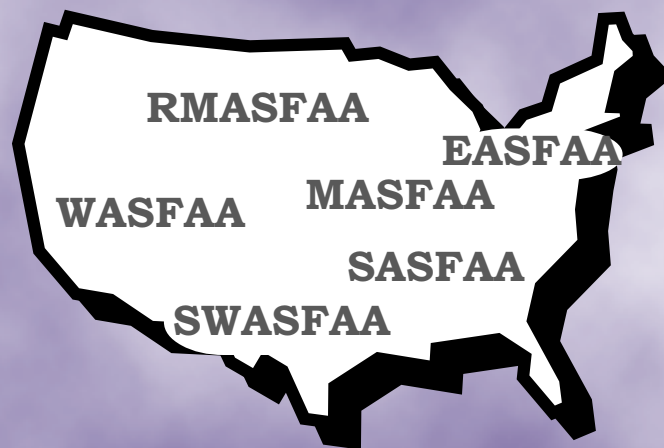


Key Factors in Compensation of Financial Aid Administrators and Staff:

A Report on the 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey



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 **N·A·S·F·A·A**
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID ADMINISTRATORS

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For further information on the 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, contact Kenneth Redd, NASFAA's Director of Research and Policy Analysis, at (202) 785-0453, ext. 138 or by e-mail at reddk@nasfaa.org.

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Introduction

This report summarizes the results of the 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey. The salary survey was designed to provide information on the key factors in the wage compensation of financial aid staff at postsecondary education institutions throughout the United States. It seeks to explain what factors influence the twelve-month salary of financial aid administrators and staff by exploring the relationship between salary and 71 discrete data elements. A self-assessment model is included to assist managers and individuals in analyzing normalized salary ranges. The information includes only actual cash wages paid to financial aid staff. Data on fringe benefits or other non-wage compensation are not included. The report updates research results previously published by NASFAA in 1999 and 1995.

This study was designed to provide support for postsecondary educational institutions to understand better the key factors in salary compensation of financial aid administrators. It updates research previously published by NASFAA in 1999 and 1995.

The two previously published reports dealt with both salary and staff size. The previous reports entitled *Staffing Issues in Student Financial Aid: A Report on the NASFAA Staffing Models Project* and *Staffing Issues in Student Financial Aid: A Report on the NASFAA 1998 Staffing Models Project*, were published by NASFAA in December 1995 and October 1999, respectively. The 1999 study was the first to include a self-assessment model for predicting average salary ranges for individual financial aid office personnel based upon key compensation factors. This report updates the 1999 model.

NASFAA salary and staffing models have been used by hundreds of postsecondary educational institutions

Since the publication of these reports, the salary and staffing models have been used by hundreds of postsecondary educational institutions, consultants, and others throughout the United States. The results were presented and discussed at a number of financial aid professional meetings and have led to further research.

This report details the results of the 2003 salary study, provides an objective and quantified self-assessment salary model, and provides additional information on the populations studied. Highlights from this study were published in an article entitled “Key Factors in Compensation of Financial Aid Administrators and Staff” (*Student Aid Transcript*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 2004).

Survey Instrument

NASFAA’s Research Committee developed a Salary Survey Instrument with two variations. One contained eleven questions and was used for institutions that had filed a 2003-2004 Fiscal Operations Report and Application to Participate (FISAP) Report. The FISAP contains a number of data elements, including total Federal Pell Grant expenditures and total student enrollment for institutions that participate in any of the three Campus-Based Aid programs.¹ For those schools that had not filed the 2003-2004 FISAP, an alternate survey instrument containing two additional questions that asked respondents to report their total student enrollment and amount of Federal Pell Grant funds expended was used. The survey instruments were administered on the World Wide Web and respondents were automatically directed to the appropriate survey instrument based upon their institution’s Office of Postsecondary Education School ID (OPEID). The surveys were administered from August to October 2003. No identifying information regarding individual respondents was obtained. However, the respondents’ school identifiers (OPEIDs) were obtained. Several edit checks were incorporated into the on-line survey to ensure that only valid responses to each question were submitted.

¹The Campus-Based programs include the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), the Federal Perkins Loan Program, and the Federal Work-Study program. Institutions that participate in these programs are required to file a FISAP report annually. See 34 CFR § 673.3 (2003).

The OPEID was used to gather additional information about the employer institutions. Additional information was obtained from the US Department of Education’s public records, including the 2003-04 FISAP, the Postsecondary Education Participant System (PEPS), and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

NASFAA announced the survey to its membership through its *Today’s News* daily e-mail service and through its Web site. NASFAA sent approximately 20 reminder e-mails. In addition, announcements were posted for member and non-member institutions on national, regional, and state financial aid administrator list serves. A final reminder email was sent to chief financial aid administrators at 4,585 educational institutions using the U.S. Department of Education’s PEPS database. Contacts at member institutions were asked to encourage each staff member to complete a survey.

The survey gathered information on the characteristics of postsecondary institutions (NASFAA members and non-members) and financial aid administrators. The data collected include:

- Types of students served (undergraduate and/or graduate/professional);
- Total number of students enrolled;
- Total 2001-2002 Federal Pell Grant expenditures;
- Total Stafford and PLUS funds disbursed for the 2001-2002 award year;
- Total aid disbursed for the 2001-2002 award year;
- Functional job title;
- Actual job title;
- Highest degree earned;
- Number of years of financial aid experience;
- Gender;
- Race;
- Employment status (full-time, part-time, etc.); and
- Annual salary amount for the period July 1, 2002 – June 30, 2003.

