

# Jacksonville State Ups Enrollment by More Than 500 Students with Focus on Enrollment Programs & Implementation of StudentForms



Allocating a significant amount of your financial aid office's operating budget to a new technology purchase is a bold move—and it was one of the first things Jessica Wiggins did as Financial Aid Director at Jacksonville State University (JSU). “While I was interviewing for the role, I told them that StudentForms by CampusLogic had changed everything for me at my previous institution, and it would be a priority if I were hired,” she explains.

The school had faith that she could revamp JSU's financial aid office into an environment that truly puts students first—especially since a ‘student-centered culture’ is one of JSU's core values. They just needed the right tools for the job.

## Student Verification: Overwhelming & Scary

In the past, students faced a frustrating, complicated system, and weeks-long verification times. The prior forms management software that was being utilized wasn't working well, she says. “The forms were five or six pages long and were incredibly overwhelming to our students.” Luckily, Wiggins knew of a better way. She'd used StudentForms in her past role as an Associate Director of Financial Aid at a higher education institute in Georgia. “I saw the difference and the transformation that it made in our verification process,” she explains.

## The Solution: StudentForms by CampusLogic

StudentForms simplifies financial aid processes—like verification, professional judgments, and SAP appeals. A key component of the cloud-based CampusLogic student financial success platform, StudentForms provides a digital portal for financial aid professionals to manage tasks, review files, and automate student communications via text and email. Plus, students

can upload documents from any mobile device—a feature staff and students love for the time savings.

## Verification Done in Hours, Not Weeks

It was such a relief for JSU's overtasked financial aid team. “When we first did the hands-on training with them, there were hands clapping. There were people whistling. It was really an awesome moment to see,” Wiggins says.

That convoluted, weeks-long verification nightmare is a thing of the past, she reports. “We've gone from weeks to hours.” The proof is in the numbers. In 2018, by the end of April they'd verified just 99 students. At the same time in 2019 they'd done more than 500. Other features that get thumbs-ups from her staff? How easy StudentForms makes professional judgments, logical forms that only show students what they need to answer, and communication tools that automatically keep students up-to-date on processes.

## Celebrating Record Enrollment

The bold move Wiggins made paid off in a big way for JSU. Alongside a newly-implemented freshman scholarship structure and significantly expanded admissions efforts, the implementation of StudentForms resulted in record freshman enrollment for the fall semester of 2019. Not since 2012 has the university surpassed 9,000 students, but its latest efforts to empower student financial success and enhance the overall experience continue to boost numbers. With an increase of 6.2% in enrollment—or 542 students—JSU continues to deliver its top-tier financial aid experience to growing numbers of students each semester.

## Three Week Implementation? No Problem!

Even better, this complete office overhaul was quick and painless. JSU, which uses Banner®, signed with CampusLogic on February 28. They were live with StudentForms—with full single sign-on and document imaging integration—on March 20. In just the first seven business days, JSU saw 363 student and 83 parent accounts created, and 113 files processed.

With two implementations now under her belt, Wiggins offers her tips to a speedy and speed bump-free implementation:

- Get your IT staff on board so they know what's needed and expected of them.
- Dive in and learn as much as possible about, and from, CampusLogic's knowledge base.
- The biggest one? Let go of the fear of change. If something isn't working, it's time for a new solution.

## A Simple Way to Break Down Enrollment Barriers

Simplifying processes doesn't just make financial aid office life easier. Wiggins sees StudentForms as key to delivering on JSU's overall strategic plan, which prioritizes a student-centered culture and increased enrollment. Currently, about 40% of JSU enrollees receive Pell, and many are first generation. She's pleased that something as simple as a software solution is breaking down enrollment barriers.

"I think that's what we should strive for as an industry," she says. "Simplifying processes so low-income, first-generation families don't feel like financial aid is such a hurdle for them. That should never be the reason someone doesn't attend an institution."

## Simplicity + Proactivity = Student Success

The simplicity of StudentForms also means Wiggins and her team now have the time to truly devote themselves to student needs. "We're able to have genuine conversations with students about their financial aid options," she says. JSU's financial aid counselor is now able to sit down with students and actually counsel them. The communications manager has built a proactive communications plan for FAFSA renewals, summer Pell, scholarship deadlines, and more. And Wiggins? "My role is to facilitate simplicity as much as possible," she explains. "Simplicity drives efficiency, proactivity, and meets students' needs."



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