

## Study of Student Financial Aid at Southeastern

Research Brief #27

Summer 2008

This study explores disbursement of financial aid among undergraduate students at Southeastern in Fall 2006 and Fall 2007 semesters. Both federal and state financial aid is analyzed.

- Federal aid is mainly need based and is comprised of grants (Pell, SEOGA, etc.), loans (Perkins, Stafford, Plus, etc.) and work study.
- State aid is mainly merit based and is comprised of grants (LEAP, LA Go Grant, etc.), scholarships (TOPS, Workforce Investment Act, etc.) and waivers (National Guard, War Orphan Title 29 Waiver, etc.).
- 68.6% (n = 9,083) of the enrolled students in Fall 2007 and 71.4% (n = 9,675) of the enrolled students in Fall 2006 received either federal or state financial aid or both. Table 1 shows the percentage of students who received financial aid by type.

**Table 1. Distribution of Financial Aid**

Term	Federal Only	State Only	Both
Fall 2007	37.0% (n = 5,006)	13.8% (n = 1,861)	20.8% (n = 2,808)
Fall 2006	33.4% (n = 4,426)	12.5% (n = 1,646)	22.8% (n = 3,011)

- Tables 2 and 3 show the distribution of federal and state financial aid by gender. A significantly higher percentage of female students received federal and state financial aid than their male counterparts. This is likely due to a higher percentage of females applying for financial aid than male students. 77.3% of females as opposed to 65.9% of males submitted the FAFSA application in Fall 2006 and 73.7% of females as opposed to 64.1% of the males submitted the FAFSA application in Fall 2007.

**Table 2. Distribution of Federal Financial Aid by Gender**

Term	Female	Male	Chi Square
Fall 2007	59.6% (n = 4,094)	50.4% (n = 2,533)	$X^2(1) = 106.661, p < 0.05$
Fall 2006	61.1% (n = 5,183)	51.1% (n = 2,613)	$X^2(1) = 145.981, p < 0.05$

<b>Table 3. Distribution of State Financial Aid by Gender</b>			
<b>Term</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Chi Square</b>
Fall 2007	37.8% (n = 3,108)	30.8% (n = 1,549)	$X^2(1) = 65.862, p < 0.05$
Fall 2006	37.3% (n = 3,138)	29.7% (n = 1,531)	$X^2(1) = 81.646, p < 0.05$

- Comparing disbursement of financial aid by ethnicity we see from Table 4 that a significantly higher percentage of Black students received federal financial aid than White students or students of other ethnicities.

<b>Table 4. Distribution of Federal Financial Aid by Ethnicity</b>				
<b>Term</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Chi Square</b>
Fall 2007	50.8% (n = 5,141)	80.0% (n = 1,871)	54.9% (n = 261)	$X^2(2) = 659.671, p < 0.05$
Fall 2006	52.2% (n = 5,409)	82.7% (n = 1,955)	54.0% (n = 248)	$X^2(2) = 738.674, p < 0.05$

- Conversely, a significantly higher percentage of White students received state financial aid than Black students and other ethnicity students as seen in Table 5.

<b>Table 5. Distribution of State Financial Aid by Ethnicity</b>				
<b>Term</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Chi Square</b>
Fall 2007	36.2% (n = 3,666)	32.3% (n = 755)	29.9% (n = 142)	$X^2(2) = 19.103, p < 0.05$
Fall 2006	36.5% (n = 3,784)	26.6% (n = 628)	31.2% (n = 143)	$X^2(2) = 19.103, p < 0.05$

- Table 6 shows that the average Cumulative GPA of students who received federal aid is slightly higher than those students who did not receive federal aid. The difference however is not statistically significant. First time freshman were excluded from the analysis.

<b>Table 6. Average of Cumulative GPA of Students</b>			
<b>Term</b>	<b>Received Federal Aid</b>	<b>Did Not Receive Federal Aid</b>	<b>T-test</b>
Fall 2007	2.678	2.642	$t(10,133) = 2.512, p > 0.05$
Fall 2006	2.602	2.585	$t(10,622) = 1.128, p > 0.05$

- We see from Table 7 that the Cumulative GPA of students who received state financial aid is significantly higher than those students who did not receive state financial aid. State financial aid mainly comprises of TOPS and students who receive TOPS have

specific gpa requirements that they have to fulfill in order to continue receiving the award. First time freshman were excluded from the analysis.

**Table 7. Average of Cumulative GPA of Students**

Term	Received State Aid	Did Not Receive State Aid	T-test
Fall 2007	3.089	2.496	t(10,133) = 40.094, p < 0.05
Fall 2006	3.048	2.420	t(10,622) = 40.111, p < 0.05

- Table 8 shows the comparison of Fall 2006 to Fall 2007 retention rates of students who received federal and state financial aid as opposed to those that did not receive aid. A significantly higher percentage of students who received aid persisted than those that did not receive aid.

**Table 8. Retention Rates of Students**

	Received Aid	Did Not Receive Aid	Chi Square
Federal Financial Aid	61.5%	58.8%	$X^2(1) = 9.476, p < 0.05$
State Financial Aid	72.9%	53.7%	$X^2(1) = 469.659, p < 0.05$

## **Summary**

Most students at Southeastern apply and receive some form of federal or state financial aid. Female students received significantly higher percentage of federal and state financial aid. A significantly higher percentage of Black students received federal aid where as a significantly higher percentage of White students received state aid. The Cumulative GPA of students that received state aid is significantly higher than those that did not receive state aid. This may be because a large portion of state aid is comprised of scholarships which have more stringent academic requirements. Consistent with research, we see that students who received aid persisted at higher rates than those who did not receive aid.\*

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\*[http://www.achievingthedream.org/\\_pdfs/datanotes/DataNotes-MayJune-2007.pdf](http://www.achievingthedream.org/_pdfs/datanotes/DataNotes-MayJune-2007.pdf)