

SASFAA Governance and Planning Committee Assessment

2011-2016 SASFAA Long-Range Plan

2015-2016

**Southern Association of Student Financial
Aid Administrators, Inc.**



May 2016

**Nathan Basford, Chair
2015-2016 SASFAA Past-President**



May, 2016

TO: SASFAA Board of Directors
SASFAA Membership

FROM: Governance and Planning Committee

Nathan Basford, Chair, Florida State University
Joan Bailey, University of South Florida
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SUBJECT: Assessment of the 2011-2016 SASFAA Long-Range Plan

The SASFAA Mission Statement,

“The Southern Association of Student Financial Aid administrators was founded in order to establish a community of members, who through the sharing of ideas and professional competencies and experiences would serve more ethically and effectively the diverse needs of students, parents, and institutions. The present and future existence of the Association continues to be based on this founding principle.

To facilitate this mission, the Association pledges to support professional communications in all areas concerned with the administration of student educational financing programs. The Association is committed to developing future leaders by actively involving its membership. To accomplish the goals set forth by the Association in a dynamic environment, the Southern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators offers personal and professional development opportunities and embraces sound principles and practices of aid administration.”

The SASFAA Vision Statement,

“The Southern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators is a dynamic organization serving practitioners, users and providers of student financial aid programs. This effort occurs in an environment of mutual response and support which encourages questions, discussion and shaping of ideas – thus promoting opportunities, equity and access in and to higher education.”

The charge given each year to the SASFAA Governance and Planning Committee (GAP) is to review the SASFAA Long Range Plan (LRP) and to ascertain to what extent the Board, State Presidents and Committee Chairs, acting on behalf of the membership, achieved the goals and objectives that they established for themselves in response to the 2011-2016 Long Range Plan.

This assessment followed the four major sections identified in the LRP: Organizational Structure; Communication/Collaboration; Professional Development and Finances. Organizational Structure included By-Laws, Board of Directors, Committees, Leadership, Membership and Policies and Procedures. Communications/Collaboration included a section on Legislative Relations.

The committee reviewed the goals and objectives established in the LRP and then evaluated the responses provided by the various Board members, state Presidents and Committee Chairs to determine how they met or did not meet their specific goals and objectives. This evaluation included a review of the activities conducted as well as an assessment as to whether goals and objectives were met. Because there are no objectives in the Long-Range Plan specific to the state presidents, the Past President sent them a survey and their responses were reviewed and provided to the incoming presidents-elect for their planning.

The final activity of the GAP committee includes the recommendations that are necessary to fully meet the goals and objectives set forth in the current LRP. Much progress was made in 2015-2016; however, the recommendations, if met in future years, will enhance the profile of SASFAA within the financial aid community and better serve the membership. This year, the recommendations were grouped at the end of each major Goal area. They can be found on pages 14, 17, 19-20 and 23.

The GAP committee appreciates the hard work of the Board, State Presidents and Committee Chairs and the SASFAA members who gave of their expertise, time and energy to make SASFAA a better Association. Sincere thanks to each of you for your efforts. We are a better Association because of you.

Note: Year in parenthesis below is the year the recommendation was initiated.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Bylaws

GOAL 1: The Bylaws will reflect the mission, vision and purpose of the Association and support the viability of the organization.

OBJECTIVE:

1.1 Review annually to ensure that the By-Laws continue to further the mission of the Association.

Activities:

By-Laws have been reviewed and updated. The 2015-2016 Board voted to recommend Bylaws changes to the membership to make the Vice President position a two-year term, to allow members of all classifications to be considered, when applicable, for service on SASFAA committees, and to change “mailings and materials” to “communications.” The membership approved the changes in February 2016.

Assessment:

The objective was completed but the current version of the Bylaws posted to the website does not include the change to reflect the new two-year term for the Vice President.

2014-15 GAP Recommendations:

1. (14-15) Update the SASFAA Policy and Procedure Manual to include language that continues to grant the Secretary access to posting updates to the website.
Evaluation: No response was provided and this language could not be located in the Policy and Procedures Manual.

Board of Directors

GOAL 2: The terms of the office for elected officers will be of sufficient length to ensure continuity and to complete official business while providing opportunities for new leadership.

OBJECTIVE:

2.1 Review the terms and composition of office of elected officers at least once every five years.

Activities:

The terms and composition of the elected officers were reviewed. The 2015-2016 Board voted to recommend a Bylaws change to the membership to make the Vice-President position a two-year term. The membership approved the change in February 2016.

Assessment:

The objective has been completed.

2014-15 GAP Recommendations:

1. (14-15) Consider making the Vice President's position a two-year term position. This would require a change to Article VI Section 3 of the By-Laws.
Evaluation: This recommendation was accomplished but the updated Bylaws still need to be posted to the SASFAA website.

Goal 3: The advice and assistance provided to the Board of Directors by committee chairs are such that the goals of the Association are readily accomplished, future leadership is developed and board activities remain fiscally responsible.

OBJECTIVE:

- 3.1 Assess the purpose and need for each committee when making committee chair/liaison appointments.
- 3.2 Committee goals and objectives should be developed annually to meet the goals of the SASFAA Long-Range Plan and incorporate recommendations from the most recent Governance and Planning (GAP) report.
- 3.3 Consider whether all committee chairs should be in attendance at all Board of Directors meetings, keeping in mind the need to develop future leadership for the Association yet maintaining the ability to conduct business at reasonable cost.
- 3.4 Select an appropriate mix of returning and new committee chairs to ensure that continuity of Association business and the development of future leadership.
- 3.5 Ensure that committee chair appointments, to the extent possible, reflect inclusiveness.
- 3.6 Review the Long-Range Plan annually to monitor progress toward goal attainment.
- 3.7 Evaluate and update comprehensively the Plan every five years.