The 2003 Salary Survey instrument is included in the Appendix to this report.

Survey Respondents

Valid survey responses were received from 3,744 financial aid office staff members who work at 1,563 higher education institutions. The number of respondents appear to represent adequately the number of 4-Year Public, 2-Year Public, 4-Year Private, and Graduate/Professional institutions in the

Table 1
Salary Survey Respondents by Institutional Type & Control

Institutional Type & Control	Number of Respondents	% of Total
4-Year Public	1,396	37.3%
2-Year Public	817	21.8%
4-Year Private	1,054	28.2%
2-Year Private	65	1.7%
Graduate/Professional	212	5.7%
Proprietary	200	5.3%
Total	3,744	100.0%

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

United States (see Table 1—respondents from institutions in Canada or other foreign countries were not included). Unfortunately, 2-Year Private and Proprietary institutions appear to be under-represented. This under-representation may have occurred because aid administrators at these institutional types are less likely to be NASFAA members and may not have felt compelled to respond.

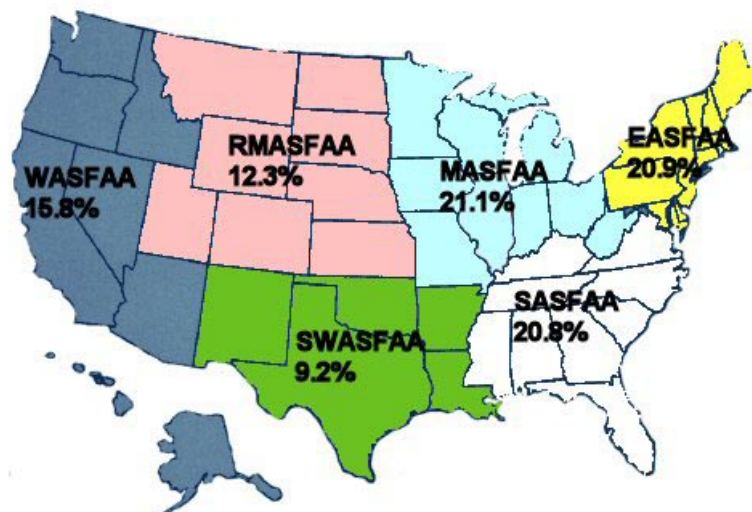
Table 2
Salary Survey Respondents by NASFAA Region

Regional Location	Number of Responses	% of Total
Eastern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (EASFAA)	782	20.9%
Midwest Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (MASFAA)	790	21.1%
Rocky Mountain Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (RMASFAA)	459	12.3%
Southern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (SASFAA)	777	20.8%
Southwest Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (SWASFAA)	344	9.2%
Western Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (WASFAA)	590	15.8%
Total	3,742 *	100.0%

* The PEPS data file did not have state information for two institutions.
Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Table 2 and Figure 1 show the distribution of survey responses by NASFAA geographic region. The regional locations used (e.g., Eastern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (EASFAA)) do not indicate membership in EASFAA but rather that the respondent worked at an educational institution that was located in a state that makes up the membership of EASFAA.

Figure 1
Distribution of Salary Survey Respondents by NASFAA Region



Survey Results

Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

The results of this study suggest that financial aid administrators now have more financial aid experience on average than in previous years. In 2003, 52.9% of respondents reported less than 10 years of experience in student aid administration. This compares with 68.3% in the 1999 study (see Table 3). On average, aid administrators in 2003 had 11.7 years of experience in financial aid, compared with 7.4 years of service in 1995. Table 4 shows higher average years of experience for every job title over the 1995 results.

Table 3
Years of Experience

Years of Experience	% of Respondents in 1999	% of Repondents in 2003
Less than 2	21.8%	8.2%
2–5	25.6%	24.0%
6–10	21.1%	20.7%
Over 10	31.5%	47.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Table 4
Average Years of Experience by Job Category

