Q&A From SSSP All Directors’ Training
September 15-16, 2014

Please note that the SSSP handbook has been posted to our website for your easy reference.

FUNDING

Q: Were 2014-15 SSSP credit funds allowed to be carried over into December 2015?
A: We have not authorized 2014-15 credit funds to be carried over.

Q: Can a career counselor be funded out of SSSP?
A: It would depend on their job duties. Title 5 § 55523(a)(1) outlines counseling services related to career exploration that would be fundable under SSSP. If the career counselor position meets the services outlined there, then yes, that position (or portion of) could be funded by SSSP. Generally speaking, career counseling for students that have not identified an education/career goal or course of study is fundable. The position would have to be listed in your program and budget plans. Positions funded by SSSP must be for core services. Job services/placement, therefore, would not be fundable.

Q: Can we use SSSP funds for printing costs from our campus production office for SSSP-related materials such as our SEP forms? Our district believes that using categorical money for printing costs at our local production department is considered a charge-back and is not allowable.
A: Yes, this is outlined in the funding guidelines as an acceptable expense: #3 Publications and Outreach Materials, page 4.9.

Q: When we identify the number of counselors providing SSSP services to calculate FTEF, do we use their contracted weekly hours (here it is 35 hours per week) or use the student contact hours? We have counselors who may see students 20 hours out of their 35, but also do other things for the remaining 15 hours such as plan SEP events, etc.
A: The Program Plan says to use the negotiated student contact hours.

Q: Can we use SSSP funds to pay for meal tickets for staff who ate dinner at our local area College Night? Also, if our college had to pay for table rental at this College Night, is the rental space a disallowed cost?
A: No, SSSP funds generally speaking can only be used for expenditures that are consistent with program goals and activities delineated in the SSSP plan. For example, it could be used for outreach to a local high school for “quick reg” type services where students are completing online orientation,
assessments, etc., but not for general outreach such as a College Night where core services are not being provided. It could possibly count towards match if your outreach is under Admissions and Records, for example.

Q: Can we use SSSP funds for student uniforms?
A: Clothing, even if it is a student uniform, is not allowable with SSSP funds.

NONCREDIT
Q: Where is the noncredit SSSP funding formula?
A: An ad hoc workgroup has been convened to revise the Noncredit SSSP plan and the funding formula. We anticipate that these tasks will be completed by December. At that time, we will hold an informational webinar. The noncredit plans will not be due until October 2015.

Q: What is the expectation for noncredit SSSP to participate in creating the Student Equity Plan? It is fair to assume that noncredit FTES and data were included in the Student Equity funding formula?
A: The Student Success Act of 2012 (SB1456) and title 5 require colleges to coordinate their SSSP plans with their Student Equity Plan, so noncredit SSSP plans must also be coordinated with the college Student Equity Plan. Yes, noncredit FTES and data were included in the Student Equity funding formula.

Q: Title 5 regulations indicate a list of eight elements required for orientation. The noncredit student population is much different from the credit population; therefore, the information provided is different. Can locally developed noncredit orientations that meets students’ needs count toward orientation?
A: Both credit and noncredit orientations must include the elements required by title 5, § 55521. The Noncredit SSSP Ad Hoc Workgroup, which is revising the noncredit SSSP plan and funding formula, will also look at modifications that may be made to title 5 to specifically address noncredit; however, these changes will take place in the future.

Q: Education planning for noncredit students is also much different. Students often do not have long-term goals until they transition to credit programs. Is the requirements for SEPs the same for noncredit and credit students?
A: The requirements for completing SEPs are broadly outlined in title 5, § 55524. The SEPs for credit and noncredit students should be designed to meet the individual needs and interests of the student. In addition, the Noncredit SSSP Ad Hoc Workgroup is designating a Noncredit SEP in the revised plan, which is tailored to the noncredit student population.
Q: If we use credit SSSP funding for noncredit services again in 2014-15, will these funds be subject to the 1:1 match requirement for noncredit SSSP funds or the 2:1 match requirement for credit SSSP funds?

A: They will be subject to the 1:1 match for noncredit funds.

COUNSELING, ADVISING AND EDUCATION PLANNING

Q: It seems that different language is used for the MIS Data Element Dictionary and the SSSP Plan template regarding SEPs. The dictionary says that students must identify a course of study after completing 15 units, then after that, we must provide the opportunity to develop a comprehensive SEP. The SSSP Plan template states that students must define their course of study and develop a comprehensive SEP by the completion of 15 units. Please clarify when the comprehensive SEP needs to be completed. Is it either completion of 15 units OR end of the third term or whichever comes first?