Activities:

The President assessed the purpose and need for each committee when assignments were made for the 2015-16 year. One position was eliminated from the 2014-15 year and another Board member served in a dual capacity. While two task forces were also added, the chairs of those did not attend the Board meetings. Committee chairs were instructed to create goals and objectives based on information contained in the 2014-15 GAP report and the 2015-16 GAP spreadsheet. The November Board meeting was done using Go-To-Meeting. Board reports were completed to help measure progress towards meeting the Long Range Plan objectives. A new Long Range Plan was approved by the Board on February 6, 2016.

Assessment:

The President is to be commended for ensuring that each appointed position on the Board helped SASFAA meet its mission and furthered the goals and objectives of the Association. The completed GAP spreadsheet was thorough which made writing the GAP report much easier. While all committee chairs were invited to all Board meetings, the President conducted the November Board meeting using Go-To-Meeting. The GAP committee supports this effort to save money but also encourages in-person meetings when financially feasible to further develop future leadership within

the Association. Since the Board opted not to develop definitions of “new” and “returning” or “inclusive,” the GAP committee was not able to conduct an assessment of 3.4 or 3.5 objectives but since these terms are not used in the new Long Range Plan, there is no need for follow-up at this time. And, as indicated above, the new Long Range Plan was approved by the Board in time for its implementation on July 1, 2016.

2014-15 GAP Recommendations:

1. (14-15) Update the SASFAA Policy and Procedure Manual to indicate that the President must take the Long Range Plan and the Governance and Planning Committee’s recommendations in establishing the goals and objectives for the year, while adding personal goals that are approved by the Board of Directors. The goals should be given to each Board member no later than two weeks prior to the first Board meeting following the Transition meeting.

Evaluation: While it was noted in the GAP spreadsheet that this was completed in July 2015, the Policies & Procedures Manual that is currently posted to the SASFAA website does not include the addition of 5.2(h) that is referenced in the “Policies and Procedures Changes for 2015-2016” that was provided to the GAP Committee for its in-person meeting.

2. (14-15) Update the SASFAA Policy and Procedure Manual to include the President-Elect as an ex-officio member of the GAP Committee prior to taking the office of President. This will help in developing the goals and objectives for the year and in assessing the Board’s attainment of the Long Range Plan.

Evaluation: While both the current president-elect and the incoming president-elect did attend the GAP Committee meeting as observers, the change to the Policy and Procedure Manual could not be located.

3. (14-15) Update the SASFAA Policy and Procedure Manual to include the incoming President-Elect (elected at the most recent Annual Business Meeting) as an ex-officio member of the GAP Committee prior to taking the office of President-Elect. This will help in developing the goals and objectives for the year and in assessing the Board’s attainment of the Long Range Plan.

Evaluation: While both the current president-elect and the incoming president-elect did attend the GAP Committee meeting as observers, the change to the Policy and Procedure Manual could not be located. In the GAP spreadsheet, it indicates that this recommendation is addressed in the new Long Range Plan. However, it could not be found.

4. (14-15) Evaluate the 2014-15 Board positions to determine if all positions are necessary to continue. It appears the Board grew by three positions, which adds costs to the SASFAA, and it is recommended that these positions, and others, be reviewed to determine if those positions and costs are necessary. It’s important to note that Section 6.1.2 of the SASFAA Policy and Procedure Manual states that all Board liaisons not identified in this section must be approved by the Board.

Evaluation: The GAP Committee commends the President for following this recommendation.

5. (14-15) Update Section 6.1.3 of the SASFAA Policy and Procedure to include a sentence at the end of the paragraph stating, “Any special ad hoc committee the president desires to establish must be approved by the Board.”

Evaluation: The Policy & Procedures manual posted to the SASFAA website does not include this language but it is mentioned in the “Policies and Procedures Changes for 2015-2016” document that was provided to the GAP Committee before its in-person meeting that a motion to include it was approved by the Board.

6. (14-15) To accompany the next Long Range Plan, the GAP Committee recommends the entire process for assigning LRP goals and objectives be evaluated, as well as the annual evaluation process conducted by the GAP Committee. The current process is rather cumbersome, difficult to follow, and the GAP Committee feels it may not be necessary or appropriate for SASFAA to work on each objective every year.
Evaluation: This was addressed in the new Long Range Plan going into effect on July 1, 2016.
7. (14-15) There is no consistent definition of how “new” and “returning” is defined in the context of the appointment of committee chairs. It is advisable to create a standard definition and some metrics by which to measure this objective.
Evaluation: This was not accomplished by the Board as it decided at its first meeting that the GAP Committee should create the definitions and metrics. Since these terms are not used in the new Long Range Plan, there is no need for follow-up at this time.
8. (14-15) There is no consistent definition on what configuration would be considered inclusive from the perspective of the appointment of committee chairs. It is advisable to create a standard definition and some metrics by which to measure this objective.
Evaluation: This was not accomplished by the Board as it decided at its first meeting that the GAP Committee should create the definition and metrics. Since these terms are not used in the new Long Range Plan, there is no need for follow-up at this time.