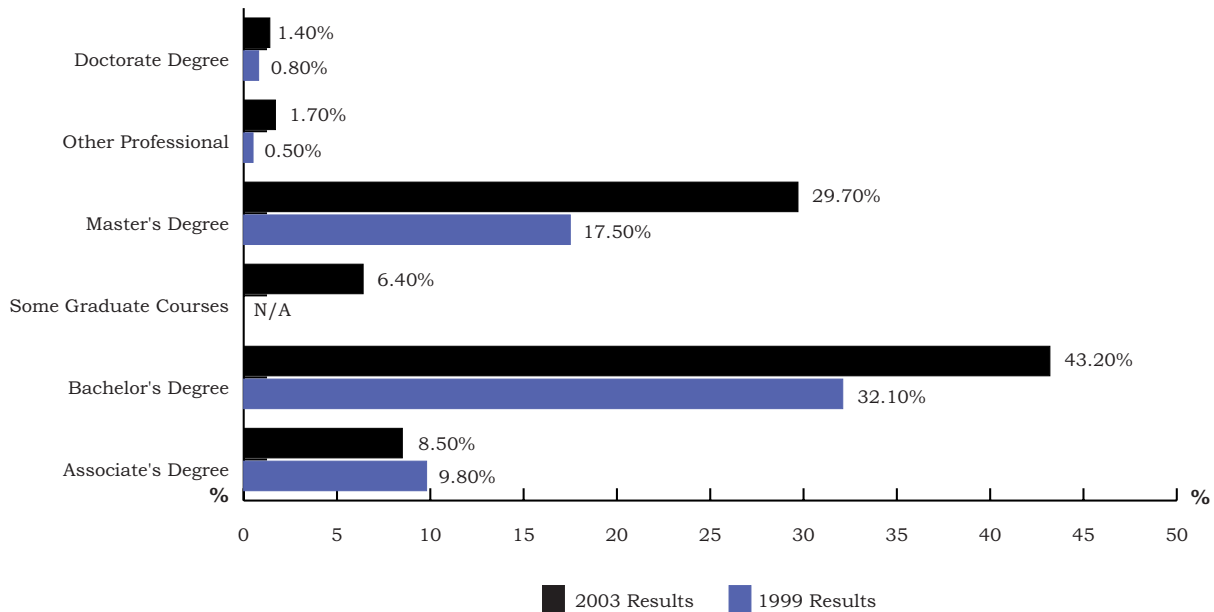
Job Category Title	1995 Average	2003 Average
Dean/Vice President	9.0	19.1
Director	13.1	16.0
Associate Director	11.8	15.2
Assistant Director	8.2	10.3
Manager/Supervisor/Division Chief	9.2	11.3
Systems or Program Analyst		8.2
Counselor/Advisor/Officer/Coordinator	5.9	7.7
Other Professional	6.8	9.7
Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor		6.9
Other Clerical	5.3	7.9
Overall Average	7.4	11.7

Note: The 1999 study collected years of experience in ranges and therefore, no comparison to that study is possible.
Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Financial aid administrators were also more formally educated in 2003 than they were in 1999. As Figure 2 shows, substantially more aid administrators reported holding at least a master's degree in 2003 than in 1999. About one-third of the 2003 respondents said they had received a master's degree or higher, compared with less than 19% in 1999. The percentage that had attained doctorate degrees has almost doubled since 1999.

While most aid administrators report higher educational attainment, those who hold the position of “Director” appear to have slightly less education, on average, than in prior studies. In 2003, a majority (52.4%) of Directors indicated they had a master’s degree or higher, compared with 58.1% in 1999. About 2.6% of Directors in 2003 indicated they had a doctoral degree compared with slightly less than 4% in 1999.

Figure 2
Highest Level of Educational Attainment



Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.
N/A means not available.

The vast majority (96.6%) of respondents indicated they work full-time. Table 5 shows that individuals who work part-time were most likely to have the job title “Other Professional” or “Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor.”

Table 5
Job Status by Job Title

Job Category Title	Full-Time	3/4 Time	1/2 Time	Less than 1/2 Time
Dean/Vice President	99.1%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Director	98.0%	0.9%	0.8%	0.3%
Associate Director	97.3%	2.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Assistant Director	97.8%	1.5%	0.5%	0.2%
Manager/Supervisor/Division Chief	96.9%	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Systems or Program Analyst	98.9%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%
Counselor/Advisor/Officer/Coordinator	95.2%	2.7%	1.8%	0.3%
Other Professional	90.9%	3.6%	3.6%	1.8%
Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor	93.8%	2.0%	4.0%	0.3%
Other Clerical	94.4%	3.4%	1.1%	1.1%
Overall Average	96.6%	1.8%	1.3%	0.3%

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

The financial aid profession is dominated by women at every level of the profession. Overall, women accounted for nearly three quarters (73.3%) of survey respondents (see Table 6) However, men appear to hold higher level positions with greater frequency than lower level positions. The job titles of “Dean/Vice President,” “Systems or Program Analyst,” and “Director” were the top three positions held by men.

Table 6
Gender by Job Title

Job Category Title	Female	Male	Prefer Not to Respond
Dean/Vice President	57.5%	42.5%	0.0%
Director	63.1%	35.6%	1.2%
Associate Director	70.4%	25.7%	4.0%
Assistant Director	78.5%	18.6%	3.0%
Manager/Supervisor/Division Chief	83.5%	15.5%	1.0%
Systems or Program Analyst	58.2%	40.7%	1.1%
Counselor/Advisor/Officer/Coordinator	79.3%	17.6%	3.2%
Other Professional	89.1%	10.9%	0.0%
Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor	86.2%	11.0%	2.8%
Other Clerical	96.6%	1.1%	2.2%
Overall Average	73.3%	24.4%	2.3%

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

The survey also collected information about respondents’ race/ethnicity identities. The majority of respondents (75.8%) indicated their race as “white.” Table 7 provides details on race by job title.

