

[Home](#)



## Program Review

Form for External Review Committee

### Non-Instructional

The ID number for this form is **87**. You will need this number to update or edit your submission in the future.

[Back To Forms](#)  
[List Page](#)

**NOTE: ANY CHANGES MADE ON THIS PAGE WILL NOT BE SAVED.**

Your form has been submitted. Thank you.

Division	Finance and Administrative Services
Department	Business Office
Program	Accounts Payable
Review Year	2007-2008
Names of the External Review Committee Members	Joan Urban
Division Overview Comments From External Review Committee	
The External Review Committee believes that the Finance and Administrative Services/Business Office/Accounts Payable Department completed their Program Review and addressed the evaluation appropriately.	

Questions and answers from the program review appear in the gray boxes. Use this information to answer the questions on the form.

### I. Office's/Department's Purpose

State the purpose of the office/department. How is this purpose within the mission of Amarillo College?

**To provide accounting and business services for income and disbursements in a timely manner and to provide timely reporting for Amarillo College and other external Agencies.**

Does the answer include a purpose statement for the office/department?  
Does the answer indicate how this office/department is within the mission of Amarillo College?

Acceptable

The response would be even better if connected more explicitly to the mission of Amarillo College.

When was the last time the office's/department's purpose statement was reviewed/revised by faculty/staff in the office/department?

Last reviewed January 30, 2001.

Does the answer indicate the last time the office's/department's purpose statement was reviewed/revised by faculty and staff in the office/department?

Acceptable

Is this office/discipline required to receive approval from an external agency or organization in order to offer courses?

no

Identify any external approvers for the office/department.

Not Answered

IF the office/discipline is required to receive approval from an external agency or organization (other than the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board),

Was (were) the external approver(s) for the office/department identified?

Acceptable

What approval schedule is required by the external approver(s)?

Not Answered

Was the approval schedule required by the external approver(s) identified?

Not Applicable

When did the office/department last receive approval?

Not Answered

When did the office/department last receive approval?

Not Applicable

Is the reason why the office/department is required to receive this approval clear?

Not Applicable

## II. Office's/Department's Improvements Based on Planning, Evaluation and Assessment

Identify at least one example of an improvement/revision which resulted from the past five-years' annual PET forms.

**1. The Disbursements area has created a Travel Training seminar to help educate college staff in AC Travel Policy and Procedures. This is offered once for each spring and fall semester. (See PET Form 2007-2008)**

**2. Guidelines for use of Request for Payments were created and distributed, resulting in fewer problem requisitions being sent to the Business Office. This has reduced the amount of time correcting errors for all departments and the Business office. (See PET Form 2006-2007)**

[PET Form 2005-2006](#)

[PET Form 2006-2007](#)

[PET Form 2007-2008](#)

After reviewing the minimum of at least one example of an improvement/revision which resulted from the annual PET forms for the last five years, determine the extent that this department/office has used the PET forms to make improvements/revisions. Does this meet the minimum expectations for using PET forms to make improvements/revisions to the department/office?

Acceptable

Commendation

COMMENDATION: The External Review Committee commends the Business Office Accounts Payable area for recognizing problems with Travel Policy and Procedures and with Request for Payments and for following up with training sessions to alleviate the problems.

The External Review Committee also appreciated having access to the appropriate PET forms during the review.

Identify at least one example of an improvement/revision which resulted from the last Program Review.

**1. Coordination with the Financial Aid department is improved regarding Void/Stop Pay Financial Aid checks. A written policy is provided to Disbursements and Financial Aid. We no longer issue replacement checks before the 2 week waiting period from check issue date is passed. This has resulted in minimizing of problems that were identified during the last program review.**

**2. The Disbursements Supervisor and Accountant have documented procedures in their respective Procedures Manual. Procedures are kept in a binder in their respective offices and are kept in electronic format on a secure server that is backed up regularly. The Accounting Clerks have documented many procedures, but have not combined them into a procedures manual as of yet.**

**3. The use of Procurement Cards has greatly increased at AC greatly simplifying the procurement of supplies needed by the departments. Amarillo College now has over 75 Procurement Cards issued to employees throughout AC. Each cardholder reports monthly on what accounts to charge for their purchases.**

**4. The AC Foundation now has their own check stock and checking account number allowing Accounts Payable to issues Foundation checks in a separate check run twice a week.**

After reviewing the minimum of one example of an improvement/revision

which resulted from the last Program Review, determine the extent to which this program/department values the Program Review process to make improvements/revisions.