Committees

GOAL 4: Committees should be of sufficient size and number and represent the diversity of the membership to accomplish the goals of the Association and to develop future leadership while being fiscally responsible.

OBJECTIVES:

- 4.1 Appoint committee members, to the extent possible, to reflect a practice of inclusiveness.
- 4.2 Ensure that committees with broadly-defined responsibilities such as legislative relations, professional development, and annual conference include at least one representative from each state in the region. Discuss appointments with the current state presidents at the time of selection.
- 4.3 Ensure that committees, unless otherwise specified in the By-Laws or by policy, function with the fewest number of members sufficient to accomplish the goals of that committee.
- 4.4 Ensure that the committee chair, with approval of the Board of Directors, makes every effort to identify an appropriate mix of returning and new members to assure the continuity of committee business and development of future leadership.
- 4.5 Pursue alternatives to on-site meetings whenever possible to keep costs at the most reasonable level. Such alternatives include conference calls, electronic mail and arranging committee meetings in conjunction with other meetings where some committee members would normally be in attendance.
- 4.6 Require that each committee provides a written annual summary of its activities so this information may be included in the president’s annual report.

Activities:

The President selected an appropriate mix of returning and new committee chairs to ensure the continuity of executive Board business and the development of future leadership.

The Conference, Legislative Relations and Professional Development committees each had representation from the nine SASFAA states. The state presidents were consulted as needed. Alternatives to in-person meetings were used when possible. Committees will provide written annual reports in June.

Assessment:

The President developed an effective committee structure and appointed qualified committee chairs. A total of two minority leaders were selected to serve as committee chairs for the 2015-2016 year. Ensuring inclusiveness can be difficult due to the number of available positions and in attempting to keep a balance of other factors (e.g., state and school type representation). Efforts were made to keep the cost of meetings as low as possible.

2014-2015 GAP Recommendations:

1. (13-14) Add language to the SASFAA Policy and Procedure Manual to specify that the President's Annual Report referenced in Section 5.2(f) be written and posted to the SASFAA website by June 30th.

Evaluation: This was completed and is included in the Policies and Procedures Manual posted to the SASFAA website.

2. (14-15) The President needs to provide the GAP Committee with a comprehensive listing of all SASFAA Board and committee members with demographic information that includes sector type, ethnicity, gender and years of experience. The list should be current and up-to-date and given to the GAP Committee at least 30 calendar days before the GAP Committee meets. It is the responsibilities of the committee chairs to have each of the committee members complete this document.

Evaluation: This was completed.

3. (14-15) There is no consistent definition on what configuration would be considered inclusive from the perspective of the appointment of committee members. It is advisable to create a standard definition and some metrics by which to measure this objective.

Evaluation: This was not accomplished by the Board as it decided at its first meeting that the GAP Committee should create the definition and metrics. Since these terms are not used in the new Long Range Plan, there is no need for follow-up at this time.

4. (14-15) There is no consistent definition of how "new" and "returning" is defined in the context of appointing committee members. It is advisable to create a standard definition and some metrics by which to measure this objective.

Evaluation: This was not accomplished by the Board as it decided at its first meeting that the GAP Committee should create the definitions and metrics. Since these terms are not used in the new Long Range Plan, there is no need for follow-up at this time.

Leadership

GOAL 5: Members who possess leadership aspirations and capabilities will be identified and developed for significant involvement within the Association.

OBJECTIVES:

- 5.1 Identify and finance, when financially feasible, one individual annually, other than the President-Elect or Treasurer, to attend the NASFAA Leadership Conference if never attended previously.
- 5.2 Finance, when financially feasible and when needed, the SASFAA portion of the NASFAA inter-regional visitation program.
- 5.3 Provide recognition of state and regional leaders.
- 5.4 Establish a SASFAA leadership workshop, held biannually for developing state member officers and leaders, which may be held at a state conference or the SASFAA annual conference. Efforts should be undertaken to track the effectiveness of the leadership workshop in leading to individuals holding leadership positions within the Association or its member-state associations.
- 5.5 Provide a forum at the SASFAA conference for recognition of any state project(s) submitted to NASFAA.
- 5.6 Provide a scholarship to award to a need-based student in order to recognize the leadership contributions of the SASFAA President to the Association. The scholarship will be awarded at the conclusion of the Past-President year.

Activities:

No one other than the current President-Elect was funded to attend the NASFAA Leadership Conference this year. However, SASFAA continued to provide monetary support to each of the nine states for an inter-state visitation program. NASFAA no longer has an inter-regional visitation program. Recognition of state and regional leaders was done at the annual conference luncheon and banquet events. The SASFAA Leadership Workshop was done in 2014. No states received NASFAA awards last year. A scholarship will be provided to the outgoing Past President at the June Transition Board meeting.

Assessment:

The inter-state visitation program, the mentoring activity at the annual conference, and the sessions at the annual conference (including the leadership track) about volunteering were effective ways that SASFAA continues to identify and develop future leaders.

2014-15 GAP Recommendations:

1. (13-14) Implement a leadership workshop track during the SASFAA conference. Have seasoned professionals conduct sessions on professional development and leadership (how to move to the next level in your career). Accommodate two or three progressive leadership sessions with the same audience in all sessions (over 2 or 3 days).
Evaluation: There were FA 101, Professional Development and Leadership tracks offered at the 2016 annual conference. In addition, there were two NASFAA U pre-con sessions and a Mid-Level pre-con workshop. There were also sessions presented on volunteerism at the

state level and national levels. The NASFAA President conducted a session on Life and Work Balance.