Table 7A
Race by Job Title

Job Category Title	Missing	African American	American Indian	Asian
Dean/Vice President	1.9%	7.5%	0.9%	1.9%
Director	3.4%	6.2%	0.8%	1.2%
Associate Director	6.2%	9.3%	0.0%	2.2%
Assistant Director	6.2%	8.2%	0.5%	1.0%
Manager/Supervisor/Division Chief	5.2%	10.3%	1.0%	4.1%
Systems or Program Analyst	6.6%	8.8%	0.0%	2.2%
Counselor/Advisor/Officer/Coordinator	6.7%	12.4%	0.3%	2.1%
Other Professional	3.6%	7.3%	0.0%	7.3%
Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor	9.0%	16.1%	1.1%	2.5%
Other Clerical	4.5%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Overall Average	5.4%	9.5%	.6%	1.8%

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Table 7b
Race by Job Title

Job Category Title	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian	White	Multi-Racial
Dean/Vice President	3.8%	0.0%	82.1%	1.9%
Director	4.4%	0.2%	82.7%	1.1%
Associate Director	4.4%	0.0%	77.0%	0.9%
Assistant Director	5.0%	0.5%	76.0%	2.7%
Manager/Supervisor/Division Chief	4.1%	0.0%	75.3%	0.0%
Systems or Program Analyst	2.2%	0.0%	79.1%	1.1%
Counselor/Advisor/Officer/Coordinator	5.8%	0.2%	71.0%	1.5%
Other Professional	5.5%	0.0%	74.5%	1.8%
Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor	8.5%	0.6%	61.3%	0.8%
Other Clerical	9.0%	0.0%	78.7%	1.1%
Overall Average	5.3%	0.2%	75.8%	1.4%

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Salary Information

The survey collected information about financial aid office staff's fiscal year 2003 (July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003) twelve-month salaries. Table 8 shows the percentage change in annual salaries of full-time employees from 1992 to 2003. The greatest percentage increase in wage compensation occurred for the job title "Manager/Supervisor/Division Chief," followed by "Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor," and "Other Clerical." Table 9 displays this same information adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Price Index.

Table 8
Change in Annual Full-Time Salaries (Not adjusted for inflation)

Job Category Title	1992 Average	1997 Average	2003 Average	% Change
Dean/Vice President	\$58,965	\$63,105	\$76,027	28.9%
Director	39,997	47,840	56,971	42.4%
Associate Director	35,678	40,482	51,749	45.0%
Assistant Director	29,008	33,298	39,843	37.4%
Manager/Supervisor/Division Chief	24,079	32,612	39,596	64.4%
Systems or Program Analyst	N/A	34,761	36,738	N/A
Counselor/Advisor/Officer/Coordinator	23,055	27,084	32,089	39.2%
Other Professional	27,651	27,654	35,582	28.7%
Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor	17,651	21,005	26,849	52.1%
Other Clerical	\$19,166	\$22,743	\$28,350	47.9%

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Table 9
Change in Annual Full-Time Salaries (Adjusted for inflation)

Job Category Title	1992 Average	1997 Average	2003 Average	% Change
Dean/Vice President	\$58,965	\$55,163	\$57,657	-2.2%
Director	39,997	41,819	43,206	8.0%
Associate Director	35,678	35,387	39,245	10.0%
Assistant Director	29,008	29,107	30,216	4.2%
Manager/Supervisor/Division Chief	24,079	28,508	30,029	24.7%
Systems or Program Analyst	N/A	30,386	27,861	N/A
Counselor/Advisor/Officer/Coordinator	23,055	23,675	24,336	5.6%
Other Professional	27,651	24,174	26,985	-2.4%
Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor	17,651	18,361	20,362	15.4%
Other Clerical	\$19,166	\$19,881	\$21,500	12.2%

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Table 10 shows the percentage change in annual salaries of full-time financial aid directors from 1992 to 2003. Financial aid directors at Proprietary institutions enjoyed the greatest percentage salary increase, followed by financial aid directors at 2-Year Private and 4-Year Private institutions. Figure 3 shows average full-time director of financial aid salaries by region. Figure 4 shows the average salary levels of full-time director of financial aid by state.

Table 10
Change in Annual Full-Time Director Salaries by Institutional Type

Job Category Title	1992 Average	1997 Average	2003 Average	% Change
4-Year Public	\$49,556	\$58,020	\$68,225	37.7%
4-Year Private	37,130	45,190	55,197	48.7%
2-Year Public	40,452	47,130	55,173	36.4%
2-Year Private	29,561	36,709	44,131	49.3%
Proprietary	31,612	37,948	53,096	68.0%
Graduate Only	40,985	44,902	49,041	19.7%
Other	35,386	38,968	N/A	N/A
Overall Average	\$39,997	\$47,840	\$56,971	42.4%

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Table 11 showed that, on average, staff working in the WASFAA region reported the highest annual salaries (\$48,680), followed by staff in EASFAA (\$47,771), MASFAA (\$42,401), RMASFAA (\$39,976), SWASFAA (\$39,941), and SASFAA (\$38,537) regions. Tables 12-17 provide additional salary statistics by institutional type and control.

