

# NEWS TO KNOW

## February 2006

### Regional Workshops

OSFA is pleased to announce that we are hosting Spring Regional Workshops throughout the state in March. These workshops are **FREE** to all participants and registration is now open. To register, please contact Kelly Harrison at 850-410-6820 with your name and the location that you would like to participate in.

Topics will include: Reauthorization, State Programs Disbursement/Reconciliation, OSFA on the Web Demonstration, Managing Multiple Priorities, Identify Theft, FERPA, and Default Prevention.

Dates and locations are as follows: March 16 - Marianna (Chipola Junior College); March 17 - Orange Park (St. Johns River Community College); March 23 - Kissimmee (TECO); March 24 - Ft. Lauderdale (Keiser College); March 27 - Kendall (Miami Dade College); March 28 - Ft. Myers (Southwest Florida College); March 29 - Tampa (Southwest Florida College).

### Navigating Your Financial Future

OSFA is pleased to announce that our Default Prevention Team is here to serve you. The Navigating Your Financial Future Team provides the following services:

- ❑ Free seminars to target delinquent or defaulted borrowers to effectively lower your institutional cohort default rate
- ❑ Free seminars on any *Navigating Your Financial Future* topic: financial aid, managing your budget, managing your credit, career planning, school life management, and student loan repayment
- ❑ On-site entrance or exit counseling
- ❑ AND MORE!

For more information, please contact Jacqueline Hill at 850-212-1108!

## State Program Deadlines

February 2006

- 28 – Participating PSI disbursement deadline for FRAG for Term 2

February/March 2006

- Term 2 refund/reconciliation due to OSFA 60 days after the PSI's last day of drop/add

March 2006

- Master Eligibility List (MEL) for next academic year opens with available centralized state programs student eligibility information
- Florida Bright Futures annual audit and other program biannual audit deadline
- 15 – Program allocations requested for eligible PSI's for Term 3
- 15 – Term 2 reconciliation in progress

## Master Eligibility List (MEL) File Layout

The 2006-2007 MEL has been enhanced for your convenience. Neil Walter has distributed the new "Bright Futures only" MEL and the new "All Programs" MEL. If you have not received your copy, or have additional questions regarding the enhanced versions, you may contact Theresa Antworth or any of the Program Directors at 1-888-827-2004.

## Mapping Your Future Release

The Mapping Your Future (MYF) Online Student Loan Counseling (OSLC) team and staff have set a tentative release date for Online Student Loan Counseling version 4.0 for April 2006. OSLC 4.0 will provide school users with additional customization options and easier data retrieval, while enhancing the counseling sessions for borrowers. Below is the list of features for OSLC 4.0:

- **Revised format for borrowers, View/download confirmations, Average indebtedness customization, Budget customization, Meteor borrower display, and Guarantor exception report batch.**

Through our sponsorship of Mapping Your Future (MYF), institutions may join MYF and use their products/services for FREE! If you would like more information on MYF, please contact your Outreach Representative or you may contact [CariAnne Behr](#) from MYF at (573) 634-8641.

## **Mapping Your Future Spanish Site**

Mapping Your Future (MYF) launched a new web site to serve Spanish-speaking students, parents, and families who seek information on careers, college, and financial aid. MYF has offered a Spanish version of its site for several years, but this new site includes much more information, an enhanced translation, and a new design. Check out the new [Spanish site](#) today!

## **Mapping Your Future Chat Events**

March 21, 7 PM Eastern

- Applying to and paying for college (including student loans)

May 16, 7 PM Eastern

- Financial aid and managing student loans and consumer debt

August 15, 7 PM Eastern

- Managing your student loans, including repayment options, consolidation, and cancellation

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## **Cohort Default Rate**

Reminder: The DRAFT Cohort Default Rates were released on February 13, 2006. Institutions should now be reviewing the [Cohort Default Rate Guide](#) to determine which challenges, adjustments, and/or appeals the school is eligible to submit to either appeal the accuracy of the rate and/or any sanctions associated with the rate. Chapter 3.1, School Strategies, contains a chart beginning on page 3.1-10 that outlines the various challenges, adjustments, and appeals that schools may consider. (Challenges apply only to draft rates, whereas adjustments and appeals apply to official rates.) For domestic schools, the time period for submitting adjustments and appeals began on February 22 (the sixth business day after the Department transmitted the cohort default rate notification packages to the SAIG destination points).

## **ED Approves Real Time Data**

It was recently announced at the Department of Education's Electronic Access Conferences that effective immediately, in addition to paper documentation, institutions can rely upon information it accesses directly from a loan holder's database as documentation that a loan reported by or on NSLDS as being in default is no longer in default or otherwise no longer impacts a borrower's eligibility (e.g., satisfactory arrangements have been made). Access to loan data directly from a loan holder's database includes the use of web-based products that display a loan holder's real-time data. Web-based products must obtain data directly from a guarantor, lender or servicers' system and be displayed without any modification. Institutions must be able to verify that the loan being reviewed is the problematic loan. The institution must print and retain an image of the information it obtained from the web that clearly identifies the borrower, the status of the debt, and the source of the data. It is anticipated that the Department will be issuing written guidance providing additional information on this issue.