2. (14-15) If financially feasible SASFAA should have a Management Institute in 15-16, as the last one was held in the fall of 2008.

Evaluation: The Management Institute was held in Orlando, FL October 7-9, 2015. It was designed to provide facilitated group work following each of the presentations.

3. (14-15) Per the Long Range Planning Chair, "Although I agree that we should do projects that could be submitted for a NASFAA Award, submitting a project just for the sake of submitting one does not make sense. We need to carefully develop an innovative project, gather data and submit for an award when we feel the project is significant and it has been thoroughly analyzed to determine that it achieved what expected outcome." The GAP Committee recommends this requirement be reviewed in the Long Range Plan.

Evaluation: This requirement was not included in the new Long Range Plan as a specific item. The GAP Committee supports this decision.

Membership

GOAL 6: The membership of the Association should represent the composition of financial aid professionals in the region.

OBJECTIVES:

- 6.1 Seek to increase membership.
- 6.2 Undertake a review of the membership categories for appropriateness at least once every five years.
- 6.3 Conduct a survey at least once every five years to determine membership needs. The survey should be scheduled two years before the effective date of the next 5-year long-range plan.
- 6.4 Increase membership involvement in activities of the Association.
- 6.5 Monitor the persistence rate of members and analyze the reasons for discontinuing membership.
- 6.6 Incorporate ideas which surface from the membership survey.
- 6.7 Provide mentoring opportunities for new members.
- 6.8 Provide membership services so the needs and interests of all sectors are addressed fairly and equitably.

Activities:

Membership solicitations were sent out on the listserv, the states' listservs, the SASFAA Nine News and Facebook. The membership categories were reviewed at the November 2014 Board meeting. The membership committee reported that membership involvement (defined by participation/registration in SASFAA activities over the year) has far exceeded the prior three membership years (by 200+) by the information provided by the Membership Chair on the GAP spreadsheet. The membership committee began a thorough monthly data collection process to ensure that data is available for persistence analysis from year to year. It was also mentioned that the membership committee plans to do a survey near year-end to obtain feedback from the membership on the association's most recent activities. The 2015-2016 membership application provided the opportunity for new members to indicate interest in mentoring opportunities. Mentors were then assigned to the mentees.

Assessment:

The total number of members as of April 9, 2016 was 1294. Numbers for this year could still increase when the June SASFAA New Aid Officer's Workshop occurs. The Membership Committee is to be commended for its implementation of a more effective mentoring program which included a get-together at the annual conference as well as the collection of additional information to meet the specific needs of mentees. The Membership Committee should also be commended for providing monthly membership statistics to the Executive Board.

2014-15 GAP Recommendations:

1. (13-14) If the Mentorship Program is continued, then assign mentors prior to the annual conference and hold a reception or event at the annual conference to connect the mentor to the mentee keeping in mind that a new SASFAA member is not necessarily a new aid officer.
Evaluation: The Membership Committee more than met the intent of this recommendation.
2. (13-14) Consider sending out at least one direct mailing of membership materials to Financial Aid Offices at colleges and universities where there are no SASFAA members.
Evaluation: This was not completed.
3. (14-15) It would be beneficial for SASFAA to create some metrics to assist in evaluating the involvement of SASFAA members in association activities (Objective 6.4).
Evaluation: The Membership Committee has established a process to regularly run/track membership data. SASFAA's electronic registration process for membership and events allows for the evaluation of member involvement in association activities.
4. (14-15) The Membership Chair recommends that this position and the Treasurer work closely to reconcile monthly so data is available and problems or errors can be corrected in order to monitor the persistence rate of members and analyze the reasons for discontinuing membership (Objective 6.5)
Evaluation: While it was reported that this task was not accomplished this year, the Treasurer believes that the reconciliation of membership records should be handled by the Treasurer-Elect so that this position can become familiar with the maintenance of these records in Wild Apricot.
5. (14-15) The GAP Committee recommends that any surveys and/or forms referenced by Board members and/or committee chairs in their report be included in the information disseminated to the GAP Committee.
Evaluation: The GAP Committee was provided with surveys that were conducted by the Communications & Outreach Committee as well as the Sponsorship Committee.

Policies and Procedures

GOAL 7: Policies and procedures are accurate and complete in order to provide consistent Associational direction.

OBJECTIVES:

- 7.1 Establish a procedure to ensure that the policies and procedures are accurate and complete and that the Association complies with them. The review should include an analysis of the minutes of each Board Meeting to be sure policy/procedures approvals have been incorporated.

- 7.2 Require that officers and committee chairs review and update policies and procedures under their purview.
- 7.3 Recommendations for policies and procedures changes shall be approved by the SASFAA Board of Directors.
- 7.4 The Secretary shall incorporate policies and procedures as they are approved into the Policy and Procedure Manual.

Activities:

The Secretary and President provided the GAP Committee with a great summary of all policy and procedure changes that the Board approved throughout the 2015-16 year. The minutes for the board meetings have been reviewed to ensure that approved changes to the policies and procedures have been incorporated into this document. The Policies and Procedures document on the SASFAA website is dated 3/28/16.