Figure 3
Average Full-Time Director of Financial Aid Salary by NASFAA Region

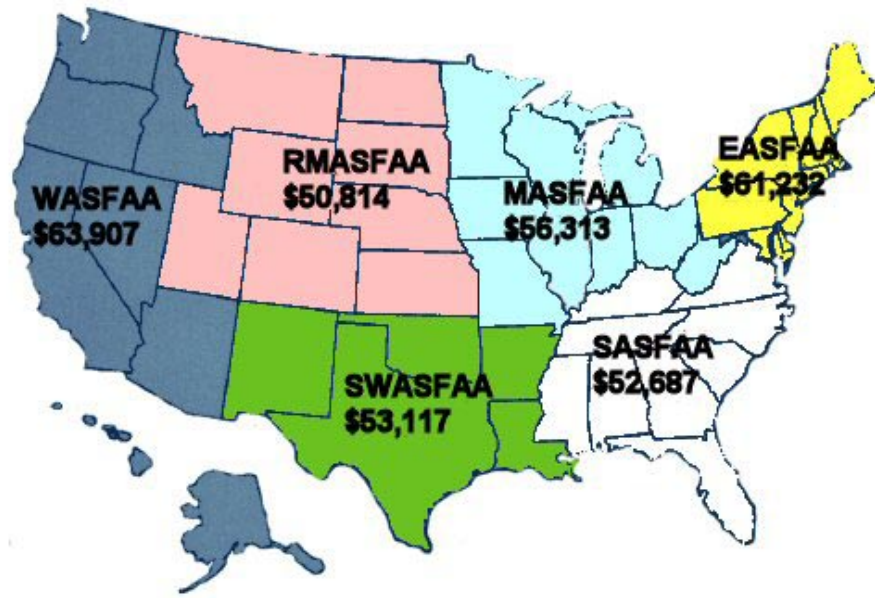


Figure 4
Average Full-Time Director of Financial Aid Salary by State

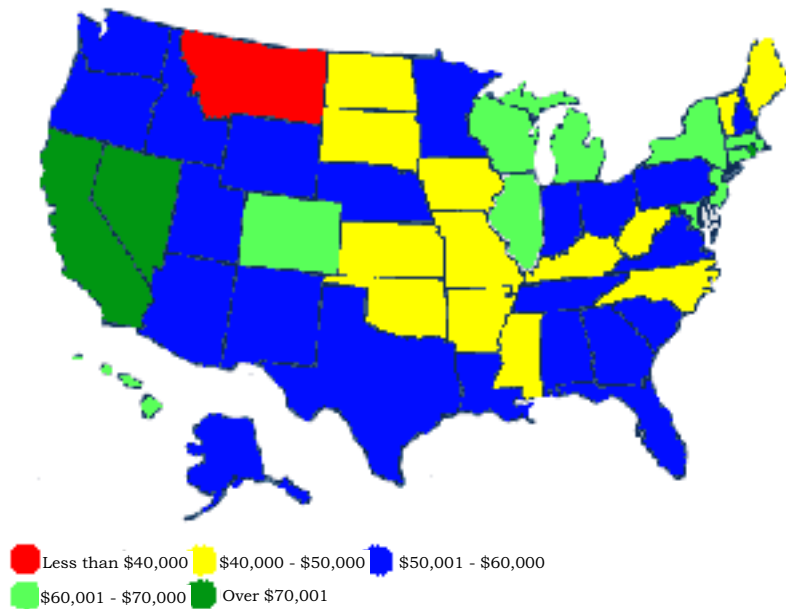


Table 11a
Annual Full-Time Salaries by NASFAA Region

Job Category Title	EASFAA		MASFAA	
	1997	2003	1997	2003
Director	\$50,717	\$61,232	\$47,485	\$56,313
Associate Director	41,374	53,341	41,712	51,722
Assistant Director	33,081	39,621	34,046	39,493
Manager/Supervisor/Division Chief	34,645	42,394	35,604	32,019
Systems or Program Analyst	33,752	35,323	32,854	35,774
Counselor/Advisor/Officer/Coordinator	28,257	34,010	28,164	31,780
Other Professional	21,662	47,453	21,915	36,246
Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor	28,592	25,776	29,065	25,834
Other Clerical	22,660	25,764	23,649	31,831
Overall Average	\$31,905	\$47,771	\$30,799	\$42,401

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Table 11b
Annual Full-Time Salaries by NASFAA Region

Job Category Title	RMASFAA		SASFAA	
	1997	2003	1997	2003
Director	\$41,624	\$50,814	\$45,970	\$52,687
Associate Director	36,872	50,744	39,395	48,874
Assistant Director	30,028	41,173	30,606	35,703
Manager/Supervisor/Division Chief	28,144	39,644	29,023	29,806
Systems or Program Analyst	32,315	38,550	31,405	31,732
Counselor/Advisor/Officer/Coordinator	24,861	31,757	24,307	30,194
Other Professional	18,448	42,581	19,129	29,005
Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor	23,280	26,902	26,076	22,930
Other Clerical	20,670	25,968	19,802	24,675
Overall Average	\$27,118	\$39,976	\$27,285	\$38,537

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Table 11c
Annual Full-Time Salaries by NASFAA Region

Job Category Title	SWASFAA		WASFAA	
	1997	2003	1997	2003
Director	\$44,559	\$53,117	\$56,926	\$63,907
Associate Director	41,493	48,157	45,979	58,710
Assistant Director	32,002	39,642	40,128	45,954
Manager/Supervisor/Division Chief	27,088	37,399	38,434	51,949
Systems or Program Analyst	34,820	37,242	43,428	51,432
Counselor/Advisor/Officer/Coordinator	22,118	27,566	31,750	36,371
Other Professional	16,746	31,683	26,180	38,433
Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor	21,785	20,458	31,290	35,384
Other Clerical	17,786	25,781	30,252	37,392
Overall Average	\$26,146	\$39,941	\$35,187	\$48,680