Acceptable

Commendation

COMMENDATION: The External Review Committee recognizes that the Accounts Payable department reacted to their last Program Review by implementing changes to improve the items noted.

Identify at least one example of an improvement/revision that is a response to accomplish a strategy or tactical objective within the Strategic Plan through 2010.

**1. The rollout of Scanning/image technology is going to come to Business Services within the next 5 years. (5.2.3)**

**2. Currently Accounts Receivable is implementing e-Checks technology for accepting payments from students. The next step will likely be the electronic transmittal of Financial Aid funds directly to student's bank accounts. (1.1.3.4)**

**3. The Disbursements Supervisor is working with the Director of Student Services on implementing the expansion of the Intramurals programs at AC. They are creating a system to ensure quick processing of payments to referees involved to encourage participation in the program. (2.2.1)**

**4. The Accounts Payable area is coordinating with the Instructional Division and the Classified and Administrative areas on how to provide Travel Opportunities for Faculty and Staff. We have had meetings and communications with these areas suggesting procedures and distributing information necessary for the successful implementation of this goal. The Disbursements Supervisor has also communicated with the Learning Communities coordinator on ways to distribute "Professional Development Gift Certificates". (7.1.2)**

After reviewing a minimum of one example of an improvement/revision that is a response to accomplish a strategy or tactical objective within the *Strategic Plan through 2010*, determine the extent to which this office/department has contributed to the implementation success of the Strategic Plan. Does this office/department lack an understanding of how it relates to the institution's future based on the Strategic Plan?

Acceptable

Commendation

CONTEXT ISSUE: To make the Accounts Payable response even stronger, please cite the specific strategies or tactical objectives of the Strategic Plan along with the item number.

COMMENDATION: The External Review Committee commends the Accounts Payable Department for following through to implement improvement/revision with objectives identified in their Strategic Plan.

Does this committee have recommendations as to how this office/department may contribute to the implementation of the Strategic Plan?

Not Applicable

Provide names and titles of those who determined the process used to assess the outcomes of the office/department.

**Terry Berg, Dean of Finance and Administrative Services**

Sara Long, Business Office Manager

Michael Sugden, Disbursements Supervisor

Jeanette Nelson, Accountant

Marquetta Taylor, Accounting Clerk III

Dana Ferguson, Accounting Clerk II

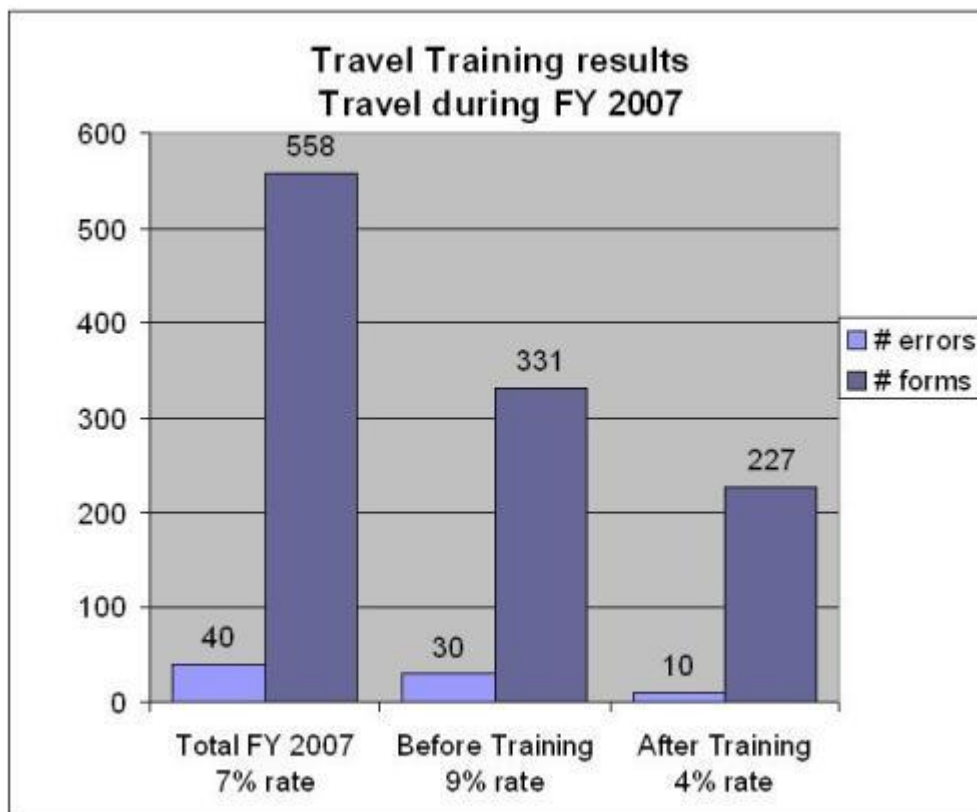
Has the office/department had a broad base of involvement from a majority of the staff within the office/department regarding implementation of student/client service or learning outcomes of the office(s) or department(s)? What recommendations does the Committee have for increasing involvement?