Assessment:

A review was done comparing the policy and procedure changes outlined in the document provided by the Secretary and Treasurer to the Policy & Procedures Manual posted to the SASFAA website and discrepancies have been noted in the appropriate sections of this GAP Report. The Board members and Committee Chairs who reviewed and updated the sections of the SASFAA Policy and Procedure Manual under their purview should be commended. It is very important to keep the SASFAA Policy and Procedure Manual up-to-date and if a quick review is done each year it will be a manageable task.

2014-15 GAP Recommendations

1. (14-15) The Long Range Planning Chair made the following recommendation and GAP suggests this be completed, “Policy and Procedure change to be submitted for June Board Meeting- 6.10 objective b. review annual year-end reports to assess committee and Board effectiveness in meeting goals and objectives and to ensure consistency with the mission of the Association. SASFAA does not have a LRP Committee every year so this needs to be struck from this section as it should be under the Past-President for GAP reporting.”
Evaluation: While it was reported that a new Long-Range Plan has been completed, section 6.10, objective b still remains in the Policy and Procedures Manual and needs to be deleted since there is not a Long Range Planning Committee each year and this objective relates more to the GAP Committee and is already addressed in its section 6.7.
2. (14-15) The Membership Chair reported that Policies and Procedures will be reviewed in light of the February 2015 Bylaw changes with recommendations presented at the Transition Board meeting, and GAP suggests this be completed.
Evaluation: The Policy and Procedures Manual was updated to reflect the February 2015 bylaws changes with respect to the membership categories.
3. (14-15) The Vice President stated, “The Summer NAOW guide is rather outdated. The goal is to update this prior to the end of the year and submit to the 15-16 VP,” and GAP suggests this be completed.
Evaluation: It was reported that the Vice President is working on this task but the version of the guide on the SASFAA website is June 2015. However, some of the dates in this posted guide do seem to be out-of-date.
4. (14-15) It is recommended to provide a list of all policy and procedure changes made throughout the year listed in the Goals and Objectives Spreadsheet.

Evaluation: The President and Secretary are to be commended for providing a list of all policy and procedures to the GAP Committee before its in-person meeting.

5. (13-14) At the June transition meeting when the new Board prepares for their year of service beginning in July, set aside time for Board members to review their section of the P&P and make recommendations for any updates or changes to the new Board to be voted upon at the next Board Meeting if necessary.

Evaluation: This was completed in June 2015.

6. (14-15) The GAP Committee recommends that the SASFAA Secretary review all of the 2014-15 minutes to ensure all Policy and Procedure changes approved by the Board are made, and then upload the current version to the SASFAA website as the October 2014 version posted there now is out-of-date.

Evaluation: It was reported that this was completed in July 2015 but it seems that not all policy and procedures changes approved after then have been incorporated into the version posted to the website.

GOAL 8: Maintain the records of the Association.

OBJECTIVES:

- 8.1 Establish procedures to maintain and archive the records of the Association at the close of each fiscal year.
- 8.2 Review periodically the methods for maintaining accessibility, retrieval, security and the location for archival of records.
- 8.3 Ensure the accessibility and continuity of the Association's records.

Activities:

No new procedures were developed for the maintenance and archiving of the Association's records. They continue to be kept on a jump drive which has also been backed up to a share drive on the Secretary's University's network. There are several prior years of Association records that were scanned by an external company and placed on a separate portable storage drive.

Assessment:

While a process is in place to maintain the records of the Association, the GAP Committee believes it needs to be more consistent and better secured.

2014-15 GAP Recommendations:

1. (13-14) Follow procedures for maintaining and archiving the records of the association and place them in the P&P Manual. This includes updating Objective 8.1 when the next Long Range Plan is developed.

Evaluation: Procedures were followed but there seem to be questions about whether SASFAA still contracts with Document Systems, Inc. to help archive our records. Objective 8.1 was removed from the new Long-Range Plan.

2. (14-15) The GAP Committee recommends that the Long Range Planning Committee review objective 8.1 and make a revision, as it's not necessary to "establish" procedures on an annual basis. The procedures are already established, but can be reviewed.

Evaluation: Objective 8.1 was removed from the new Long Range Plan.

2015-16 Organizational Structure GAP Recommendations

1. Archive prior versions of the Bylaws on the SASFAA website (at least going forward) so that a historical perspective can be maintained.

Evaluation:

2. Include both the current and the incoming presidents-elect as observers at the GAP Committee meeting.

Evaluation:

3. Update the Policies and Procedures Manual (Section 6.7) to define the structure of the GAP Committee – chaired by Past President, preference for two returning committee members and two new committee members, and inclusion of both current and incoming presidents-elect as observers.

Evaluation:

4. Add the GAP Committee as a standing committee (Section 6.1.1) due to its importance in continual evaluation of the Association's activities.

Evaluation:

5. Change the name of the committee throughout the Policies and Procedures Manual to be Governance and Planning Committee to match how it is referenced in the Bylaws.

Evaluation:

6. At the discretion of the incoming president-elect, the GAP Committee supports the use of SASFAA funds to support the SASFAA president-elect participating in an inter-regional exchange when the other regions are also willing to participate.

Evaluation:

7. To help promote membership and participation in SASFAA activities, follow up with NASFAA to obtain the names and contact information for those individuals who participated in the New & Aspiring Aid Directors Pathway.