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Table 12
Salary Survey Results for 4-Year Public Institutions

Job Category Title	N	Mean	Median	Stand. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Dean/Vice President	13	\$88,582	\$90,000	\$20,945	\$57,000	\$130,000
Director	268	68,225	66,150	17,548	30,000	124,000
Associate Director	108	56,446	55,000	14,922	16,233	100,000
Assistant Director	174	42,747	41,000	11,775	20,455	95,132
Manager/Supervisor/Division Chief	45	37,485	35,000	11,131	22,000	67,756
Systems or Program Analyst	73	38,221	36,080	10,728	22,131	65,136
Counselor/Advisor/Officer/Coordinator	431	31,415	30,000	8,184	15,161	75,000
Other Professional	32	35,677	36,784	9,674	22,000	66,400
Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor	168	26,257	23,827	8,860	12,354	80,000
Other Clerical	43	29,906	29,000	7,779	17,056	49,978
Overall Average	1,355	\$42,676	\$36,952	\$19,792	\$12,354	\$130,000

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Table 13
Salary Survey Results for 4-Year Private Institutions

Job Category Title	N	Mean	Median	Stand. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Dean/Vice President	45	\$71,585	\$65,000	\$22,214	\$26,500	\$120,000
Director	421	55,197	52,250	18,755	19,504	155,000
Associate Director	91	46,920	45,000	11,606	27,000	88,000
Assistant Director	153	36,286	35,000	8,545	20,000	79,763
Manager/Supervisor/Division Chief	21	31,884	30,108	10,440	19,864	56,000
Systems or Program Analyst	9	27,151	23,400	10,731	11,000	45,200
Counselor/Advisor/Officer/Coordinator	203	28,495	27,200	6,087	17,200	49,500
Other Professional	2	28,000	28,000	2,828	26,000	30,000
Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor	49	23,946	22,500	5,248	16,968	39,100
Other Clerical	24	24,012	24,655	4,207	16,000	31,000
Overall Average	1,018	\$43,993	\$39,764	\$19,486	\$11,000	\$155,000

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Table 14
Salary Survey Results for 2-Year Public Institutions

Job Category Title	N	Mean	Median	Stand. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Dean/Vice President	26	\$83,372	\$79,896	\$22,563	\$35,500	\$140,232
Director	320	55,173	52,640	16,142	21,736	112,944
Associate Director	10	50,565	48,000	12,989	31,239	68,735
Assistant Director	39	39,313	37,062	12,000	18,511	62,000
Manager/Supervisor/Division Chief	19	50,046	45,000	17,984	21,703	85,202
Systems or Program Analyst	5	36,226	32,927	7,550	28,970	47,000
Counselor/Advisor/Officer/Coordinator	242	35,850	33,598	12,724	13,500	90,000
Other Professional	8	34,264	35,706	7,666	23,652	43,000
Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor	96	29,271	29,000	8,691	14,500	51,396
Other Clerical	14	29,298	25,325	9,852	20,300	54,983
Overall Average	779	\$45,139	\$42,000	\$18,936	\$13,500	\$140,232

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Table 15
Salary Survey Results for 2-Year Private Institutions

Job Category Title	N	Mean	Median	Stand. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Dean/Vice President	2	\$35,000	\$35,000	N/A	\$35,000	\$35,000
Director	31	44,131	44,000	10,331	29,000	70,100
Associate Director						
Assistant Director	1	34,000	34,000	N/A	34,000	34,000
Manager/Supervisor/Division Chief						
Systems or Program Analyst	3	57,667	57,000	2,082	56,000	60,000
Counselor/Advisor/Officer/Coordinator	20	35,518	35,000	8,290	21,000	50,000
Other Professional	2	75,000	75,000	35,355	50,000	100,000
Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor						
Other Clerical						
Overall Average	59	\$42,465	\$40,000	\$13,006	\$21,000	\$100,000

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Table 16
Salary Survey Results for Graduate/Professional Institutions

Job Category Title	N	Mean	Median	Stand. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Dean/Vice President	13	\$70,592	\$65,000	\$33,214	\$20,000	\$130,000
Director	115	49,041	48,000	17,792	14,000	110,000
Associate Director	6	45,833	45,500	5,447	40,000	53,000
Assistant Director	10	42,000	40,000	11,671	25,000	68,000
Manager/Supervisor/Division Chief	4	40,685	43,000	6,425	31,500	45,240
Systems or Program Analyst						
Counselor/Advisor/Officer/Coordinator	38	30,635	30,200	4,997	19,200	50,000
Other Professional	5	26,500	29,640	8,850	12,360	35,000
Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor	1	32,000	32,000	N/A	32,000	32,000
Other Clerical	1	33,000	33,000	N/A	33,000	33,000
Overall Average	193	\$45,476	\$41,362	\$19,425	\$12,360	\$130,000

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Table 17
Salary Survey Results for Proprietary Institutions