Acceptable

For client/student outcome assessments, review the five-year graph(s) *quantitative* results or provide a brief narrative summary of *qualitative* results.

**PET results 2005-2006:** a) The Accounts Payable area held 2 Travel Form training sessions to reduce the number of errors related to Travel at AC. Errors and results were not tracked. b) The Dean of Finance and Administrative Services created clear Guidelines for Use of Request for Payment (RFP) that were distributed to the College and enforced. This enforcement greatly reduced the number of problem RFP forms received in the Business Office.

**PET results 2006-2007:** The AP department held a Travel Training session in February of 2007. 20 AC Employees attended. Errors on Travel forms before and after training were tracked. Results are shown below. We processed 558 Travel forms during FY 2007 with 40 forms having major errors. Before the training session, 331 forms were processed with 30 errors. After the training session the number of errors on 228 forms was reduced to 10, an improvement of 5%.



What changes have been made in the services of the office/department because of the analysis of these results?

Travel Training sessions are now offered twice a year, once every Spring and Fall semesters. With the amount of turnover at AC, this continues to be a popular session. We plan to reduce to once each year if demand declines.

During these sessions, several suggestions and comments about the forms have been solicited and several upgrades to the Travel Authorization and Travel Expense Statement have been made. The most significant upgrade is the move to having both forms available on the [AC Website](#) for easy completion and printing.

For client/student service or learning outcomes, review the five-year graph(s) quantitative assessment results or provide a brief narrative summary of *qualitative* assessment results.

Have any changes been made in the services of the office/department because of the analysis of these results?

Acceptable

Concern

STYLE ISSUE: Please change 'we' to "Accounts Payable" in the first paragraph.

Provide the five-year graph(s) indicating the demand for the office's/department's services.

Assess the need for the office/department.

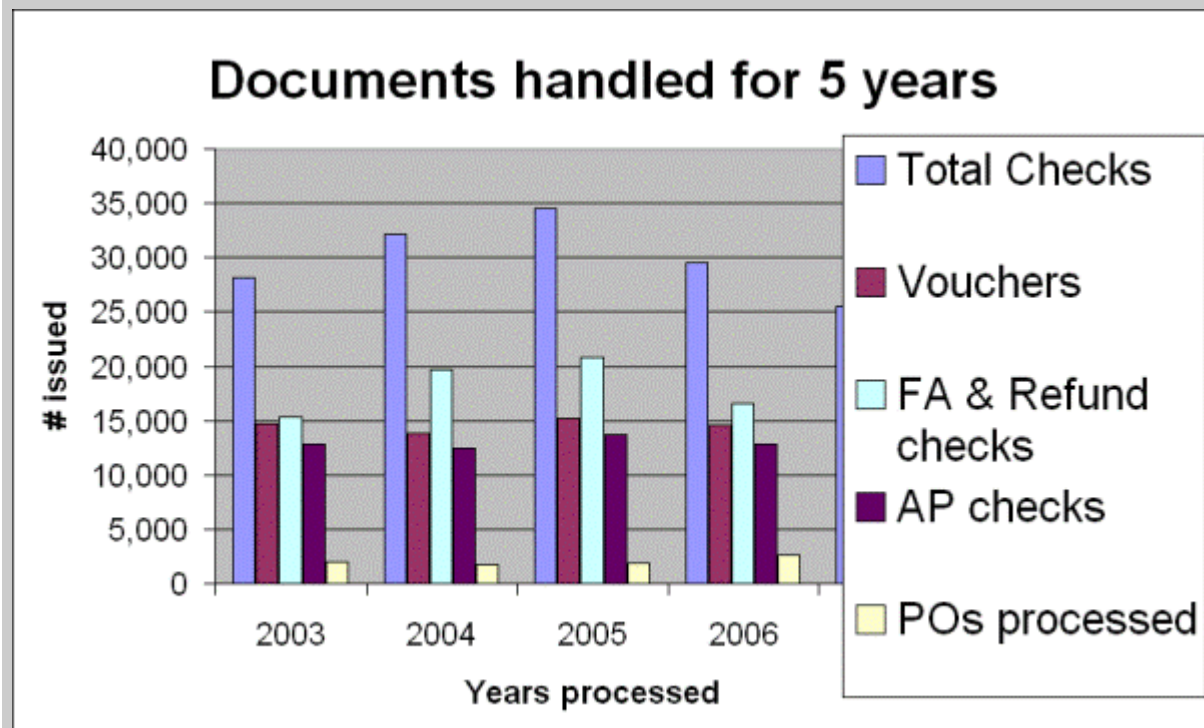
Disbursements work flow has been fairly consistent over a 5 year period, with fluctuations in volume of particular tasks.