Evaluation:

8. Touch base with each financial aid office at colleges and universities where there are no SASFAA members.

Evaluation:

9. The GAP Committee supports the recommendation made by the Treasurer that the Treasurer-Elect should be responsible for the monthly reconciliation of membership records.

Evaluation:

10. Section 6.10, objective b still remains in the Policy and Procedures Manual and needs to be deleted since there is not a Long Range Planning Committee each year and this objective relates more to the GAP Committee and is already addressed in its section 6.7.

Evaluation:

11. Explore the possibility of tracking volunteers and the committees they served on through the membership database (Wild Apricot).

Evaluation:

COMMUNICATION/COLLABORATION

Communication

Goal 09: Facilitate alliances between and among various sectors and members of the financial aid community.

OBJECTIVES:

- 9.1 Work with all sectors of the region's financial aid community to ensure representation and participation in all Association programs and activities.
- 9.2 Serve as a link with and between various sectors of the Association, and as a link between the state associations and the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators.

Activities:

This was accomplished by ensuring as many sectors as possible were represented on committees and also by reaching out to everyone in SASFAA to gather information for the Long Range Plan. Between the President, President-Elect, and Past President all of the states will have a SASFAA representative at their conference. The Past President served as SASFAA's regional voting member on the NASFAA Board. The President served as an observer of the NASFAA board this year and was a voice for SASFAA 2015-16.

Assessment:

The actions were appropriate but it was noted that participation from the for-profit sector is still lacking.

2014-15 GAP Recommendations:

No recommendations.

Communications/Collaboration

Goal 10: Disseminate quality information to enhance communications among members in a timely and cost-efficient manner.

OBJECTIVES:

- 10.1 Improve frequency and quality of communication with members.
- 10.2 Address a full range of issues, ranging from policies to daily operations.
- 10.3 Provide the SASFAA president's annual report to the membership in accordance with Section 1, Article 7 of the By-Laws.
- 10.4 Use technologies to improve communications with the membership.
- 10.5 Employ marketing/communications strategies to focus information to various segments of the membership and develop outreach materials to market SASFAA effectively to various constituencies.
- 10.6 Develop a volunteer process and communicate it clearly. Consider creating "SASFAA Kits" on committee structure, programs, service, etc.

Activities:

The Communications and Outreach Chair has done an excellent job at frequently communicating with SASFAA members. The President communicated with the membership via the listserv,

SASF AA Nine News, Facebook and individually. The President’s Annual Report will be presented to the membership by the June 30, 2016 deadline. A solicitation for volunteers was sent out periodically during spring 2015 to the membership and the President sent the final list to the appropriate board members for consideration of committee appointments.

Assessment:

Section 8.1.1 of the SASFAA Policy and Procedure Manual outlines who is responsible for submitting information to SASFAA Nine News on a monthly basis. This responsibility is shared by all members of the Board, not just the Communications and Outreach Chair. Many postings did occur during the year, but not according to the prescribed schedule. Information is being communicated in many ways, but with the popularity of other social sites (e.g., Facebook, etc.), it would be beneficial for SASFAA to discuss the most effective ways to use all of these outlets to lessen duplication but increase involvement.

2014-15 GAP Recommendations:

1. (14-15) Consider seeking volunteers skilled in marketing and/or publications to help develop pieces SASFAA can use on the website, on Facebook or to send to institutions.
Evaluation: This was not accomplished but a volunteer did help provide design work for the conference theme.
2. (14-15) Information is being communicated to SASFAA members in many ways, but with the popularity of other social sites (e.g., Facebook, etc.), it would be beneficial for SASFAA to discuss the most effective ways to use all of these outlets (e.g., SASFAA listserv, SASFAA Nine News, Facebook, etc.).
Evaluation: The Communications and Outreach chair did conduct a survey of all active 2015-16 members via the listserv on 4/1/16. It was reported that results will be collected and distributed to the Board for planning in 2016-17. The GAP Committee was provided a copy of the survey results.

Legislative Relations

GOAL 11: Apprise members of legislative issues affecting the profession, educate members of alternative approaches, encourage involvement on issues and advocate positions when reasonable consensus exists.

OBJECTIVES:

- 11.1 Promote the SASFAA region’s role in the higher education community.
- 11.2 Increase SASFAA members’ awareness of the potential effect and outcome of legislative issues, proposals and actions.

Activities:

The Legislative Relations Committee members and all SASFAA members were provided regular updates of Congressional activities and activities of other Washington, DC-based professional associations and research organizations. The committee also reviewed and was given the opportunity to develop position papers to be used for a briefing document to be shared with Congress during the SASFAA Hill Day activity.

Assessment:

The Hill visits conducted were deemed successful. The GAP Committee acknowledges that advice was provided that Legislative Relations Committee members need to be knowledgeable of issues, well-read, willing to devote the time needed for the committee's work, recognize that not all issues can be dealt with year to year and embrace the concept of reasonable consensus in developing and advocating legislative positions. For the past two years, SASFAA has conducted our own Hill Visit Day without another association. This allows us to advocate on behalf of our members and students in our region. The Legislative Relations Committee encourages continuation of having a SASFAA Hill Day without another association present.

2014-15 GAP Recommendations:

1. (14-15) Distribute articles to the SASFAA membership on matters of concern from the Legislative Relations Committee on an as needed basis.
Evaluation: This was completed.
2. (14-15) Continue to conduct Hill visits, whether they are joint with other associations or an independent SASFAA activity.
Evaluation: This was completed.

