
Communicating Financial Aid Effectively: Transparency, Impact, and Collaboration

OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID | Mini Conference

October 21, 2025

Agenda

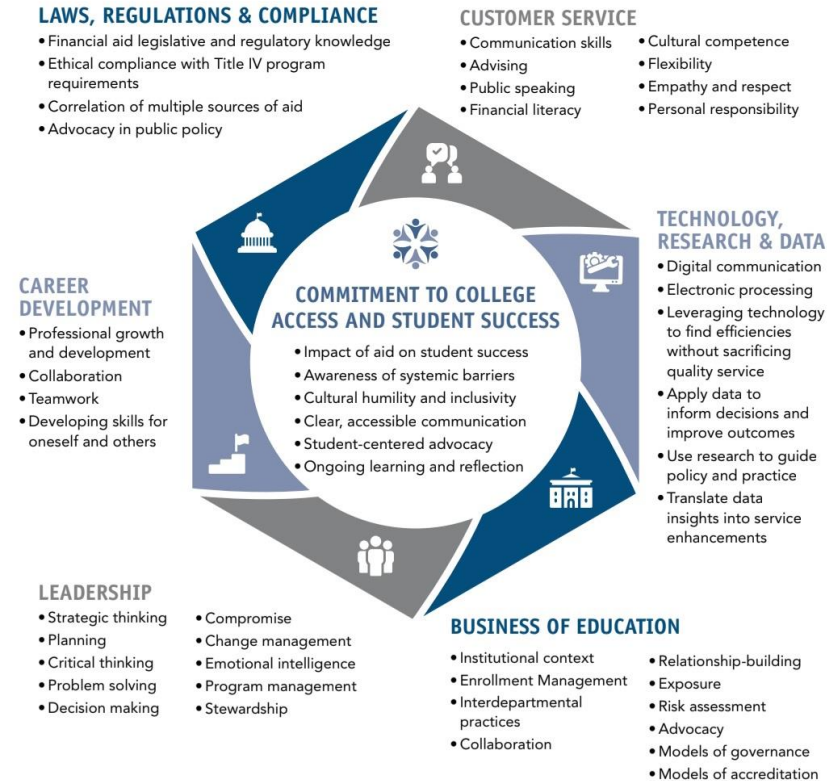
- Why We're Here
- My Role
- Website Overview
- Dispatch & What Works
- Goals for 2025–26
- Collaboration Highlights & How You Can Help



Financial Aid Competency Framework

Why We're Here: Transparency supports trust — trust supports enrollment.

- Clear, consistent communication builds trust and credibility
- Having a dedicated comms role in financial aid is rare and invaluable
- At Iowa, our work aligns with institutional brand standards to enhance clarity and credibility



[NASFAA.ORG/COMPETENCIES](https://nasfaa.org/competencies)

My Role



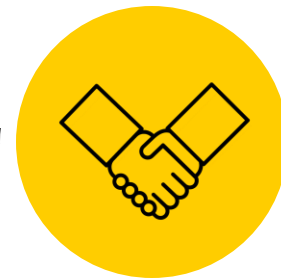
Digital/Print Strategy:

Website, Dispatch,
Financial Aid
Forms/Handouts,
Analytics



Marketing Campaigns:

FAFSA Renewal for
current students, paid
Carver Scholarship
Promotion



Campus Partnerships

Connections strengthen
outreach, align messaging
across departments, and
ensure students receive clear,
consistent financial aid
information wherever they
engage on campus.

OSFA Website – Our Digital Front Door

Then (prior to site launch)

- 250+ pages, multiple clicks deep
- Confusing navigation
- Inconsistent tone
- Not viewed as a trusted resource

Now (launched July 2024)

- ~60 pages, most one click deep
- Streamlined, student-centered content
- Hidden pages triggered by To Do List
- Annual updates before FAFSA opens, cost is finalized by BOR, & when aid offers go out

Website Snapshot (last 28 days)

Performance

17K views • 7K users • Avg time 56s

Most visitors find what they need within one to two clicks.

Top Pages

Home Page – 4,475 views (25% of total)

Applying for Aid – 2,215 views (13%)

Contact Us – 1,829 views (10%)

Scholarships – 1,301 views (7%)

Cost – 1,269 views (7%)

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Office of Student Financial Aid

File the 2026-27 FAFSA

 **SEARCH**

[Types of Aid](#) ▾ [Cost](#) ▾ [Applying for Aid](#) ▾ [Eligibility](#) ▾ [Understanding Your Offer](#) [Receiving Aid](#) [Financial Wellness](#) ▾ [Contact Us](#) ▾



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Dispatch Campaigns

2024–25 Snapshot

- **FAFSA Renewal Final Notice** – 1/28/25
 - 17872 students; 10,022 (56.08%) open rate
 - 7213 parents; 5,036 (69.82%) open rate
- **Aid Offer Mailing Follow-up Notice** – 3/13/25
 - 15,587 incoming students; 13,160 (84.43%) open rate
- **Aid Offer Notice** – 3/10 thru 7/31
 - 15,177 current students; 10,795 (71.13%) open rate

What Works

- **Clear subject lines.** Students respond best when the purpose of the email is immediately obvious.
- **Action-forward content.** Every message should point to a specific next step – not just inform, but guide.
- **Segmentation and personalization.** Targeting messages to specific groups, like parents or first-year students, increases relevance and engagement.

