

*Ethics in Financial Aid - Case Studies*  
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***Scenario 1:***

Your college is planning on a new computer system and you are on a committee that is looking at several large and well-known vendors. One of the vendors that submitted a response to your college's RFP invites you to participate on its advisory panel. They explain that they are interested in the perspective of schools that are currently using other systems. This is a national group. The Spring meeting will be held in Seattle and the Fall meeting will be held in Boston. All expenses are paid by the vendor.

Would you accept their offer?

***Scenario 2:***

Sandy, your loan rep from Sammie Mae, a private guaranty agency, has come to your office to meet with you and conduct the entrance loan counseling workshop for your students. It is the last workshop of the semester, so Sandy offers to take you out to lunch at the best restaurant in town to celebrate. She says that she has a couple of things she would like to discuss over lunch. Her company has printed financial aid application materials for schools in the past and she would like to provide this service for your school. Your budget is really tight this year and you may not have the funds to provide good printed information.

What is your response?

***Scenario 3:***

A faculty member calls you to report a student who she thinks may be fraudulently getting financial aid. The faculty member saw the student driving a new BMW in town. In addition, the student always comes to class with expensive clothes, gold jewelry and takes class notes on her Blackberry. The faculty member gives you the student's name and says she just wanted to make you aware that the student is probably "cheating the system". In addition, a college staff member told you that she thinks the student is paying someone to complete her financial aid forms for her.

What do you do?

***Scenario 4:***

Your application volume has increased by 40% this year and you are 4 weeks behind in processing files. You receive a call from Mr. Big, a member of the Board of Trustees. Mr. Big says that he has received a call from a student who is in danger of being evicted from his apartment because he has not yet received his financial aid and can't pay his rent. Mr. Big wants you to expedite this student's file.

What do you do?

***Scenario 5:***

Pho is a Vietnamese student who was having trouble with his financial aid application. You met with Pho and helped him through the process. He was very grateful. At Christmas, he comes to the office and presents you with a hand-carved teak chess set his uncle brought back from Asia for you at his request. You explain to Pho that you were just doing your job and he does not need to give you anything. He appears very concerned and says that if you do not accept the gift his uncle will be insulted and Pho will lose face with the rest of the family.

What do you do?

***Scenario 6:***

Sallie Student has received a BOG-B for the past three years. This year, she turns in her BOG application at your front counter listing \$ 13,000 in parents' income. Your staff person, Jane, reviews the form and notices that, although Sallie is a dependent student, there is no parent signature on the form. Sallie lives about an hour from the college. Jane gives the form back to Sallie and tells her to take it home, have her parents sign it and bring it back tomorrow. Twenty minutes later, Sallie returns with a signed form. She explained that her mother happened to be on campus and signed the form. Jane does not think that Sallie is telling the truth. She thinks that the mother's signature looks suspiciously like Sallie's. Sallie is very offended at the insinuation that she would do anything wrong and is in tears.

Jane brings you the BOG application and asks you what she should do. What is your response?

***Scenario 7:***

Emma is a technician in your office. Her job duties include reviewing files, packaging students and adjusting awards. This year, her brother, Bob, has enrolled in your college and applied for financial aid. The files in your office are assigned alphabetically and Emma's brother's file is in the group that she will be reviewing and awarding.

Bob comes to the office. He says that he has had a change in income and Emma told him he would qualify for federal grants. He has the documents that she told him to bring into the office. He asks to see Emma so that she can make the revisions on his financial aid records.

***Scenario 8:***

Several high schools have contacted your office and requested a financial aid presentation at their college or financial aid night for students and parents. Your staff is beginning to set up its annual outreach calendar. Joe stops by your office and requests that he be assigned Stanford Prep High School. He tells you that he really likes the counselor there and feels that he is helping build a presence for the college there. On his way out, he jokingly says he also likes them because last year they gave him a \$100 honorarium for doing the financial aid presentation.

Would you grant Joe's request?

***Scenario 9:***

Coach Kelley, the football coach, has recruited a number of low-income students from another part of the state. The students have arrived in town but have no money for housing or other expenses. He is worried that the students' financial aid applications might be delayed because the families haven't turned in all of their verification documents. Coach Kelley says that he has a good relationship with the families and asks you to let him know what forms are missing so that he can work with the families.

Is this information that you can provide?

***Scenario 10:***

Your office is sponsoring a campus "Financial Aid Day" to promote financial aid and assist students in completing next year's FAFSA form. In the past, several lenders have contributed give-away prizes, such as, T-shirts, backpacks and calculators. You are pretty sure that this is no longer permitted and have not contacted any of your vendors for product contributions.

You receive a call from Bob, a rep for Good Day Student Loan Company. He has provided a number of items for this event in the past and would like to participate again. He thinks the products he previously provided would not be allowed, but has offered to contribute a \$1000 scholarship to be raffled off.

Can you accept his offer?

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