2015-2016 Communication/Collaboration GAP Recommendations

1. Continue to encourage representation from all sectors in all Association activities.
Evaluation:
2. Strengthen the communication and process of the SASFAA Nine News articles schedule through the President-Elect workshop, operational calendar and Board meetings.
Evaluation:
Evaluation:
3. Develop a legislative guide for SASFAA's advocacy efforts – structure of Hill visits, definition of reasonable consensus, etc. and make sure all Legislative Relations Committee state selected members understand their responsibilities.
Evaluation:
4. Seek volunteers skilled in marketing and/or publications to help develop pieces that SASFAA can use to promote the Association as an organization to join.
Evaluation:

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional Development

GOAL 12: The professional growth and competencies of members are addressed by offering workshops, seminars, meetings and other training opportunities.

OBJECTIVES:

- 12.1 Determine the training and professional development needs of members, recognizing categorical distinctions among members such as experience, institutional type, constituencies served and level of responsibility.
- 12.2 Continue to develop and offer an annual conference which integrates observations gathered from conference evaluations, membership and professional development surveys, and consideration of current issues and educational trends and the perceived need of members.
- 12.3 Provide such a conference which incorporates cost-saving measures to encourage participation, emphasizes content, and is self-supported.
- 12.4 Provide a varied conference agenda incorporating legislative, regulatory, public policy and operational topics, as well as, competencies in management and human relations.
- 12.5 Foster collaborative training and professional development opportunities between state members, other regional associations and NASFAA.
- 12.6 Invite and plan interactions and discussions with higher education associations such as SACUBO, SACRAO and COHEO.
- 12.7 Recognize, encourage, and support the development of informal networking strategies for sharing information and locating job opportunities.
- 12.8 Encourage worthy and thought-provoking research, publications and presentations by members.
- 12.9 Recognize and provide opportunities for pre- and post-conference professional development experiences.
- 12.10 Continue to provide an annual, comprehensive training workshop to provide new aid administrators with the basic framework of knowledge to administer student financial assistance programs.
- 12.11 Identify experienced members to serve as faculty for planning and conducting professional development programs of the Association.
- 12.12 Choose training sites which are centrally located within the SASFAA region, accessible to attendees, affordable, and educationally suitable for the intended participants.
- 12.13 Offer periodic opportunities specifically for experienced aid administrators to grow in leadership and management.

Activities:

Training opportunities included the Management Institute in October 2015 (Orlando, FL), a Veterans Webinar in November 2015, the pre-conference workshops (NASFAA U for Cost of Attendance and Professional Judgment and the Mid-Level Symposium) in February 2016 prior to the Annual Conference (Greensboro, NC) and the New Aid Officer's Workshop scheduled for June 2016 (Jacksonville, AL). The annual conference included a great mix of sessions, including the new Lunch & Learn ones conducted by vendors and overall was kept well within budget.

Assessment:

The Vice President and President should be commended on the training opportunities offered. Multiple training levels for multiple levels of experience were provided throughout the year. While the conference expenses were almost \$25,000 under budget, the conference registrations were lower than estimated. However, if you just look at the Annual Meeting revenue and the Annual Meeting Program expenses, the expenses were only \$1,765.83 over and that does not include the Sponsorship income. The Conference Committee should be commended for their tight control of the budget. Senior administrators were involved in the planning and implementation of the Management Institute (Brad Barnett, Zita Barree, Amy Berrier, Heather Boutell, Michael Morgan and Brent Tener), the Mid-Level Symposium prior to the annual conference (Dottie Davidson, Sean Johnson, Michael Morgan, Bill Spiers and Forrest Stuart) and the New Aid Officer's Workshop instructors have an average of 17.36 years of financial aid experience. As of the date of the GAP Committee meeting, registrations for the June New Aid Officer's Workshop were below 80. If the number of participants remains below 100 and/or continues to decline, then it would be advisable to re-evaluate the frequency and scope of the workshop.

2014-15 GAP Recommendation:

1. (14-15) Provide clarification on what is meant by an annual conference being self-supporting. Does this include conference registration fees and expenses charged to the conference line item of the budget only? Or, does it include a portion of sponsor support? Or, are there some other items included.

Evaluation: Since no action occurred in time to be applied to the 2016 annual conference, the GAP Committee recommends deferring this item to next year when the 5-year financial plan is developed. As noted above, though, in just reviewing the conference income and expenses line items, the Committee feels that the conference met the spirit of being self-supporting this year.

2. (14-15) The GAP Committee recommends reviewing Objective 12.8, as the research/publication piece is not realistic based on the configuration of our membership.
Evaluation: This was eliminated in the new Long Range Plan that goes into effect on July 1, 2016.

3. (14-15) Now that the annual conference is being held at more SASFAA states than when the charity rotation schedule was created, it would be beneficial for Board to revisit the schedule and determine if it is time to make changes. Whatever is decided should be included in the SASFAA Policy and Procedure Manual and Conference Handbook.

Evaluation: The Board decided no changes were needed at this time.

