

Success Story: Barstow Reduces Cycle Times by Implementing StudentForms

Higher ed underwent a rapid and unexpected move to digital in 2020 – from learning to administration services.

Understandably, this created significant roadblocks for financial aid teams that simply were not prepared. Barstow Community College in Barstow, Calif., met these challenges by embracing technology solutions that reduce friction for students and staff alike. Heather Minehart, Dean of Enrollment Management and Services at Barstow shared her experience launching StudentForms in 2020.



The Pain Points of Manual Processes

Before partnering with CampusLogic, the financial aid office at Barstow Community College was entirely manual and paper-based. The team used traditional methods that caused friction and stress for students and staff. Heather testified to the time her staff spent just to complete their data download processes and verifications. It meant her team was often overwhelmed: spending hours struggling to get caught up, especially at the beginning of each semester.

StudentForms: The Pandemic Pivot

At the beginning of the pandemic, Heather had to prepare for the possibility that her team—and their financial aid services—would move remote. At this point, students were still coming into the office every day to drop off physical paperwork. Mere weeks after Heather was introduced to CampusLogic, she received notice that the entire university would begin working remotely. Barstow initially planned to launch StudentForms during the 2021-2022 school year, but the unexpectedly quick pandemic-driven transition sped up that timeline. The Barstow financial aid and IT teams were already working with CampusLogic on training and implementation, which allowed the financial aid team to quickly overhaul from manual to digital processes in a matter of weeks.

StudentForms is an integral part of CampusLogic's Student Financial Success platform. It reduces the need for in-office visits and simplifies verification, professional judgments and SAP appeals. The digital platform allows financial aid professionals to manage tasks, review files and automate student communications via text and email. Students have access to conveniently upload documents from any mobile device, and the financial aid process is always in motion.

Onboarding In Record Time

Onboarding an entirely new platform mid-year was terrifying for Heather. She and her team were planning to test extensively and conduct several practice sessions to get more familiar with StudentForms. Heather expected a months' long onboarding and implementation process. Instead, her team needed it to happen in a matter of weeks.

Instead of the rocky experience she initially feared, Heather's entire team was able to lean on unlimited access to their dedicated customer success manager from CampusLogic to quickly identify issues and find solutions. Heather described her experience working with the CampusLogic team, "If I ran into an issue and my staff could not figure it out, it was as simple

as reaching out to CampusLogic and you guys came back and said ‘Oh, here’s the answer.’” This seamless coordination and access saved Heather and her staff time that may have otherwise been spent troubleshooting internally.

Enhancing The Student Experience with StudentForms

Ease of use for students was especially important in the transition. Heather initially planned a large student rollout of the CampusLogic platform, which included workshops for students and extensive communication. But with students off-campus and an expedited timeline, those plans were shelved.

The StudentForms portal is available to students 24/7 from any device. It includes clear and quick instruction for students and parents, allowing almost any task to be completed within minutes. Heather noted, “The fact that we were able to turn StudentForms on without a rollout speaks volumes to how student-friendly the product is.”

Students already face enough obstacles along their paths to a degree. Financial aid process barriers are often what keep students from enrolling and persisting in higher education. Reducing the friction they encounter by making the process intuitive clears a pathway for them.

Improving Barstow’s Cycle Times

StudentForms is not just an easier, streamlined verification process for students—it cuts down review time for financial aid staff, too. Manually handling student paperwork creates backlogs of students who have submitted their documents but are still left waiting to be verified and receive information about financial aid.

Heather spoke to those backlogs, “It was not atypical for us, prior to going live with CampusLogic, to have hundreds of files sitting, waiting to be verified and students asking, ‘Did you get my paperwork?’ ‘What’s my award?’ ‘Where are we at?’” Now, that does not happen. Heather checked StudentForms during a live conversation with members of the CampusLogic team and found only nine students waiting to be reviewed, a drastic decrease from what would have been ten times that number, before StudentForms.

Ensuring Accuracy for Students and Staff

Another concern with manual financial aid verification is the potential for human error. Logic built directly into StudentForms catches mistakes and discrepancies, which creates efficiencies for Barstow and taking their review time down to minutes—if not seconds—for most student files. Heather can trust that her team has not missed anything when students submit documents through StudentForms. Automated communications let students know of critical tasks they need to complete so Barstow doesn’t have to chase students in a quest for missing or incorrect documents. “I feel very confident now that we don’t make mistakes when we are verifying.”



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