



U.S. Department of Education,  
Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA), FSA Training

***Developing and Implementing Training Programs  
for Financial Aid Administrators***



Case Study

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### The Challenge

The Training and Information Services Division (TISD) is the unit of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA) responsible for the learning needs of all external customers, including colleges, high schools, lenders, guaranty agencies, and state agencies. The audience is diverse, ranging from clerical staff at small, for-profit technical institutions to senior managers at large state universities. Training topics vary widely as well, addressing both the soft skills (management, procedures, and policy) and information technology required to administer financial aid. A variety of delivery formats are used, including Web and satellite-delivered videoconferences; traditional classroom-delivered training; self-paced, Web-delivered courseware; and distance learning via Web conferencing tools such as WebEx.

### The Solution

Vangent designs, develops, and implements training programs for staff at the 8,000 colleges and universities that annually administer \$70 billion in federal student assistance.

Since the inception of the FSA Training contract, Vangent has worked with FSA to design and develop more than 25 training courses and videoconferences delivered to more than 68,000 participants.

We have adapted our approach to instructional design to be in compliance with the FSA methodology, incorporating core principles of instructional design and adult experiential learning. Vangent is highly familiar with the FSA process for developing training and understands the steps and documentation required.

For the last two years, Vangent has designed and developed self-paced, Web-based courses that teach college staff how to use custom application software to administer their financial aid portfolios. Satellite and Web-streamed videoconferences are an effective and inexpensive means of training administrators who are geographically dispersed. Vangent has produced 15 videoconferences in the past 6 years to address the learning needs of school administrators stretching from the Mariana Islands to Maine. Each 2-hour conference is broadcast by satellite and is Web-streamed. Vangent

is responsible for all pre-production, production, and post-production tasks, including program design, script development, registration, and talent recruitment and coaching.

## The Results

Vangent takes great pride in the solutions that it has developed for FSA. Through a diverse line of products, we have helped engage administrators in an ongoing discussion with FSA. In the past two years alone, 51,000 school administrators have participated in live learning events or have used E-Learning products designed and developed by Vangent. Some of these events were self-paced, Web-based courses teaching college staff how to use custom application software to administer their financial aid portfolios.

Participants have consistently rated their satisfaction with each of these courses highly (4 to 5 on a 5-point scale). For example, for each of the 15 videoconferences we have produced for FSA, at least 92 percent of participants said they were either “satisfied” or “highly satisfied” with the learning experience.

During the spring of 2004, Vangent was tasked by FSA to create a national training event encompassing several Title IV topics entitled “R2T4, Analyzing Data and Conflicting Information.” This training effort required us to develop a full set of training materials and provide full logistical support locating training sites and hiring non-federal trainers. The training was highly successful and was described by the financial aid community as “the best training the Department of Education has ever put out.”

## Contact Information

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