2015-16 Professional Development GAP Recommendations

1. Continue to provide multiple types of training opportunities for different experience levels.
Evaluation:
2. Continue to explore ways to involve the vendors/sponsors in the conference program, tying them to sponsorship levels. These would be opportunities for product placement.
Vendors/sponsors should be allowed to do non-product sessions if they co-present with a school member.
Evaluation:
3. Continue collaboration between states, SASFAA and NASFAA.
Evaluation:
4. For any of the NASFAA Core training that SASFAA provides, follow up with those participants who never take the credential test to find out why they are not taking advantage of this free offer.
Evaluation:
5. Implement a plan to start soliciting for New Aid Officer's Workshop sites earlier.
Evaluation:
6. Request that the Professional Development Committee determine why attendance has been lower for the New Aid Officer's workshop in the recent past.
Evaluation:

FINANCES

Finances

GOAL 13: Fiscal integrity will be ensured.

OBJECTIVES:

- 13.1 Adhere to the practices outlined in the SASFAA Guide to Financial Management.
- 13.2 To ensure adequate organizational reserves are available, a zero based budget should be developed and maintained.
- 13.3 Review the SASFAA Guide to Financial Management annually to ensure the continuation of sound financial practices.

Activities:

The Budget and Finance Committee and Treasurer followed the practices of the SASFAA Guide to Financial Management. It was updated throughout the year. A section was added to outline the duties of the Budget and Finance Chair and the table of contents was updated to accommodate this change and the addition of the Treasurer-Elect position. There was continuous monitoring of the investment accounts and the mix of short-term, long-term and operating accounts. A zero-based budget was developed for the 2015-16 year. Expenses are being closely monitored as there has been concern about the lower than projected income so far.

Assessment:

The practices of the SASFAA Guide to Financial Management as updated on March 16, 2016 were followed. A zero-based budget was submitted for approval by deadlines provided in the Guide to Financial Management. The most recent Guide to Financial Management is posted to the SASFAA website under the Finances section.

2014-15 GAP Recommendation:

1. (13-14) It would be beneficial to update The Guide to Financial Management with a section entitled Guidelines and Procedures for the Budget and Finance Chair (similar to the Treasurer section).
Evaluation: This was completed.
2. (13-14) The Guide to Financial Management should be updated to specifically state that every effort should be made to ensure that either the Treasurer or Budget and Finance Chair have board experience in either of these two positions.
Evaluation: This was completed.
3. (14-15) An updated budget should be provided to the GAP Committee 30 calendar days before the annual GAP meeting.
Evaluation: This was completed.
4. (14-15) Outline the duties of the Treasurer and pending Treasurer-Elect positions, as the first Treasurer-Elect will be elected in February 2016, to take office in July 2016. The SASFAA Policy and Procedure Manual and Guide to Financial Management should be updated prior to the Treasurer-Elect taking office.
Evaluation: This was completed.

GOAL 14: The future financial stability of the Association is provided through careful and regular planning and evaluation.

OBJECTIVES:

- 14.1 Determine the appropriateness of fees access for dues, the annual conference, workshops and ancillary services including vendors, at least every five years.
- 14.2 Provide for the establishment, maintenance, investment and monitoring of an Associational reserve fund which is sufficient to cover at least one year's operating expenses and any outstanding contractual obligations.
- 14.3 Monitor, review and revise as necessary, the Association's investment strategy for positioning the Associations finances.
- 14.4 Review routinely all risk and liabilities affecting cash management and contractual obligations.
- 14.5 Determine the appropriate cash balance to be brought forward annually.
- 14.6 Incorporate the financial impact of vendor sponsorship in the budget planning process annually.

Activities:

Fees and sponsorship levels were reviewed before the annual budget was established. Investments (short-term and long-term) were monitored closely to assure that reserves were met. The Budget & Finance Chair monitored the investments monthly and met with the Advisory Solutions representative along with the President and Treasurer to ensure that the short-term investments were allocated properly. The President set a goal of establishing a Budget Planning Guide to be a part of the Guide to Financial Management. This guide is in draft form awaiting review and approval by the Board at its June Transition meeting.

Assessment:

A review of the April 26, 2016 Budget vs. Actuals and the Balance Sheet shows funds sufficient to cover one year operating expenses. Board minutes from February 2016 show current assets sufficient to cover outstanding liabilities as well.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Budget} + \text{Liabilities} &= \$413,776 + \$186,067 = \$599,843 \\ \text{Total Current Assets} &= \$892,696 \end{aligned}$$

The Budget & Finance Chair's report included a statement that the market has been very volatile this year and that has produced concern with the budgeted income from the investments. The Budget and Finance Chair also continued to provide a detailed liability assessment with her Board reports.

2014-15 GAP Recommendations:

- 1. (14-15) Review Objective 14.5 ("Determine the appropriate cash balance to be brought forward annually") in the Long Range Plan and modify the language. SASFAA is required to have a balanced (zero-based budget) at the beginning the year and operate this way during the year, so there generally isn't a plan to carry forward a cash balance on an annual basis.
Evaluation: the new Long Range Plan that goes into effect on July 1, 2016 does not include this language anymore so no action is needed at this time.
- 2. (14-15) Review sponsorship levels at the June 2015 Transition meeting.
Evaluation: This was completed.

2015-16 Finances GAP Recommendations

1. The duties outlined for the Treasurer and Treasurer-Elect in the Guide to Financial Management should be reviewed towards the end of the 2016-17 year and any updates needed should be made to the Guide prior to the 2017-18 year.

Evaluation:

2. A committee/task force should be formed to develop a five-year financial plan.

Evaluation:

3. The sponsorship levels for the upcoming year should be approved by the current Board each year due to timing issues with these companies' budgets and calendar commitments.

Evaluation: