HOW-TO: MPA FINANCIAL AID

*I hope this guide can be used by MPA staff to avoid mistakes that I made during the process. The financial aid process is bound to change yearly, so edit this guide as needed. AR 4/20/18*

Step 1. Don’t panic.

Step 2. Tracy and financial aid are responsible for need grants and waivers, except AmeriCorps and Merit. Don’t worry about need grant and waivers. Refer to MPA’s AmeriCorps and Merit Award policies saved in O drive to see how they need to be awarded.

Step 2.5 Ask faculty to rate their students in terms of merit. See spreadsheet example in o drive. Ask them to do this after Fall and Winter quarter.

Step 3. Walter Niemiec should send you an updated foundation and scholarship award figures spreadsheet in December. **If you don’t receive them, bother Walter**.

Step 4. Based off what Walter sends you, update the MPA Costs and Aid page and the Survey Monkey to reflect the new numbers. This can be done late December/early January. Jan can update the Survey Monkey.

Step 5. Make the Survey Monkey go live mid-February (share link with current and admitted students and post on Costs and Aid). If you wait too long, students will send you a lot of emails asking about it. Give the students until late March to early April to complete the Survey Monkey.

Step 6. In the meantime, prep the emails/letters and make sure they reflect the upcoming academic year dates.

Step 7. Send out a reminder that the financial aid application is due one week before it closes. Email students who applied for Americorps/Sara Ann Bilezikian but who haven’t sent any additional materials in (Service Letter/resume/LOR). Also remind students who may have applied but haven’t been admitted yet to apply for MPA sponsored aid.

Step 8. Day of application closing – it will be crazy, students will panic and call you with questions/get locked out of Survey Monkey, etc. If students get locked out of Survey Monkey, have them send you their responses individually, you can add it to a master spreadsheet later (just don’t forget).

Step 9. Day after application closes. Schedule at least three days to sort through the data you will export from Survey Monkey. It will take time to build the spreadsheets and sort essay questions. Then, schedule at least one to two days to read the essays and review additional submitted materials. Review 1819 spreadsheets for reference (do not look at Randee’s older spreadsheets, they include need grants and waivers and will only confuse you).

Step 10. Award based off the quality of the essay and the student’s need. Do not award to students (depending on the award, of course) who do not meet the FAFSA deadline of 2/1 or use the same essay for every prompt.

Step 11. Do the math. Have someone check your work.

Step 12. Looks groovy? Send to Colby Morelli before sending letters.

Step 13. All good in terms of accounting? Send e-mails and write letters. For students who didn’t receive an award, send a letter. Have Doreen sign all letters. Steps 9 through 13 should realistically only take a week if there aren’t mistakes.

Step 14. Awards should show up in student accounts late Spring/early Summer.