

Dear Mr. Doyle and Ms. Simpson,

I am the student who emailed Ms. Simpson on December 10th in response to her request for a written account of my experiences with Financial Aid at BCC during the fall 2009 semester. I also gave Mr. Doyle a printout of that email in the evening of December 11th. The following is a revised account, which I intend to read at Tuesday night's meeting if I can get there on time, and you have my permission to read it in my behalf if I can't and to copy it and give it to anyone to whom you choose to give it.

- It was in June 2009 that I originally applied online for a Pell grant for the fall 2009 semester at BCC. I turned in all the documents the people at the Financial Aid desk at BCC said were necessary at that time. Had my application not been complete as of June 2009, I would not have been allowed to work during the summer of 2009 as a work study student--as I was.
- In early September 2009, after waiting in line at Financial Aid for more than four hours I was told that I would receive an award letter concerning my financial aid. This never happened.
- In October 2009 I made several unsuccessful attempts to wait in line long enough to find out further information about my Pell grant, but was unable to speak to anyone at the Financial Aid counter before I had to leave for a class.
- On November 16th, I finally managed to get into a line that was moving fast enough to facilitate my talking to someone at the Financial Aid counter before I had to leave. I was told that the income documentation for 2008 that I had turned in in June 2009 was not in my records, but that the Financial Aid counter would be open until 7 p.m. that same day and would also be open until 7 p.m. on November 17th and that I could submit the document for the second time on the 16th or 17th and that Financial Aid would then expedite my receiving my check within a short time.
- On November 17th, shortly before 4 p.m.--three hours before I had been told the Financial Aid counter would close on that day--I went to the Financial Aid counter and was told they had *already* closed, and that those who had been waiting in line at the time they had closed were the only ones they would see. I went up to Peter Nguyen, the man who had told me I could come back until 7 p.m. on the 17th the previous day, and when I reminded him of his statement, he allowed me to be last in line. After waiting more than an hour, I gave Mr Nguyen the required document and he told me Financial Aid had everything they needed and that they would expedite my getting my Pell grant check so that I could have it in about two weeks.

- On November 25th, the evening before Thanksgiving, I received an email from Peter Nguyen telling me I still had a document to turn in--the same document I had turned in already in June 2009 and on November 17, 2009.
- On December 3rd, I submitted the required document for the third time. I was told "you're in the computer. Check back next Monday."
- On December 7th, which was the following Monday, I was told that I would receive my check on December 16th--provided that I updated two pieces of information with Admissions and Records--my major and my high school.
- I immediately went to stand in line at Admissions and Records, where I was told by the woman at the counter that the only person who could update the required information was Loretta Newsom, and that she was at lunch.
- I went back to Admissions and Records after Ms. Newsom had returned from lunch, and she updated my major and told me there was no hold related to my high school. When I requested that she convey this information to Financial Aid, she said it was impossible: "we're separate departments." (The fall 2009 semester is my third at BCC as a full time student, and I supplied information about my high school, from which I graduated in 1968, when I first enrolled.)
- I immediately returned to the Financial Aid counter and told the woman at the counter what Loretta Newsom had said. She said, I'll give you my boss's phone number. She printed out the sheet of information that said I needed to update my major and my high school and gave me a post-it note with "Sherry Anderson" and a phone number (510-981-2878) on it--no office hours, no email address. I got a recorded message when I called that number and have as yet received no response to the messages I have left Ms. Anderson.
- I am writing this on December 13th, and I have no way of knowing whether or not I will be able to pick up my check on December 16th. I have spent more than forty hours, just in the last few weeks, waiting in lines to speak to someone about my check, and many more hours than that since June 2009.

If anyone wants to contact me, please give them my email address (chadidjahmcfall@gmail.com) and phone number, which is (510) 273-2432.

Thank you for your concern,
Chadidjah McFall
Tuesday, December 15, 2009