Job Category Title	N	Mean	Median	Stand. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Dean/Vice President	4	\$71,250	\$67,500	\$23,358	\$47,000	\$103,000
Director	99	53,096	51,000	16,565	24,000	120,000
Associate Director	4	46,615	46,450	7,422	40,000	53,560
Assistant Director	18	42,278	42,864	8,357	23,465	55,000
Manager/Supervisor/Division Chief	2	39,500	39,500	2,121	38,000	41,000
Systems or Program Analyst	3	30,273	30,000	3,917	26,500	34,320
Counselor/Advisor/Officer/Coordinator	47	34,141	32,500	9,475	15,200	61,450
Other Professional	1	24,816	24,816		24,816	24,816
Secretary/Receptionist/Clerk/Processor	11	27,216	27,559	6,749	12,000	36,000
Other Clerical	2	38,000	38,000	0	38,000	38,000
Overall Average	191	\$45,359	\$43,000	\$16,875	\$12,000	\$120,000

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Characteristics of Respondents' Institutions

The majority of information obtained about the survey respondents' postsecondary institutions was obtained from public records and reports, although, as previously noted, some institutional information was obtained directly from survey respondents. A listing of the types of institutional data collected (either directly from respondents or from a secondary source) is shown below:

- Number of students enrolled
- Total Campus-Based Aid funds administered
- Total Federal Pell Grants administered
- Total Stafford & Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students (PLUS) administered
- Perkins Loan Default Rate
- Direct Loan and FFELP Participation
- Religious Affiliation
- Historically Black College and University identification
- Tribally controlled institution
- Carnegie Classification
- Tuition & fees
- Admissions selectivity
- Total aid administered
- Academic Program Length
- Academic calendar (semesters, quarters, etc.)
- Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) Default Rate
- Number of applicants
- Number of admits
- Athletic association
- On-campus dormitory rooms
- Number of academic programs offered
- Total institutional employees
- Total institutional revenues
- Total institutional assets

These variables were tested to determine if they correlate with salary. The three institutional characteristics that appear to have the most statistical influence on salary were:

- Number of students enrolled at the institution;
- Whether the institution is under public, private, or proprietary control; and
- Highest degree offered by the institution.

It must be noted that many of the variables are inter-related. Larger institutions, for example, manage larger amounts of financial aid funds through the Campus-Based, Federal Pell Grant, and Stafford & PLUS Loan programs.

Table 18 shows average total student enrollment and standard deviation of enrollment by institutional type and control. Enrollment information was available for 766 Public, 640 Private, and 136 Proprietary institutions (institutional control information for 21 schools was not available). As the table shows, 4-Year Public colleges and universities had larger average student enrollments (17,112) than 4-Year Private (3,470) and Proprietary (3,302) institutions.

The highest degree offered by the institution also appears to be a statistically significant factor in the twelve-month salary of financial aid office personnel. Schools that offer doctorate degrees pay the highest average salaries, generally followed by institutions that offer master's, bachelor's, and associate's degrees, and certificates, respectively. Table 19 shows the average full-time director of financial aid salaries by highest educational degree offered.

Table 18
Average Student Enrollment By Institutional Type & Control

Institutional Type & Control	Average Enrollment	Standard Deviation
4-Year Public	17,112	18,981
4-Year Private	3,470	5,088
2-Year Public	9,344	11,903
2-Year Private	634	2,285
Proprietary	3,302	6,236
Graduate Only	1,216	5,573
Overall Average	7,467	12,429

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Table 19
Average Full-Time Director Salaries by Highest Educational Degree Offered

Highest Degree Offered	Number of Institutions	Percentage of Total	Average Salary of Full-Time Directors of Financial Aid
Less-than-one-year certificate	9	0.6%	\$41,833
Less-than-two-year certificate	105	6.9%	41,714
Associate's	321	21.1%	53,704
2-4 year certificate	188	12.3%	53,819
Bachelor's	198	13.0%	49,789
Post-baccalaureate certificate	15	1.0%	54,417
Master's	291	19.1%	55,351
Post-Master's certificate	103	6.8%	59,501
Doctor's	293	19.2%	71,135
Total	1,523	100.0%	\$57,040

Source: 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey, October 2003.

Salary Self-Assessment Model

The results from the salary survey were used to create a new self-assessment salary prediction model. This self-assessment model provides an objective methodology for predicting normative salary for institutions with similar characteristics. The result is an average salary for an individual based upon key compensation factors.

A correlation analysis was performed between those variables collected in this study and salary. Further analyses indicated there were ten major factors that have a strong statistical influence on financial aid staff members' salaries. These factors are:

- 1) Job title
- 2) Years of financial aid experience
- 3) Geographical state of employment
- 4) Highest educational level attained
- 5) Number of students enrolled at the institution
- 6) Functional role within the organization
- 7) Degree of urbanization at the work location
- 8) Whether the institution is under public, private, or proprietary control
- 9) NASFAA geographic region
- 10) Highest degree offered by the institution.

A statistical procedure called multiple linear regression was used to create the model. Multiple linear regression attempts to model the relationship between two or more explanatory variables and a response variable by fitting a linear equation to observed data. A common example of its use is generally found in college admissions offices. Many colleges calculate a predicted grade point average (GPA) for each applicant for admission. Multiple linear regression is used to create a mathematical linear equation to make this prediction, usually from high school GPA, test scores and other information. This same method was used to create the 2003 NASFAA Salary Model.