For more information, you can view the official press release on the [NASFAA website](#).

## **FSA Video Presentation**

The office of Federal Student Aid at the U.S. Department of Education will soon make available a video presentation entitled, "Start Here, Go Further With Federal Student Aid: Money for Education Beyond High School." This presentation will answer questions about the application process, hosting a high school night, provide valuable resources to students and parents, and more! Once it is available, you may view the video at any time using the video-on-demand [Website](#). The video presentation also will be provided in DVD and VHS formats. A formal announcement will be made when the program is available. Meanwhile, keep an eye on their counselors and mentors [Website](#) for more details!

## **2006 Fiscal Officers Training**

FSA will hold a series of one-day workshops on Fiscal Officer Training in 2006. While designed primarily for fiscal officers and business officers at institutions participating in the Title IV aid programs, ED encourages aid administrators and representatives from third-party servicers to attend these workshops, which are intended for individuals who are "fairly

familiar" with the Title IV programs. For more information on the workshops, view [DCL ANN-06-01](#).

Note: The workshop scheduled for Florida is currently full. However, ED advises that institutions continue to check the website for availability (as cancellations are occurring).

## **NASFAA Training Materials**

If you were unable to attend NASFAA's Fall 2005 Training Series "Administrative Capability: Campus-Wide Compliance," you can now order the reference material distributed at the workshops. A limited supply of the materials is available. NASFAA's 2005 Fall Training materials present compliance in the context of a campus-wide effort. They focus on developing strategies to ensure and strengthen the cross-campus communication necessary to demonstrate Title IV administrative capability. Read the [article](#) for complete details and how to order.

## **2005/2006 Self Evaluation Guide**

All twenty-six sections of the twenty-first edition of the NASFAA Self-Evaluation Guide for Institutional Participation in Title IV and Other Federal Programs are now available on [NASFAA's Web site](#). In addition to being able to download individual sections, Members may also download a master PDF file incorporating all sections. The Self-Evaluation Guide serves as an in-house self-assessment tool to help institutions prepare for required audits of the institution's administration of ED and HHS student financial assistance programs during the 2005-06 award year.

## **2006/2007 Application and Verification Guide**

The Department has posted the [Application and Verification Guide](#) section of the 2006-2007 FSA Handbook. This publication is intended for aid administrators and counselors who help students begin the student aid process—filing the FAFSA, verifying information, and making corrections and other changes to the information reported on the FAFSA. A print edition will be mailed at a later date. *(ED notes that the handbook contains no guidance pertaining to the federal student aid portions of the recent budget reconciliation legislation. The Department is preparing and will be issuing guidance on that measure soon.)*

## **Dates to Remember**

**FASFAA** Experienced Aid Officers Workshop  
March 1-3, Safety Harbor, FL

**FASFAA** Graduate/Professional Workshop  
March 3, Safety Harbor, FL

**FASFAA** Region III Workshop  
March 14, Orlando

2006 **SFA** Spring Conference  
April 5-7, San Antonio, TX

**FASFAA** Region I Workshop  
April 6, Tallahassee, FL

**FASFAA** Region V and VI Workshop  
April 11, Miami Gardens, FL

**FASFAA** Spring 2006 Conference  
June 7-8, Ft. Myers, FL

**NASFAA** Annual Conference  
July 5-8, Seattle, WA

Need more information? Check out their websites!

## **Mission Statement**

The Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA), serves as a guarantor for the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP), and the administrator of Florida's scholarship and grant programs. The OSFA Mission is to facilitate higher education access and services by providing exemplary customer attention, comprehensive financial aid information, and convenient and efficient products.

## **Philosophy**

As a public agency, OSFA has the ability to offer its partners and customers something few guarantors can: the ability to shape OSFA programs and services based on their specific concerns. Earnings generated from OSFA's loan programs are used to help fund scholarship

and grant programs, financial aid workshops and publications, and to provide better services for our participants. When schools and students choose to use the OSFA guarantee for student loans, they are actually helping countless other needy and deserving students by investing in education programs. So, if a participant has a problem or suggestion, OSFA management listens and does whatever it takes to implement a solution that meets their needs. Public dollars deserve that kind of accountability in education finance.

## **OSFA Team Contact Information**

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TBA  
Default Prevention Representative, South  
*(Please contact one of the other representatives until this position has been filled.)*

## **Finally**

Confidence in the institution's ability to determine our integrity, character, and truthfulness is of the utmost importance to OSFA. The Office of Student Financial Assistance wants to know and deliver what you seek in a partner. You have the right to choose. Together, we have the power to make a difference. Trust the Office of Student Financial Assistance to help you help your students. They are our future.