The number of vouchers created each year by the Disbursements Department Accounting Clerks II and III has remained fairly steady averaging 14,400 per year.

Purchase Orders processed have been increasing in volume over the last 2 years, due to limitation of "[Request for Payment](#)" forms and other manual requisition forms that provide limited tracking opportunities.

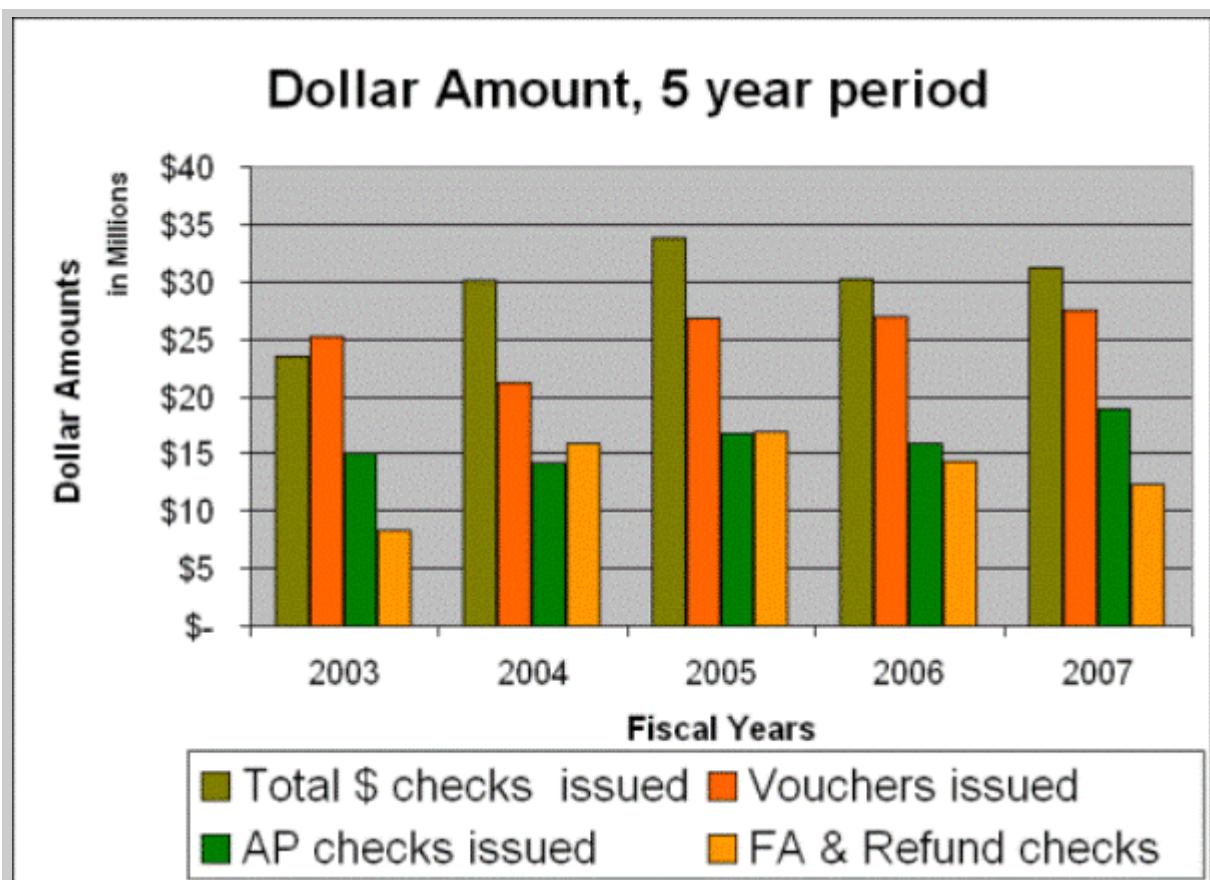
Disbursements issues, on average, 12,900 regular AP checks each fiscal year with no significant change year to year.