Table 20 shows the regression analyses results for the model. The study found that about 68% of the variance associated with salary could be accounted for by the ten variables shown. Other factors which were not obtained in this study, such as job performance, could further explain the salaries of financial aid administrators.

Table 20
Salary Prediction Model Regression Analysis

Independent Variables	Beta
Job title	2,372.87
Years of experience	747.70
Geographical state of employment	288.97
Highest educational level attained	3,319.82
Number of students enrolled at the institution	.086
Functional role within the organization	1,519.43
Degree of urbanization at the work location	2,167.82
Whether the institution is under public, private, or proprietary control	2,464.16
NASFAA geographic region	594.61
Highest degree offered by the institution	244.92
Constant	-25,720.51
R-squared	.685
Adjusted R-squared	.684

Conclusion

This study suggests that financial aid has become a stronger profession because aid administrators have more years of formal education and more years of experience, on average, than they did six years ago. The fact that aid directors, however, generally have slightly fewer years of formal education and experience suggests that a large percentage of aid administrators may have recently retired from this position. If this is in fact true, it would be interesting to study what effect this changing of the guard will have upon our profession.

The study identifies ten primary factors that account for 68% of the variance associated with financial aid administrators' salaries. While these factors together explain a greater amount of variance associated with salaries than the previous NASFAA model, it fails to make significant improvements. To do so would require the collection of additional information, such as: performance measurements of the employee and employer, institutional policies regarding compensation, information about the employee's total compensation (including fringe benefits and untaxed income), years of experience at specific job levels, and an assessment of the supply and demand of the labor market. These data should be captured in future studies.

NASFAA's Web site provides a calculator that allows aid personnel at NASFAA member institutions to perform a salary self-assessment. Managers may use the salary model to analyze salaries of employees in similar job titles or other factors. The companion publication, "Key Factors in Compensation of Financial Aid Administrators and Staff" (*Student Aid Transcript*, Vol. 15, No. 1, 2004), also provides management advice for implementation of the model. Caution should be exercised when interpreting the results from under-represented institutional types (2-Year Private and Proprietary Schools) and extreme outliers (extremely small and extremely large institutions).

Appendix:

The 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey

The 2003 NASFAA Salary Survey

The NASFAA Research Committee asks you to complete this *anonymous* survey to help us determine average financial aid administrator salaries. We will publish the results of this study to NASFAA members and we will use the responses to update the 1999 salary model.

Instructions: We ask that each staff member of your financial aid office complete one survey. All responses will remain completely confidential. If, however, you believe there is a question that is objectionable, you may skip it and answer the remaining questions. Please make sure that all staff at your financial aid office complete this survey (except student interns, work-study employees, or unpaid volunteers).

Personal Questions

1. Please choose the functional title that **best** describes your main role within the financial aid office at your institution. If your position covers multiple roles, select the first one listed (highest level) which appropriately describes your authority:
 - Chief financial aid administrator (e.g., Vice President, Executive Director, Director)
 - Second in command (e.g., Director, Associate Director)
 - Manage grant, scholarship, loan or work program or staff
 - Manage systems or program computer systems
 - Directly assist students & authorize financial aid awards (Assistant Director, Counselor, Officer, Advisor)
 - Perform data entry or other clerical task
 - Perform secretarial or receptionist functions
2. Actual job title _____
3. Highest degree earned
 - Doctorate Degree (Ph.D., Ed.D etc.)
 - First Professional Degree (J.D., etc.)
 - Master's Degree
 - Bachelor's Degree
 - Associate's Degree
 - Other
4. Number of years of experience in financial aid _____
5. Gender
 - Female
 - Male
6. Race
 - African American or Black
 - American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Asian
 - Multiracial or Other
 - Hispanic/Latino
 - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
 - White

7. Annual salary amount for the period July 1, 2002 – June 30, 2003 \$_____.00 (When entering salary data, please do NOT include commas. Include your cash salary only. Do NOT include the value of any fringe benefits.)

Institutional Questions

Note: To preserve anonymity we have chosen to ask these questions of each financial aid staff member at your institution. To maintain the integrity of our research, however, it is very important that every staff member at your institution provide the same answers to the following questions. We recommend the chief financial aid administrator at your school disseminate standard responses to the following questions to all staff to ensure uniformity of response. (When entering numeric information for questions 8 to 12, please do NOT include commas.)

8. Total number of students calculated by adding your answers from Part II, Section D, questions #7a and #7b on the 2003-2004 FISAP _____
9. Total Campus-Based funds spent from Part VI, Section B, question #4 on the 2003-2004 FISAP _____
10. Total Federal Pell Grant expenditures from Part II, Section E, question #23 on the 2003-2004 FISAP _____
11. Total Stafford (Subsidized and Unsubsidized) and PLUS funds disbursed in the Federal Family Education Loan Program and Federal Direct Loan Program for the 2001-2002 Award Year _____
12. Total aid disbursed from all sources (including but not limited to aid programs reported above) for the 2001-2002 Award Year _____
13. In the space below, please provide your institution's six-digit Federal School Code (OPE ID), taken from your Eligibility and Certification Acknowledgement Report (ECAR)

Thank you for completing this survey. If you have questions or comments about this survey instrument, please contact Mr. Kenneth Redd, NASFAA's Director of Research & Policy Analysis at (202) 785-0453 or by email to redk@nasfaa.org.

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