A: Title 5 § 55530 outlines student responsibilities and when a comprehensive SEP needs to be completed. Section 55530(d) states, “Nonexempt students who have completed the services identified in (b)(1) through (4) shall be required to complete a comprehensive education plan after completing 15 semester units or 22 quarter units of degree applicable credit course work or prior to the end of the 3rd semester or 4th quarter of enrollment, or a shorter period if required by district or program policy.” So, it is either completion of 15 units or prior to the end of the third term. The regulations leave some flexibility for local control. For example, your district policy could require a plan by completion of 15 units or prior to the end of the third term, or whichever comes first, but title 5 doesn’t require that.

Of course a comprehensive SEP can be completed sooner if the student has declared a course of study and the college has the resources available.

Q: If a student received a comprehensive SEP after the third semester of enrollment, will the college still be able to receive the funding formula credit?

A: Yes, the college will receive credit for the term in which it is reported.

Q. In Section II of the SSSP Plan, under Counseling, Advising and Other Education Planning Services, question #5 asks for the number of full time equivalent counselors with instructions in parenthesis to divide the total full time and part time counseling hours by 2080. Is this correct?

A. No, this is a mistake. Colleges should divide the total full- and part-time counseling hours by the number of full-time contracted hours in their district to determine the number of full-time equivalents.

PROVISION OF SERVICES TO NEW STUDENTS

Q: It was stated that starting Fall 2015, all new students would be required to complete orientation, assessment, and have an SEP for registration, regardless of priority registration. Is that correct? There is
some question to whether it was all students (new and not new) or just new students for the new requirement.

A: Please see sections 55530 (Student Responsibilities) and 55531 (Institutional Responsibilities) of the SSSP title 5 regulations. Specifically, section 55531(c) reads:

“Colleges are required to provide nonexempt students with the services specified in sections 55520, 55521, 55522, 55523, and 55524. Initial implementation of these services is required for first time students identified in section 55530(b) by the fall 2015 term. Beginning with the spring 2015 term, districts shall notify students of the requirements established by this subchapter.”

MIS

Q: You stated that an EOPS SEP can be considered a “comprehensive” SEP for SSSP purposes as long as the EOPS student education plan covers all of the terms needed for the student to complete their education goal and includes all of the components of an education plan as stated in title 5, § 55524. Given that, are you defining a comprehensive SEP as one that “covers all of the terms,” leading to the completion of the student’s program of study? Would we be unable to classify any plan that falls short of this (even by a single course) as a comprehensive SEP when we submit our MIS data?

A: The EOPS SEP must be compliant with the requirements for a comprehensive SEP outlined in title 5, § 55524. So yes, if the plan “falls short” it wouldn’t be classified as a comprehensive plan.

Q: Can we report services for all students (new and not new) if they received services in MIS elements SS07 – SS11?

A: Yes, services should be reported for all students in the terms provided.

Q: How can we submit a student as credit & noncredit in the same submission if they are taking both types of courses?

A: Currently, you must record the student as either credit or noncredit. As stated above, the Noncredit SSSP Ad Hoc Workgroup is revising the noncredit SSSP plan and funding formula. It will also look at modifications that need to be made to the MIS data elements.

Q: How are students that apply to more than one college in a multi-college district, and receive multiple services (possibly duplicated services) such as assessment, orientation, abbreviated SEPs, etc. handled for the allocation formula and MIS reporting? If a student receives an abbreviated SEP at one college and then enrolls in another college in the same district, will the district receive funding for both abbreviated SEPs for the same student record?

A: If there is a student record, the colleges where the student is taking classes will get funding for all the services provided. It is best if the colleges could share data so one student doesn’t need to complete multiple SEPs.
Q: The data element dictionary indicates that the SS data element for SEPs pertains only to services received in the reporting term; in other words, students reported must have enrolled and received services in the reporting term. However, many orientation services and SEP development take place before the student actually enrolls at the college. So for the fall term, the students are receiving the services in the summer. Please advise how we address this issue.

A: You are correct that services must be reported in the term in which they are provided. If your institution is providing services in the summer for students enrolling in the fall, then the services must still be reported in the summer term.