Financial Aid check runs were increasing in volume, but a policy/procedure change to eliminate Book Checks, starting for the Summer 2006 session, has reduced the number of these checks we issue. AC now waits to issue FA balance checks until after the 12th class day, and the students now charge their books on account through FA Link, reducing the number of checks we have to issue each semester. Due to this change, the overall volume of checks issued has been reduced over the last 2 years, but should level off at FY 2007 level.



Use of Amarillo College issued credit cards has increased dramatically over the last several years. Currently, there are 7 Executive, 47 Travel and 75 Procurement cards in use at AC. While this has reduced the number of Purchase Orders and manual requisitions at AC, the Disbursements area creates a voucher for each type of card to assign charges to departments as reported by cardholders each month. This lengthy process takes 1 day on average for the Executive card and 1-2 days for the Travel and Procurement card each month.

Travel at AC remains a highly demanding task for the Disbursements due to the complexity involved. FY 2007 had 558 Travel Authorizations processed, each of which will involve 1-6 or more vouchers/checks being created for each one. There is not enough historical data to create a graph.



Does the review of the five-year graph(s) of the office's/department's services demonstrate that an analysis has been used to make action plans for the future?

Will the program's/department's plan of action for improving any identified problem or results directly improve demand for the office's/department's services?

Acceptable

STYLE ISSUE: Replace the use of 'we' with "Accounts Payable" or other appropriate term.

### III. Resources

#### Library

Which of the following library collections/resources/services have been used by the staff and/or students within the past five years? (Select all that apply.)

Electronic journals Meeting services Seminars/conferences



Does it appear that the library collections/resources/services used by the staff and/or students within the past five years is accurate and thorough?

Acceptable

Which 2 or 3 collections/resources/services should be improved to support Amarillo College's mission regarding teaching and service?

NA

Has the office/department identified why 2 or 3 collections/resources/services should be improved to support Amarillo College's mission regarding teaching and service?

Not Applicable

Does your office/department have an external approver (other than the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board)?

no

How has the library participated in the approver's evaluation?

Not Answered

If the office/department has an external approver (other than the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board), has the library participated in completing the approver's evaluation?

Acceptable

What approval schedule is required by the external approver?

Not Answered

Did the office/department identify the approval schedule that is required by the external approver?

Not Applicable

When did the office/department last receive approval?

Not Answered

Did the office/department indicate when the last approval was received?

Not Applicable

## Technology and Security/Privacy

After assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the office's/department's access to technology, what improvements would ensure that the students have access and training in the use of technology?

NA

Does the office's/department's assessment of strengths and weaknesses of students' access to technology and training use of technology include ways to improve both?

What improvements would ensure that students use technology?

NA

Does the office's/department's answer include the improvements that would ensure students use technology? Are the recommendations of this office/department feasible?

Not Applicable

Review office/department operations. Does any operation present the possibility for violations of security, confidentiality, or integrity of student records?

no

After a review of this office's/department's operations based on this Self-Study and any other information available to this Committee, does any operation present the possibility for violations of security, confidentiality, or integrity of student records? If so, describe those operations and identify the violation possibility in detail.

Unacceptable

Concern

CONCERN: Please provide information about the steps that are taken to ensure confidentiality of financial records.

What changes need to be made to prevent violations of this nature?

Not Answered

What changes need to be made to prevent violations of this nature?

Unacceptable

Concern

CONCERN: The External Review Committee cannot determine whether changes need to be made in securing Accounts Payable information without knowing what security measures are already in place.

Which support services need to be strengthened to better serve the students in or served by this office/department? Explain what aspects of the services need to be strengthened.

NA

Do the Self-Study recommendations of this office/department for support services which need to be strengthened to better serve the students appear to have merit?

Not Applicable

Describe any indicators or problems that prevent a healthy, safe and secure environment for staff and students of this office/department.

