Connecticut State Colleges & Universities

Verification Gateway Provides a Reliable Verification Portal to Enable Steady Enrollment

There's a good reason 85,000 students call Connecticut State Colleges & Universities (CSCU) their home. Students can choose from CSCU's 12 community colleges, four universities, or its online degree program. Plus, CSCU has the lowest tuition cost in the state, making it the leader in higher education. More than 300,000 degrees and certificates have been awarded since CSCU's inception in 1983 from all discipline studies, ranging from liberal arts, manufacturing, and nursing degrees.

Enabling Steady Enrollment

Higher education continues to face enrollment obstacles. To further the issue, COVID-19 has created an increase in financial burdens resulting in a downward spiral in student enrollment, especially among incoming freshmen who are uncertain on how to adjust their plans or unwilling to pay a higher tuition for online classes.

Despite the challenges, CSCU remains diligent in keeping enrollment steady. Using Verification Gateway (VG) to complete verifications sooner so students can plan accordingly plays a role in their success. With a 29 percent average decrease in verifications completed 14 days prior to semester and a 38 percent average decrease in verifications completed 7 days prior to semester, more of those verifications were completed earlier resulting in a 15% average increase in packaging rate by the first day of classes. More students receiving their aid sooner equals a higher potential for enrollment.

"One of the biggest challenges CSCU students faced during COVID-19 was the transition to distant learning and the technological requirements that went with it," said Steve McDowell, Associate Vice President, Financial Aid Operations and Title IV Compliance. "With this challenge, we were fortunate to have VG already in place because students could safely complete verifications from home. It was one less thing they had to worry about."

CHALLENGE

Steve McDowell and the financial aid team needed a verification platform that could handle CSCU's larger student population and higher verifications numbers. The solution needed to be efficient for students and families and provide workload relief for the financial aid staff.

SOLUTION

Selecting Verification Gateway allowed verifications to be processed more efficiently; created a user-friendly experience for students and families; reduced foot traffic and call volume in the financial aid office; and helped drive enrollment.

RESULTS

- Reduced call volume
- Two-day turnaround of verified records
- 50% average decrease in time from first ISIR to verified
- 28% average increase in completed verifications
- 29% average decrease in verifications completed 14 days prior to semester
- 38% average decrease in verifications completed 7 days prior to semester
- 15% average increase in packaging rate by first day of classes

Financial Aid Team Pursued New Verification Solution to Tackle Volume Challenges

CSCU's large student population equals a large number of selected verifications burdening the financial aid office with manual verification checks resulting in less time being available to work directly with students. Between all of the institutions, about 40,000 students are selected for verification annually and more than 28,000 are from the community colleges alone. McDowell and his team knew they needed to find a solution to alleviate the pressure on the team with verification so they could turn their focus to needed student counseling throughout the system. They also knew more verifications completed sooner offered the potential to increase enrollment.

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Reduced Foot Traffic and Call Volume in Financial Aid Office

When the financial aid team implemented VG for the 2018-19 aid year, they quickly experienced some relief for the team. Verification Gateway from Inceptia is an automated online platform that streamlines federal verification processing for students and schools by offering interview-style questions, simple and secure document collection, complete reporting and personal interaction when needed.

The most immediate result was the significant decrease in student foot traffic and call volume. Inceptia's team handled all verification matters, opening up the time for the financial aid staff to engage with students in different capacities.

"The financial scene behind higher education is complex and overwhelming at times," McDowell said. "It was a welcomed relief for Inceptia to take over verifications so our team could counsel students on loan options and short and long-term financial goals."

CSCU

PARTNER PROFILE

Connecticut State Colleges & Universities (CSCU) is in Hartford, Connecticut and comprised of 12 community colleges, four universities, and an online degree program. Approximately 85,000 students call CSCU their home with more than 90 percent of students from Connecticut. The school offers a range of undergraduate and graduate degree programs that help students achieve their personal and career goals as well as contribute to the economic growth of Connecticut.

Verification Processing Time Faster than Ever

Processing time was no longer consumed by cumbersome back-and-forth questions, paper overload, or delayed responses. Since VG's inception, CSCU has seen significant results: a two-day turnaround time; 28 percent average increase in completed verifications; and 50 percent average decrease in the time it had been taking from first ISIR received to verified.

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Talk to Us

To learn more about Verification Gateway, contact your Business Development representative or visit inceptia.org.

We uncomplicate financial aid.

Inceptia is a nonprofit organization committed to innovative, effective, and uncomplicated solutions for verification, financial aid management, smart borrowing, financial education, and repayment wellness.