

2008-2009 Final Report on NASFAA Committee Activities

Developmental Objective #1: Focus the efforts of the leadership conference to reflect the training and development opportunities for new leaders on diversity; governmental relations and advocacy; and other professional development activities which build and expand upon linkages/partnerships with states and regions.

Federal Issues Committee (FIC)

- Along with staff, the committee developed a list of legislative issues for the 2009 Leadership Conference participants to use to advocate for a common agenda of student aid legislative priorities in their Hill visits during the Conference.
- Developed a list of 97 individuals from the state and regional associations' federal issues/governmental relations committee chairs or presidents, if no committee exists, to serve as a "rapid response network" for community feedback during the Negotiated Rulemaking (NegReg) process, and other issues as needed.
- Will present an interest session at the 2009 National Conference targeted for state and regional governmental relations committee chairs to discuss ways to develop a more consistent and coordinated message from our various associations to our elected officials.

Leadership Development & Professional Advancement Committee

- The Leadership Conference: 1) included a session on NASFAA's National Conversation Initiative in addition to sessions with practical tips on how to communicate better with elected leaders; 2) conference sessions focused on association issues and effective practices to manage them, i.e. financial, contractual, volunteerism, etc; 3) was designed to enable participants to become more effective leaders and to take back to their association ideas that will improve operations and leadership development on a state and regional level; and 4) the committee presented a session at the Leadership Conference that highlighted existing efforts to promote volunteerism in the associations and gave participants a chance to discuss what opportunities would work in their associations.
- The committee chose to look at the broader definition of diversity that includes a range of factors such as race, gender, culture, sexual orientation, disability and more. The committee decided to continue hosting the diversity event at the National Conference and to attempt to expand the awareness of the event by inviting anyone to attend, who feels they contribute to the diversity of the profession. Written invitations will continue to go to those self-identifying as minorities in the NASFAA database. Since there is no way to identify other potential attendees, we will attempt to extend the invitation through signage and flyers. The event will be a late afternoon reception, that we hope will encourage attendance. Speakers representing racial and sexual orientation diversity have been scheduled to participate.

Research Committee

- On 10/14/2008 the Research Committee submitted 11 sessions for the national conference in July.

Developmental Objective #2: To plan and implement a national conference that focuses on the needs of members, trends in the field, emerging issues, affordable participation rates, and a dissemination/training strategy targeted to non-conference participants.

Federal Issues Committee (FIC)

- Will sponsor 8 interest sessions focusing on issues from the 2008 HEOA and other recent legislation or regulatory packages. Sessions are:
 1. New Private Student Loan Laws: Workable Solutions
 2. Roundtable for Regional and State Governmental Relations Chairs
 3. The New Veteran's Education Benefits
 4. NASFAA Financial Aid Simplification Survey
 5. TEACH Grant: Implementation From a School's Perspective
 6. New Disclosure Requirements
 7. Highlights of Negotiated Rulemaking for Loan Issues Affecting Schools
 8. Highlights of Negotiated Rulemaking for General Provisions and Non-Loan Program Issues
- FIC also recommended NASFAA develop an interest session on the new FERPA regulations using materials from the April 2, 2009 NASFAA Webinar.

Institutional Program Management Committee (IPM)

- Developed 4 interest sessions for the 2009 Conference; six committee members will present and/or moderate sessions at the conference.

National Conference Committee

- In keeping with this objective, we developed a diverse program with a total of 117 sessions. Topics encompass the areas of regulation, reauthorization, technology, management, loans, student access and diversity, graduate/professional issues, research, professional development, customer service and financial literacy. Attendees will find sessions that are functional and philosophical, current and future oriented.
- The Department of Education will be presenting 13 topics. All of the ED sessions will be repeated during the four day conference. In addition, the Department will be offering their resource room which provides a valuable opportunity for members to have one-on-one dialogue with the Department to address technical and regulatory issues.

Student Access & Diversity Committee

- The committee is providing six conference sessions this year, titled "National Training for Counselors and Mentors: Perspectives from the Front Lines", "Understanding and Implementing the New Independent Student Definition", "Advocating for Student Aid Spending in Tough Economic Times", "Outreach Collaborations with the Financial Aid Office", "Implementing Reauthorization Changes: Meeting the Needs of Students with Disabilities", and "Successful Outreach Practices in the Financial Aid Office".

Staff Training & Professional Development Committee

- Discussed 16 possible National Conference sessions; followed through on suggested sessions relative to governmental relations and advocacy by finding presenters and moderators.
- Volunteered to participate in Diversity Event, in conjunction with the national conference, in addition to serving as presenters and moderators on conference sessions.

Developmental Objective #3: To develop a strategic framework for staff training and professional development that focuses on instructional, state, regional and national requirements; and identifies state of the art technology tools that also provide NASFAA with responsive and alternative delivery options.

Federal Issues Committee (FIC)

- At the fall meeting, the FIC discussed training methods for NASFAA to inform the membership, effectively and timely, of aid related issues. The FIC overwhelmingly recommends that NASFAA continue its efforts to recapture the role as the primary training source on student aid issues. The most effective way to do this is through frequent webinars with co-trainers/presenters from the Department of Education and student aid organizations/agencies. NASFAA's Today's News should also be used as an effective way to provide training and guidance on recent legislative provisions. Several of the issues recommended for inclusion in future webinars can be very effective and timely as features in Today's News.
- Recommended topics for NASFAA webinars on the HEOA: definition of net price, how to calculate it and when to calculate it; application process for students who cannot provide parental data on their FAFSA beginning in 2009-10; delay in ACG and SMART grant eligibility for non-citizens until July 1, 2009; financial aid issues and other information that student aid officers need to know "immediately" due to effective dates of recent legislation and regulations; year-round Pell; sex offenders in civil confinement; auto-zero EFC based on IRAQ/Afghanistan war service; consumer information; model code of conduct; disclosure requirements; preferred lender lists and student loans; reporting requirements; changes from a program perspective; changes in student eligibility; and how to implement the HEOA. Four webinars on Reauthorization were held as follows:
 - August 21, 2008: Reauthorization 2008: First Alerts (NASFAA presenters: Joan Berkes, Larry Zaglaniczny, and Justin Draeger)
 - November 20, 2008: Reauthorization 2008: Effective Dates and Implementation Issues (NASFAA presenter, Joan Berkes; Department of Education presenters, Jeff Baker and Dan Madzellan)
 - January 15, 2009: Negotiated Rulemaking: Implementing Reauthorization (NASFAA presenters: Joan Berkes and Larry Zaglaniczny)
 - June 2, 2009: Negotiated Rulemaking: Report to the Membership (NASFAA presenters, Jennifer Martin, Karen McCarthy, Joan Berkes, and Justin Draeger; FIC member and school negotiator, Heather McDonnell).
- Based on a recommendation from the FIC, President Day send a sample letter on August 28, 2008 to the NASFAA membership to use to apprise their respective institution presidents and others about the possible impact of the HEOA on the institution and its students.

Institutional Program Management Committee (IPM)

- Drafted a letter on HEOA changes to be sent from President Day to NASFAA member CEOs.
- Reviewed and updated *Choosing, Using, and Appraising a Student Financial Aid Consultant*.
- Reviewed the survey instrument in the NASFAA publication, *Key Factors in Financial Aid Office Staff Sizes* and made recommendations to the Research Committee on updates.
- Developed two articles for *Transcript*, one on the findings of NASFAA's Satisfaction Survey and one on perspectives from a first time volunteer on a NASFAA committee.

Student Access and Diversity Committee (SADC)

- Augmented NASFAA's collaborative efforts with the National Training for Counselors and Mentors (NT4CM) initiative as a way to provide financial aid training for school counselors, TRIO, GEAR UP, and other grassroots providers of guidance to middle- and high-school students.

- Developed a conference session to promote NT4CM , with a format that can be duplicated at regional conferences and other professional association conferences.
- Developed 2 conference sessions that will offer training on helping subpopulations with unique needs: one on working with student with disabilities and another on the new independent student definition, which includes homeless and foster youth.
- Developed 2 conference sessions related to access and success of underserved students.

Staff Training & Professional Development Committee

- Developed proposal to address needs of states & regions regarding fall training; Webinars will take the place of decentralized workshops to address concerns that states & regions are losing money and are unable to find qualified trainers.
- Committee agreed that Webinars are an excellent training opportunity for those members unable to travel.
- Completed update of the Professional Judgment Monograph handed over from the 2007-08 committee.
- Presented in the Professional Judgment Webinar.

Technology Issues Committee (TIC)

- Reviewed and discussed NASFAA’s Webinar and Online Learning plans and supported the direction in terms of the number of offerings, attendance and quality; concurred with the need to charge a fee for some type of Webinars in the future to offset the costs.
- Brainstormed and offered suggestions on Webinars to be offered by NASFAA in the future.
- In terms of the Online Learning strategy, discussed whether members would be able to afford the courses with ED’s free courses available.

Developmental Objective # 4: To develop a needs assessment tool to identify and address the staff training needs of financial aid staff in the field.

Graduate and Professional Issues Committee (GPIC)

- GPIC was not engaged in the development of a singular “needs assessment tool” as defined above. Instead, GPIC was active in the attempt to solicit the training needs of the GPIC community in a variety of ways, such as SOGAPPP. One significant outcome of providing and analyzing the results of the SOGAPPP is NASFAA’s refined ability to understand current GP practices, which may provide guidance regarding future training topics.
- Developed specific training topics and identified program presenters for 9 to 11 GPIC-related sessions at the 2009 Conference.
- Committee members attended “Birds of a Feather: Graduate Programs” open forums at the 2008 Federal Student Aid Conferences and inquired of attendees what were their critical issues and training needs. Issues identified were (a) how can Law School FAA’s find and develop alternatives to the (largely shrinking or disappearing) Bar Study Loans for new graduates? (b) training to help sort out the many new wrinkles with the Post 9/11 GI benefits to be packaged next year; (c) FAFSA simplification, were it to actually occur, may in fact make it difficult for certain Health Professions graduate students to provide the mandated parent information required for the appropriate administration of certain Health Professions Loans; if this comes to pass, we will need guidance, training, and probably the development of new forms and processes.

National Conference Committee

- Reviewed evaluations from the 2008 conference to assist in selecting sessions.

- In addition to the Sub-Committee review of evaluations from the 2008 conference prior to selecting initial sessions, the Federal Issues Committee, chaired by Bonnie Joerschke was charged with monitoring legislative initiatives to determine emerging issues that would require insertion into the program. Eight of the 15 NASFAA committees submitted sessions for consideration by the Conference Committee and the Committee made a concerted effort to include most of those sessions which were representative of the needs of the membership in the areas of Federal Issues, Graduate and Professional Issues, Institutional Program Management, Leadership Development, Research, Student Access and Diversity, Staff Training and Professional Development and Technology.

Research Committee

- Committee chair felt the committee had too much work to work with IMPC on updating the Staffing Projection Model as requested by the IMPC Chair.

Staff Training & Professional Development Committee

- Reviewed Assessment Plan to evaluate NASFAA tools such as the Self Evaluation Guide, CORE, Learn Student Aid, Fall Training, Monograph, Self-Evaluation Guide, National Conference, Webinars, Leadership Conference, Best Practices, Pre-Conference and Ask Regs. Questions were developed using a WASFAA survey as a base.
- Committee encouraged their respective regions to complete the anonymous survey by sending messages through their listserves and submitting an article to Today's News.
- Assessment Plan template to be turned over to 2009-10 Committee Chair, since outcomes assessment cannot be determined without results from the needs assessment survey.

Developmental Objective #5: To aggressively expand membership development, marketing and outreach-oriented communications, and follow-up; provide professional development, research, including SOGAPP, and staff training opportunities for NASFAA'S graduate and professional membership group; and partner with appropriate professional associations, as appropriate.

Editorial Board of the *Journal of Student financial Aid*

- The two most recent issues of the Journal of Student Financial Aid have included articles on merit-based state scholarship programs, factors that drive student debt, the importance of federal grant programs for students in rural community colleges, degree persistence of student loan borrowers, a survey of the literature related to student persistence, and a summary of 529 plans and other postsecondary education savings vehicles. In addition, the editor's columns have encouraged aid administrators to keep their focus on our students and the purpose of aid programs and have advocated simplification of the federal financial aid process to facilitate access.
- Articles scheduled for the forthcoming issue will deal with graduate student persistence, an exploration of who benefits from tuition discounts in public institutions, and an analysis of the effects of state financial aid program on the enrollment of parents. Additional articles under review include the impact of award structure on the distribution of merit aid, the price response of students' enrollment in two-year colleges, and a review of the literature relation to student loan defaults. Initial plans for the following issue include articles on the attitudes of African-American parents toward their children's college costs, review a workshop model to improve access of underrepresented students in high education, and examine an optimization model for allocation of merit-based aid.

- Because of budgetary limitations, there has been initial discussion of moving the Journal to an annual paper publication, with articles published electronically when the editorial and production process is completed.

Graduate and Professional Issues Committee (GPIC)

- SOGAPPP subcommittee conceptualized and drafted the SOGAPPP survey instrument with hard work and guidance provided by Meihua Zhai, and who helped us ensure that questions asked were useful, complete, and relevant to the GP community in the 2009 program and regulatory environment.
- Work overload at institutions prevented them from participating in the survey even though numerous attempts were made to accommodate their concerns.
- On November 6, 2008, presented Webinar entitled “Financial Literacy for Graduate Students” which was a huge success. Additionally, GPIC members enthusiastically responded to the request to help provide written responses to the large number of questions posed by participants during the Webinar which could not be addressed by the presenters due to time constraints.
- GPIC members have been instrumental within their states and regions in attempting to expand membership and to provide outreach-oriented communications and follow up. As one example, the MASFAA region does not have a GP committee or communication structure of its own, but the region is now served by a GP issues list serve developed ad hoc by GPIC. GPIC members have used their active voices at state and regional trainings to encourage GP practitioners to advocate for their students and programs as they participate in NASFAA’s National Conversation Initiative (NCI).

National Conference Committee

- Aggressively sought session proposals from members and committees; over 200 were received; used this as the basis for a diverse program designed to provide training opportunities for beginners and seasoned professionals who desire functional, technical and philosophical development. To highlight one area, the committee incorporated seven GPIC sessions into the conference program. Eight of the 15 NASFAA committees submitted sessions and the program’s sessions are representative of those submitted.

Research Committee

- Held 2 conference calls and met with GPIC regarding survey questions for the SOGAPPP as well as incentives for non NASFAA and NASFAA schools to complete SOGAPPP;
- As the result of a request by Bob Morse of US News and World Report we held a conference call on December 19th to discuss where we go next with the AIR/NASFAA financial aid discussion. The Higher Education Opportunity Act has changed the equation with their pricing lists and the cost calculator. We have commitments to other agencies (NAICU and AAU) already in place for net price and a cost calculator. We would want to see consistency across various approaches and some clear definitions. US News and World Report is wondering if NASFAA is planning on having a Research Committee Meeting or would NASFAA have some other meeting format that could be arranged so NASFAA, AIR and CDS could begin the discussions or begin planning a strategy on how to in a systematic way address all the various issues that continue to surround the financial aid section of the CDS.

Student Access and Diversity Committee (SADC)

- Recommended to IPMC to explore the concept of having a professional certification process for financial aid professionals as a way to positively promote the profession and the Association, and encourage interest in the profession in order to increase diversity.

- Proposed to the Awards Committee a new institutional award category to recognize outstanding efforts in the area of access and diversity, including efforts to encourage underserved populations to enter graduate/professional programs.
- Identified best practices in outreach to encourage diversity at the graduate and professional level.

Development Objective # 6: To initiate planning and implementation strategies related to the NASFAA sponsored “National Conversation on Access and Aid for Students in Postsecondary Education.”

Student Access and Diversity Committee (SADC)

- Chair and another member of the committee served on the Public Policy Research and Development Group (PPRDG), the primary deliberative body for assessing existing research and studies and developing recommendations for the National Conversation Initiative.
- Supports the belief that the National Conversation Initiative is the most effective vehicle for developing proposals to simplify the delivery system and encourage early notification of college financing opportunities, as well as voicing concerns about serving underrepresented students such as undocumented immigrants.
- Developed conference session on Advocating for Aid Spending in Tough Economic times.

Developmental Objective # 7: To plan and develop an on-going strategy to support and expand volunteerism among the membership at the regional and state level.

Leadership Development & Professional Advancement Committee

- The committee presented a session at the Leadership Conference that highlighted existing state and regional efforts to promote volunteerism in the associations and gave participants a chance to discuss what opportunities would work in their associations. The committee is sponsoring a similar session at the National Conference.

Research Committee

- September 3, 2008 the Research Committee approved a request for \$5,000 for a Research Grant proposal to study college access for students who transition from foster care from Dianne Wright, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Higher Education, Florida Atlantic University.
- At the request of the RC Justin Draeger requested through the NASFAA news for our members to submit examples of everyday research in early October. Some of the RC conference sessions came from the response from our members; several have agreed to present at NASFAA.
- The committee reviewed literature and made recommendations for consideration for the Robert P. Huff Golden Quill award.

Development Objective # 8: To continue to plan, develop and initiate (as appropriate) national program models (e.g. College Goal Sunday) and effective partnerships with such groups as NCAN and the Council of Great City Schools to focus on expanding student access to education and participation levels of under-represented groups in postsecondary education.

Student Access and Diversity Committee (SADC)

- Collaborated with NT4CM initiative in support of NASFAA staff efforts to provide advisory and technical assistance to other college access-related organizations; One of the committee members, Cristi Millard, joined the NT4CM publicity and outreach work group. She is preparing an article promoting NT4CM activities that will be sent to the state and regional associations for distribution. The committee is also offering a conference session to promote NT4CM. The committee also assisted in preparing a funding proposal that NASFAA will use to solicit outside funding for NT4CM initiatives, such as the topical webcasts.
- Other attempts at developing partnerships to expand access included an effort to work with the National Library Association and the Council of Inner City Schools to develop a promotional bookmark highlighting the Student and Parent portals on the NASFAA website; this effort needs to be funded through corporate sponsorship; committee prepared a funding proposal for NASFAA to use to solicit outside funding; Dr. Day agreed to reach out to the Council of Greater City Schools for possible collaboration on the project.
- Plans to offer a conference session that describes examples of successful collaborations between financial aid offices and other organizations.
- Provided feedback to NASFAA staff in the development of a web portal for Students, Parents and Counselors and a web portal that identifies ‘best practices’ to promote access and diversity.
- Best practices were highlighted in Today’s News, and will be focus of a conference session and a *Transcript* article.
- Developed an article for the *Transcript* magazine on ways to take advantage of grants offered by philanthropic organizations for developing access and diversity initiatives, to increase awareness of those collaborative opportunities.
- Assisted NASFAA staff in revising the “Cash for College” brochure to better serve the information needs of underserved students and their families.

Development Objective # 9: To explore options for new publication approaches and methodologies for NASFAA to focus on important and critical issues related to access and student aid in postsecondary education.

Student Access and Diversity Committee (SADC)

- Developed six proposals for Student Aid Transcript articles, including research and analysis of trends affecting diversity in higher education and some that highlight best practices in meeting the needs of underserved students.

Developmental Objective #10: To develop a federal legislative and advocacy agenda that focuses on simplification of program delivery systems (including FAFSA), follow-up strategies related to HEA reauthorization and regulatory analysis, training, and other issues important to the effective administration of financial aid.

Federal Issues Committee (FIC)

- As indicated in Developmental Objectives 1, 2, & 3, the FIC identified training topics for news articles and webinars (to be implemented by NASFAA staff in cooperation with the Department of Education and other student organizations). The FIC is sponsoring eight (8) interest sessions at the 2009 National Conference. All include important provisions in recent legislation like the HEOA and include presenters and moderators from member schools, NASFAA staff, government officials, etc.

- The FIC was formally involved in the recent round of Negotiated Rulemaking sessions between February and May 2009. They reviewed draft proposed regulations as they became available and then offered positive or negative advice as applicable. The FIC held biweekly conference calls to discuss proposed regulations, share experiences from state and regional perspectives, and provide guidance to NASFAA staff on training needs of the membership.
- The FIC compiled a list of 97 “rapid responders” comprised of governmental relations/federal issues committee chairs in state and regional associations for NASFAA to use when input from the grassroots level was needed during the NegReg process. The committee also discussed ways for NASFAA to more effectively work with other groups like NICUA and NACUBO.
- The FIC worked with NASFAA in cooperation with the Department of Education to identify errors in the HEOA that require technical amendments.
- Dan Madzellan (Office of Postsecondary Education) and Elise Miller (NCES) were invited to the committee’s fall meeting to highlight various provisions, issues, and challenges of the HEOA. Dan informed the committee of changes to need analysis, new reporting criteria, simplification of the formula and FAFSA, and the continuing problem in obtaining IRS data under the IRS code. Elise noted changes in IPEDS reporting which includes 17 new types of data that will be requested due to the HEOA and that schools must have a net price calculator or use the one NCES is developing by August 2009.
- The FIC completed the simplification survey initiated by the 2007-08 FIC. NASFAA distributed the final report to the membership in Today’s News on June 3, 2009. The FIC used most of a day at its fall meeting discussing how best to approach simplification (the application, formula, delivery system, programs, etc.). A strategy needs to be developed on how to achieve simplification and the parts that comprise that effort. Individuals from different backgrounds (financial aid, human services, etc.) need to discuss initiatives to simplify the formula to award by income tier (like welfare and free lunch programs) to help families identify their eligibility before filing the FAFSA. The FIC also met with Marie Bennett (National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs—NASSGAP) to discuss simplification from a state agency’s perspective. Cooperation with NASSGAP is important to ensure suggested changes to the FAFSA or need analysis do not compromise or seriously impact state grant programs. States cannot quickly change if methodology changes; changes to many state programs would require changes in state statute. Dr. Day used recommendations from the FIC and others gathered from the NASFAA membership to develop the framework of the National Conversation Initiative and the prototype model FAFSA requested by the White House.
- The FIC advised NASFAA staff on issues requiring training or clarification and ways to help membership manage changes to need analysis.
- The FIC compiled a 5-page list of recommended topics and issues from the HEOA on which to focus discussion at the Department of Education’s regional hearings held preparatory to negotiations, and for Dr. Day’s written and oral testimony at the October 8, 2008, hearing.
- The FIC and Dr. Day brainstormed on issues to include in discussions in the National Conversation Initiative and questions to ask NASFAA membership at the town hall meetings held at student aid association meetings across the country in fall 2008 and spring 2009.

- The FIC revised the Preferred Lender List Monograph to include current regulatory and statutory requirements and guidance for institutions as they decide whether to pursue a preferred FFEL and/or private lender list. This publication was published in Today's News on June 4, 2009.

Graduate and Professional Issues Committee (GPIC)

- Not a lot of GPIC activity/progress to report here; however, GPIC believes it is worth noting a reality here, which is not quite a disconnect with the objective, but still bears stating within the larger context of NAFSAA concerns in this area: Simplification is less of an issue for independent students of all types, including GP students, for many reasons, but if FAFSA simplification is manifested to the point where GP students might be unable to submit necessary parental data on the FAFSA, a number of GP practitioners will face a new challenge in federally-required data collection to maintain compliance with HHS loan statutes.

National Conference Committee

- Consideration and weight given to the HEOA legislation as session proposals were reviewed to ensure that all aspects of the recent legislative & regulatory issues are addressed.
- Requested that ED conduct sessions that will address reauthorization analysis and implementation.
- The program will be highlighted by a general session led by Dr. Phil Day entitled "National Conversation Initiative" which will be a discussion of the Initiative that has occurred throughout the country over the last year. ED staff will deliver a general update on the final day of the conference and it is anticipated that the keynote address will be delivered by Robert Shireman, Deputy Undersecretary of Education.

Research Committee

- No federal legislative and advocacy agenda was created by RC.

Student Access & Diversity Committee (SADC)

- Supports belief that the National Conversation Initiative is the most effective vehicle for developing proposals to simplify the delivery system and encourage early notification of college financing opportunities, as well as voicing concerns about serving underrepresented students such as undocumented immigrants.
- Developed a conference session on Advocating for Aid Spending in Tough Economic times.

Developmental Objective #11: To significantly upgrade the use of technology for the benefit of the association and the financial aid community by implementing key components of the ESolutions Project.

Technology Issues Committee (TIC)

- Assisted NASFAA staff with various aspects of the E-Solutions project, including suggestions regarding the redesigned website, Encyclopedia, ISG Web product, etc.
- Tested a number of electronic products prior to their launch to the entire membership to include the ISG Web, electronic voting and the donation process for the Dallas Martin Endowment for Public Policy and Student Aid.
- Developed technology related articles for the Transcript and numerous conference presentations.

