Jenine Salas

Jenine Salas proudly calls herself a true “financial aid lifer.” She got her start as a work-study student at UNM and now brings more than 13 years of professional experience from UNM’s Main and Valencia campuses, as well as CNM. She’s done a bit of everything from FAFSA guidance, federal aid processing, scholarship administration to leadership, and operations management. She currently serves as the Financial Aid Manager over Scholarships at the University of New Mexico, where she leads a team responsible for more than $300 million in scholarships each year. She also oversees the state’s largest group of Opportunity and Lottery Scholarship recipients…and let’s be honest, that could be its own full-time job!

Jenine loves finding ways to make processes smoother and student experiences better. She’s at her best when collaborating with colleagues, problem-solving big projects, and leading her team with energy, humor, and a student-first mindset.

She lives in Los Lunas with her husband and two daughters, who keep the family busy with gymnastics meets and practices. She also has two adult children (one who lives in Albuquerque and one in California) and a growing stack of psychological thrillers she swears she’ll finish “one of these weekends.” Jenine is excited and honored to be considered for NMASFAA President-Elect and looks forward to connecting with and supporting financial aid friends across New Mexico.

Jenine Salas

Financial Aid Manager, University of New Mexico

Contact

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SKILLS

Communication
Problem Solving
Leadership
Organizational
Customer Service
Critical Thinking/Analytical
Detail Oriented
Collaboration
Time Management
Computer
Professional Judgement
Decision Making

Software

Banner
OnBase
Academic Works
Microsoft Products

Training completed

2022-2023 FSA Basic Training for New Staff
2023 Virtual Federal Student Aid Training Conference
2025 SWASFAA Management and Leadership Institute Conference

EDUCATION

University of New Mexico
Fall 1998 – Spring 2002
Bachelor's Degree in Political Science, Minor in Social Welfare
GPA: 3.31

WORK EXPERIENCE

University of New Mexico-Financial Aid Manager
October 2024-Present

Lead a team of six employees, including scholarship officers and accountants, to ensure efficient and compliant administration of scholarship programs.
Oversee the state's largest population of Opportunity Scholarship recipients, managing an annual budget of approximately $70 million.
Coordinate the administration of over $300 million in total scholarship funds annually, ensuring funds are awarded and reconciled in accordance with state and institutional guidelines.
Implemented process improvements to streamline operations and automate routine tasks, enhancing accuracy and reducing manual workload.
Reviewed applications for the university's most prestigious competitive scholarships, supporting holistic evaluation and award decisions.
Conduct end-of-term analysis of state and institutional scholarship data to evaluate compliance, identify trends, and inform future awarding strategies.
Draft and distribute email communications to students regarding scholarship requirements, renewal criteria, and next steps for those not meeting eligibility, including appeal and petition processes.
Collaborate with key campus partners to resolve complex student concerns, support scholarship audits, and improve student-centered services.

Central New Mexico Community College-Associate Director
July 2024-October 2024

Managed a team of two full-time employees and one work study student, providing leadership and guidance to enhance our team's effectiveness.
Conducted weekly one-on-one sessions with team members to deliver feedback, identify growth opportunities, and drive team success.
Developed and implemented departmental processes, including the creation of new RRAAREQ codes and standardizing the use of OnBase to improve efficiency with our department and One-Stop.
Developed communication templates to efficiently notify students of their scholarship eligibility, ineligibility, and award status.
Introduced a new contract process for students with approved Lottery/Opportunity appeals, utilizing SignNow for streamlined signing.
Administered over $600K in Foundation Scholarships, including applicant screening and award distribution.
Collaborated with the Executive Director of CNM Foundation to ensure the effective allocation of funds and to strategize outreach to eligible students.
Managed institutional scholarship funds, ensuring awards were made in accordance with established criteria.
Oversaw the distribution of state funds, including TPREP, Lottery, Opportunity, and SSIG, ensuring compliance with funding requirements.
Handled escalated cases involving dissatisfied students or parents, providing additional support and resolution.
Collaborated closely with departments such as Cashier's, CNM Wellness, and Admissions to ensure file completion and resolve complex student issues.

Central New Mexico Community College-Financial Aid Advisor
October 2022–July 2024

Reviewed verification files, cleared c-flags, reviewed and processed loan revisions according to federal regulations and consortium agreements, ensuring compliance.
Calculated SAP for students, reviewed approximately 300 yearly SAP appeals and sent financial aid contracts to students via SignNow which improved processing time.
Cancelled financial aid for transferring students and notified the requested institution, ensuring a seamless transition.
Advised students on the short-term and long-term consequences of dropping courses, providing personalized guidance and support.
Exercised professional judgment to determine if student's aid should be adjusted due to special circumstances or required an override due to dependency issues.
Processed Alternative Teacher Licensure Pell overrides, ensuring eligible students received the necessary financial support.
Provided info regarding NM Opportunity Scholarship and used Opportunity workflow in Banner to determine eligibility.
Cleared student overawards on a weekly basis maintaining compliance for over 300 student accounts annually.

Assigned cases to other advisors through Salesforce to ensure timely resolution and optimal case management.
Maintained and updated an Excel spreadsheet of over 1100 SAP appeals annually to provide accurate tracking and timely processing.
Assisted One-Stop and Contact Center with inquiries over chat.
Analyzed and worked disbursement reports to ensure timely financial aid disbursement.
Analyzed transfer monitoring reports to guarantee that students weren't being paid at another school at the same time as CNM.

