

Rhea Farooq

Associate Director, Financial Aid Systems

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📍 Evanston, IL 60201

STRENGTHS

- 👤 **Functional leadership**
Guided Banner decisions across departments, and colleagues often sought a practical answer before escalating issues.
- 📊 **Data stewardship**
Validated sensitive aid data during reporting work, giving stakeholders greater confidence in compliance and student records.
- ⚙️ **Service improvement**
Turned recurring manual steps into clearer workflows, and staff noticed smoother processing during busy aid cycles.
- 👥 **Collaborative delivery**
Brought financial aid and technology teams into testing early, which made difficult releases feel more manageable.
- 🎓 **Staff enablement**
Used real cases in training sessions, helping colleagues build confidence with Banner tools and solve issues independently.

SKILLS

Banner Financial Aid

Data governance

Financial aid compliance

Database reporting Data validation

Systems integration

Project management Staff training

Packaging and awarding

Workflow automation

System upgrades Troubleshooting

Student communications

Online services

Information sensitivity

SUMMARY

Associate director and **financial aid systems** specialist with eight years of higher education technology experience, including more than six years administering **Ellucian Banner Financial Aid**. Leads configuration, upgrades, testing, integrations, reporting, automation, troubleshooting, and technology planning across **financial aid** and enrollment operations. Connects policy, data, and service needs with dependable system behavior for undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral populations. Protects data integrity through validation, governance, classification, documentation, and information sensitivity practices supporting FERPA, federal, state, institutional, and audit requirements. Partners with financial aid, enrollment management, **information technology**, student accounts, and external agencies. Improves packaging, awarding, student communications, online services, and staff capability through practical technology changes that support reliable student service.

EXPERIENCE

Associate Director, Student Financial Systems

Midcity University 📅 February 2023 - Present 📍 Chicago, IL

Leads Banner Financial Aid administration and cross campus systems strategy, guiding reporting, automation, compliance, upgrades, integrations, and service improvements. Partners with financial aid, **enrollment management**, information technology, student accounts, and administrative stakeholders to protect data integrity and maintain dependable operations.

- Directed **Banner Financial Aid upgrades** with stakeholder testing, reducing disruption during annual aid cycle.
- Built reporting queries for award review, giving leaders clearer insight into processing exceptions.
- Automated recurring aid workflows, returning staff time for complex student service cases.
- Coordinated FERPA and audit controls through validation reviews and documented **data definitions**.
- Trained financial aid staff on Banner usage, **troubleshooting** methods, and practical process standards.
- Connected enrollment and **student accounts** data, improving reconciliation across campus operations.

Financial Aid Systems Manager

Riverbend State College 📅 July 2020 - January 2023 📍 Peoria, IL

Managed **Banner Financial Aid** configuration, integrations, packaging, awarding, reporting, and staff enablement. Translated operational requirements into tested system changes while coordinating implementation work across financial aid, enrollment, technology, and student accounts teams.

- Configured Banner packaging rules with **financial aid** review, improving consistent award decisions.
- Tested **integrations** across enrollment and student accounts, catching defects before production release.
- Created **reporting** extracts for compliance reviews, supporting timely **institutional** and federal submissions.
- Streamlined awarding workflows through automation, reducing manual handling during peak processing.
- Led **staff training** sessions using realistic cases, helping teams resolve Banner issues independently.
- Managed upgrade documentation and validation, giving stakeholders confidence in release readiness.

Financial Aid Systems Analyst

Great Lakes University 📅 June 2018 - June 2020 📍 Milwaukee, WI

Supported **Banner Financial Aid**, database reporting, testing, data validation, and daily aid operations. Served as a practical connection between functional users and technology teams, resolving issues and improving information quality for **student services**.

LANGUAGES

English	Native
Spanish	Intermediate

MY CAREER



- Associate Director, Student Financial Systems at Midcity University (3.6 Years)
- Financial Aid Systems Manager at Riverbend State College (2.5 Years)
- Financial Aid Systems Analyst at Great Lakes University (2 Years)

- Validated Banner aid records against source data, improving accuracy across student award populations.
- Developed database **reports** for counselors, making case review faster and more consistent.
- Tested online **financial aid** changes with staff feedback, improving student communication workflows.
- Troubleshoot production issues with technology partners, restoring dependable service for aid teams.
- Documented recurring solutions, giving colleagues a clearer reference during high volume periods.
- Reviewed data **classifications** and sensitive fields, supporting **FERPA** aligned handling practices.

PROJECTS

Banner Financial Aid Upgrade Program 📅 2023

Coordinated release planning, stakeholder testing, documentation, and validation for Banner Financial Aid upgrades. Kept service continuity and data quality central throughout implementation work.

Financial Aid Reporting and Automation Hub 📅 2022

Created reporting and workflow improvements that connected packaging, awarding, compliance review, and staff service needs. Clearer information helped teams act with greater confidence.

LEADERSHIP & AWARDS

- Received Ellucian Banner Financial Aid Advanced Administration Certificate in 2025 for advanced system administration capability.
- Earned recognition from financial aid colleagues in 2024 for dependable compliance reporting and patient staff support.
- Led cross campus systems coordination in 2023, building trust across financial aid, enrollment, technology, and student accounts.

EDUCATION

Master of Science in Information Systems

DePaul University 🎓 GPA: 4.0 📅 2020 📍 Chicago, IL

Coursework: Database systems, data governance, systems analysis, information security

Bachelor of Science in Information Technology

University of Illinois Chicago 🎓 GPA: 4.0 📅 2018 📍 Chicago, IL

Coursework: Database administration, programming, systems design, information technology management

CERTIFICATIONS

- FERPA for Higher Education Professionals 📅 2024
- Ellucian Banner Financial Aid Advanced Administration Certificate 📅 2025

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- **Ellucian Platforms:** Banner Financial Aid, BDMS, BCM
- **Ellucian Support:** Ellucian Action Line, Banner support, release support
- **Database Technologies:** SQL, relational databases, database queries
- **Reporting Tools:** Report development, data extracts, survey data
- **Data Governance:** Data definitions, data classification, data ownership
- **Data Quality:** Data validation, integrity checks, exception review
- **Financial Aid Operations:** Packaging, awarding, aid processing
- **Compliance Standards:** FERPA, federal aid rules, state aid rules
- **Systems Delivery:** Testing, upgrades, implementation planning
- **Integration Methods:** Data integration, cross campus interfaces, external agency exchange
- **Service Technologies:** Online functionality, student communications, workflow automation

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Member, EDUCAUSE community, following higher education technology practice and peer exchange.
- Participant, NASFAA professional community, supporting current financial aid administration and compliance knowledge.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Work Status : Authorized to work in United States. No sponsorship required.

REFERENCES

AVAILABLE ON REQUEST