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MEMORANDUM

Code: AA-2012-12

TO: Vice Presidents for Student Affairs

FROM: Ephraim P. Smith 
Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer

SUBJECT: Financial Aid Systemwide Audit Report 11-70: Consumer Information

For the systemwide financial aid audit conducted March 2010 through November 2011, consumer information was one of the areas reviewed. In that review, it was found that some campuses did not disclose consumer information in direct individual notices and those that did issue direct individual notices did not always list and briefly describe all required information or explain how students could obtain the information. The specific audit recommendation follows: "We recommend that the CO define, document, and communicate to the campuses the responsibilities for the disclosure of consumer information by direct individual notice."

In response to this recommendation, we are providing the following guidance to campuses. There are a variety of required consumer disclosures that must be made to both prospective and enrolled students. More information about these disclosures can be found in the Federal Student Aid Handbook, Volume 2, Chapter 6: "Providing Consumer & Safety Information." Under the umbrella of consumer information there is a subset of disclosure items that require direct individual notice. These items are as follows:

1. General Disclosures

- Financial assistance available to students
- Information about Academic Programs, costs facilities & policies
- Withdrawal procedures, refunds, Return of Title IV aid
- Accreditation and Licensure information
- Disability information
- Study abroad information

CSU Campuses
Bakersfield
Channel Islands
Chico
Dominguez Hills
East Bay

Fresno
Fullerton
Humboldt
Long Beach
Los Angeles
Maritime Academy

Monterey Bay
Northridge
Pomona
Sacramento
San Bernardino
San Diego

San Francisco
San José
San Luis Obispo
San Marcos
Sonoma
Stanislaus

- Transfer of credit
- Contact Information for persons with whom a student may obtain information about the school
- Copyright infringement
- Completion, Graduation and Transfer-out rates
- Retention, placement & post graduate study

2. Athletic Program Participation

3. FERPA

4. Annual Security Report and Annual Fire Safety Report (October 1 deadline)

For the items identified above, campuses must also be mindful of the minimum elements to be contained in these direct individual notices:

- Identify the required information disclosures.
- Provide the exact electronic website address where the information can be found.
- State that, upon request, a person is entitled to a paper copy containing the required information.
- Inform students and others how to request a copy.

The Federal Student Aid Handbook provides more detail on the exact information to be provided for the brief descriptions in items 1 through 4 above.

Campuses are also reminded the notice can be provided to an individual through an appropriate mailing or publication, including direct mailing through the U.S. Postal Service, campus mail, or electronic mail.

Since the consumer disclosures are not limited to the Financial Aid department, there is a need for coordination amongst the various constituents on-campus for the university to be in compliance. These conversations are usually initiated by the financial aid office and will often include the designation of a coordinator or committee for this purpose.

All campuses are requested to review their existing consumer information to ensure all required topics are covered and deadlines met. In response to this memo, campuses must also ensure that those items requiring direct individual notice are implemented in accordance with this memo and federal regulations.

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Your prompt attention and cooperation in this matter is appreciated. Should you have any questions, please contact Mr. Dean Kulju, Director, Financial Aid, at (562) 951-4737 or dkulju@calstate.edu.

EPS/dk

c: Dr. Benjamin Quillian, Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer
Dr. Ron Vogel, Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
Mr. Larry Mandel, University Auditor
Mr. Eric Forbes, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Student Academic Support
Mr. Dean Kulju, Director, Financial Aid and Scholarship Programs
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