None

Are recommendations to assure a healthy, safe and secure environment for staff and students of this office/department valid? Are any of these recommendations more significant and/or urgent?

Acceptable

Describe any indicators or problems that hamper adequate physical facilities, both on and off campus, to meet the needs of the office/department.

None

Do any of the problems or concerns regarding adequate physical facilities, both on and off campus, to meet the needs of the office/department appear to be significant and/or urgent? Are there any other needs of this nature which this Self-Study didn't cite but which this Committee feel are critical based on other information? Which of these does this Committee deem most significant and/or urgent?

Acceptable

#### IV. Budget

Which office/department outcomes have resulted in budget requests to date?

None

Have any of this office's/department's outcomes resulted in budget requests to date? If not, why? Was the explanation valid or reasonable?

Acceptable
Project the office's/department's strategic initiatives for the next five years based on the office's/department's outcomes.
The office will need to purchase equipment if the plan to implement document imaging proceeds. Training of personnel will be required to implement the new technology and additional personnel may be needed to operate the new equipment.
Has this office/department been able to project strategic initiatives for the next five years based on the office's/department's outcomes? If not, what appears to be blocking this office/department from accomplishing this?
Acceptable

**V. Publications**

If the office/department publishes any advertising or recruitment documents (electronic or paper), do the documents accurately represent Amarillo College and the program/department?
yes
IF the office/department has published any advertising or recruitment documents (electronic or paper), check <u>at least one copy of each document</u> and determine whether it accurately represents Amarillo College and the office/department.
Unacceptable
Concern
CONCERN: Should the Program Review answer be "NA" rather than "yes"? If Accounts Payable does publish documents, please provide a link or copy of each document.
If no, explain what is inaccurate?
Not Answered
IF anything appears to be inaccurate, identify the apparent violation.
Not Applicable
Does the office/department publish any documents (electronic or paper) with references to SACS accreditation?
no
Are the references in compliance with SACS approved statement?

Not Answered

IF the office/department has published any document(s) with a reference to SACS accreditation, are all references consistent with the approved statement? (Approved reference: Amarillo College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award associate degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Amarillo College.)

Acceptable

Which reference is not in compliance? Describe how you will assure compliance for all references in the future.

Not Answered

IF any references are inconsistent, identify all documents with the inconsistent reference(s).

Not Applicable

IF the Self-Study did identify inconsistencies, does the plan for assuring future compliance appear to correct the problem?

Not Applicable

IF the Self-Study did NOT identify all inconsistencies, what plan does this Committee recommend?

## VI. Other

State any additional comments/concerns which may impact this office/department during the next five years.

1. The move towards electronic funds transmittal of Financial Aid Disbursements and the corresponding reduction in issuing checks will impact Disbursements.
2. Payments to vendors by electronic funds transmittal will be considered if item #1 above goes well.
3. Electronic delivery of original invoices through e-mail, etc. will be an upcoming issue.
4. Document imaging technology will affect our procedures when it is implemented.
5. The Business Office needs the Physical Plant to fully integrate with the Colleague system. This would allow Accounts Payable to process all their payments through the system and eliminate the manual forms that are submitted for any payments less than \$1000.00. Processing these manual forms takes additional time to process and enter into the Voucher system.

IF additional comments/concerns were included in the Self-Study

regarding items which may impact this office/department during the next five years, does this Committee feel that recommendations and/or concerns have merit. IF NO such items were included in the Self-Study but this Committee feels such comments or concerns are valid, cite them and include any relevant recommendations.

COMMENTS:

1. The External Review Committee recognizes that the Accounts Payable Disbursements area will be impacted by electronic funds transmittal of Financial Aid Disbursements and agrees that steps will need to be taken to adjust to this impact.
2. The External Review Committee agrees that payment to vendors via electronic fund transfers will be a logical next step if all goes well with the procedures outlined in #1.
3. The External Review Committee agrees that Accounts Payable should stay abreast of the issue of electronic delivery of original invoices through e-mail and adjust procedures accordingly.
4. The External Review Committee appreciates that Accounts Payable is aware that document imaging will affect procedures and agrees that the department will need to adjust accordingly.
5. When checks are dispersed to students, the reason for the check or refund should be explained either on the check or in a letter.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. The External Review Committee recommends that staff from the Business Office and the Physical Plant meet to address the concerns outlined in #5 and implement policy/procedures to implement the necessary changes.