



FEDERAL WORK STUDY: MANAGEMENT & BEST PRACTICES

**Celena Tulloss, SASFAA
President, Director of
Financial Aid &
Scholarships**

Disclaimer

Members of the Association recognize that one of the purposes of the Association is to provide training and informational services to its members through training conferences and periodic written material. While the Association shall utilize its best efforts to provide its members with the most current information available, there can be no assurances or warranty that its interpretation of any rule, regulation or statute will be in conformance with any present or future interpretation of such rule, regulation or statute by any appropriate governmental authority. Accordingly, each member shall hold the Association harmless from any claims, damages, or liability resulting from such member's use of any information, data, or interpretations as provided to such members by the Association.

CONTENTS

- Common practices & struggles managing the FWS program
- Audit or program review findings
- Steps taken to correct findings and improved management of the FWS program
- FWS Task Force
- Questions

FWS Practices at UTK

- New students are auto-packaged with FWS awards based on their FAFSA response
- Continuing students are batch awarded, or awarded on request
- Typically award FWS funds over and above annual authorization (200% or more)
- Employment documents are completed in the FAO (I-9, W-4, etc.)
- FWS staff monitors remaining eligibility for students
- FWS staff review and approve all position descriptions
- FAO submits time for FWS students through the University payroll system

2014-2015 Program Review

- Kansas City School Participation team, five reviewers, one specifically for FWS
- All FWS job descriptions and off-campus agreements were requested
- For sample of FWS students, class schedules, timesheets and pay records were requested
- FISAP records with supporting documentation

Findings

Finding one: Improper use of FWS funds to replace staff position

- Made to review four years of job descriptions; two positions and three students were found to be improper

Finding two: Failure to properly administer FWS program

- Paper timesheets: missing records, math errors
- Students exceeded FWS award
- Students working over allowable weekly schedule
- Students working during scheduled class time
- Made to review three years of timesheets for errors (requested a sample to be extrapolated)
- Had to calculate by student, by pay period, the amount of improper payment and FCC (hired temp staff specifically for this response)

Findings

Finding three: Failure to properly determine FWS employment eligibility

- Boys and Girls Club of the Tennessee Valley was determined not to be Community Service as defined by ED (membership fee found on their website)
- Three years were reviewed, two students were improperly paid

Action Taken

- Repayments and FISAP corrections
- Resulted in increased institutional support, guidance was issued to supervisors from the Associate Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration
- Major discussion - How do we best address these issues?
 - Staff vs. technology
 - Technology was more cost effective than the additional staff time needed for compliance monitoring
- Changes in staffing, move from manual processes to technology

Purchase of JobX/TimesheetX

- Product of Next Gen Web Solutions
- Positions require the specific data elements defined by ED
- Positions must be individually approved annually by FWS staff
- Positions are posted online and available for students to apply once they have a FWS award
- Students and supervisors are sent automated reminders when time sheets are due to be entered and approved
- All timesheets are electronic, for both on- and off-campus jobs
- Produces an electronic file that is sent to payroll, no more manual time entry or paper timesheets!

Purchase of JobX/TimesheetX

Prevents student from entering time:

- Until officially hired into the position and approved by FWS staff
- If time conflicts with class schedule unless approved by FWS staff with documentation of class cancellation
- Beyond the set FWS limit per week
- Beyond their FWS award amount
- If they are no longer enrolled
- If they no longer meet SAP
- If they have outstanding document requirements
- If the time is more than one payroll late (to ensure the minimum monthly payment requirement)

FWS Task Force

- Supported by Vice Provost and Assistant Vice Provost of Enrollment Management
- Charged with improving the current FWS program and associated processes, and building the FWS program into a national model
- Original Task Force comprised of April Wolford, EM Project Manager, and FWS Coordinator
- Work began in late fall 2019/early spring 2020

Task Force Actions to Date

Advisory Subcommittees

- Included Task Force members, current FWS supervisors & students, and other relevant campus partners
- Met in-person (pre-Covid) and virtually to brainstorm ideas for improvement and gather feedback from those “in the trenches”
- Engagement Subcommittee
 - Connecting with students when they first arrive at UTK
 - Engaging with current FWS students to keep them interested & involved
- Student & Supervisor Development Subcommittee
 - Helping create supervisor trainings prior to hiring students
 - Training/professional development opportunities for FWS students

Task Force Actions to Date

Supervisor Town Halls

- Held two 90-minute sessions via Zoom
- Invitation sent to all active FWS supervisors (both on- and off-campus)
 - 50-70 attendees per session
- Provided an hour-long presentation and answered questions throughout plus 30 minutes at the end

Task Force Actions to Date

- Looking to revamp our onboarding process
 - Researching onboarding best practices
 - Hoping to gain additional assistance from campus partners
- Benchmarked 30 institutions
 - TN public schools
 - Aspirational peers
 - Comparative peers
 - Other SEC peers
- Questions included which office is responsible for onboarding, how do students submit forms and documents, does the institution use E-verify, etc.



Questions?



THANK YOU!

CELENA TULLOSS
CTULLOSS@UTK.EDU
865-974-3601

Business Partners