My Focus for the Year Ahead

Content & Impact

Simplified language, action-forward tone on webpages and dispatch communications, holistic service operations review to better inform timing of email notices

Transparency & Governance

Improved clarity for confusing topics (Federal Work-Study and Satisfactory Academic Progress), Grad PLUS and Parent PLUS loan revisions based on federal changes

Collaboration & Connection

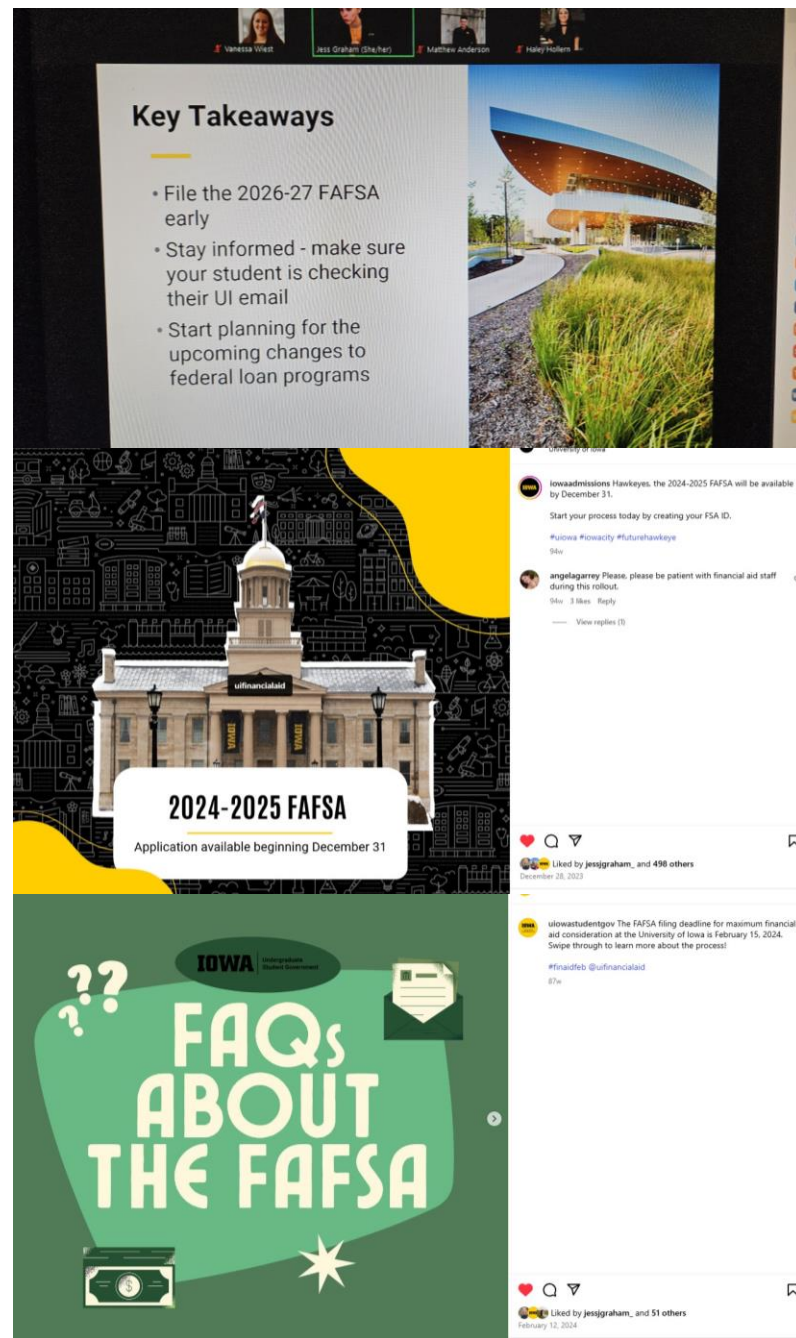
Continue building trust by strengthening cross-campus partnerships and expanding communications support to financial aid colleagues in the graduate and professional programs

Collaborations

- **Spring 2024 examples**
 - Admissions Instagram Collab: FAFSA is Open!
 - Undergraduate Student Government Instagram Collab: FAQs about the FAFSA
- **Fall 2025 examples**
 - Parent & Family Programs: Website article & Parent-focused Webinar
 - CLAS: newsletter & website listicle

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How Can You Help?



**Share accurate
information**



**Use official
OSFA links**



**Loop us in
early**



**Send feedback
or ideas**

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and Collaboration

Thank you

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