Central New Mexico Community College-Financial Aid Advisor
January 2014–April 2016

Reviewed verification files, cleared c-flags, reviewed and processed loan revisions according to federal regulations and consortium agreements, ensuring compliance.
Calculated SAP for students, reviewed SAP appeals and wrote financial aid contracts.
Cancelled financial aid for transferring students and notified the requested institution, ensuring a seamless transition
Advised students on the short-term and long-term consequences of dropping courses, providing personalized guidance and support.
Exercised professional judgment to determine if student's aid should be adjusted due to special circumstances or required an override due to dependency issues.
Processed Alternative Teacher Licensure Pell overrides, ensuring eligible students received the necessary financial support.
Presented financial aid information to students at local high schools and facilitated FAFSA workshops, increasing application rates.
Managed and responded to FASS email from students, providing accurate information and timely support.
Manage branch campus operations in the advisor's absence, ensuring continuity of services and support for students.
Cleared student overawards on a weekly basis maintaining compliance for over 300 student accounts annually.
Conducted weekly in-person loan counseling sessions, assisting over 30 students per week.

University of New Mexico-Valencia Campus-Financial Aid Officer
January 2010–January 2014

Advised students and parents on the Financial Aid process, provided information on available programs and eligibility requirements.
Evaluated student's financial requests and assessed ability for grants, loans and work study.
Made award adjustments to federal and state awards, including the Lottery Scholarship, ensuring compliance with federal and state eligibility requirements.
Evaluated student's academic progress, checked student petitions for completion and led committees to reinstate student's financial aid.
Exercised professional judgment to determine if student's aid should be adjusted due to special circumstances or required an override due to dependency issues.
Processed hiring paperwork for all student employee and work study

students through UNMJobs, streamlining onboarding procedures.
Delivered 20+ presentations on financial aid and scholarship information to local high schools and college classrooms, which increased student awareness.
Managed highly sensitive and confidential information for over 1200 students, ensuring privacy and compliance with FERPA regulations.
Organized and coordinated the annual Scholarship Recognition Reception for over 300 attendees.
Supervised 3 Work Study students, provided training and mentorship.

Albuquerque Monument & Engraving-Supervisor
June 2009-January 2010

Generated sales from wholesale accounts as well as individual retail customers.
Maintained a relationship with local builders, glass companies, funeral homes and cemeteries around the state of NM which lead to repeat business.
Managed a team of 5 employees, overseeing scheduling, vacation approvals and bi-weekly timecard sign-offs..
Trained and onboarded 2 new employees, developed training materials and prioritized work assignments to ensure seamless integration and enhanced productivity.
Created designs for memorial markers using Auto-Cad, providing immediate service to families.
Kept track of monthly wholesale and retail sales using Excel.
Responsible for reporting information to the owners and president of corporation.
Coordinated and executed monthly trips to deliver monuments across the state, ensuring timely and efficient delivery services, which improved customer satisfaction.
Utilized expertise in laser engraving, diamond engraving, and sandblasting to produce high-quality memorial markers,
Worked with French Funerals and Cremations, Sunset Memorial Park and Best Friends to fulfill urn and grave marker orders, ensuring high-quality products and timely delivery that boosted client satisfaction and repeat business.

Vaughn's Fine Jewelers-Manager
September 2002-May 2009

Managed a team of three employees for a family-owned business.
Generated and analyzed daily sales reports and graphs using Win-Jewel, providing critical insights that helped identify sales trends and inform inventory decisions.
Monitored inventory levels and produced reports to inform owners about fast-sellers and items that needing reorder.
Provided strategic recommendations on product selection based on customer feedback and market trends.
Implemented Point of Sale (POS) systems in the front showroom and trained 3 employees, enhancing transaction efficiency and customer experience.
Increased sales by delivering exceptional customer service and leveraging in-depth product knowledge to meet customer needs effectively.

Generated sales from repair services, providing accurate quotes as well as recorded prices of repairs not done at time of visit.
Maintained merchandise displays enhancing visual appeal.
Provided excellent customer service both over the phone and in person.
Fostered a welcoming store environment that encouraged repeat visits and enhanced overall customer satisfaction.

University of New Mexico-Financial Aid Advisor
May 2002-September 2002

Advised students and parents on the Financial Aid process and providing detailed information on available programs and eligibility requirements.
Evaluated student's financial requests and assessed ability for grants, loans and work study.
Made award adjustments on less complex cases.
Evaluated student's academic progress, checked student's petitions for completion and sat on committees to reinstate student's financial aid.
Exercised professional judgment to determine if a student's aid should be adjusted.
Issued short-term loans to those who qualified.
Conducted loan entrance counseling according to federal and university guidelines.
Researched problems that arose from daily transactions.
Served as liaison with other departments on campus.
Worked with highly sensitive and confidential student and parent information.

University of New Mexico-Student Employment HRIS Coordinating Assistant
April 2000-May 2002

Monitored federal and state work study earnings to ensure students did not exceed financial aid eligibility.
Verified academic progress, work study awards and eligibility for financial aid.
Assisted HRIS Coordinator to process and enter student employee and work study hiring paperwork, terminations, salary adjustments, account changes, FTE changes and transfers.
Interacted with new hires and assisted them in filling out the appropriate paperwork.
Interacted with the payroll department and verified bi-weekly time sheets.
Trained 4 new employees.
Updated job postings on the work study website.

University of New Mexico-Financial Aid Officer Peer Advisor
August 1998-April 2000

Provided advice to students and parents regarding financial aid programs, requirements and processes.
Evaluated student's academic progress and reviewed appeals.
Sat in on committees and reviewed petitions for reinstatement of

financial aid.
Reviewed loan applications and other financial documents for accuracy.
Served as liaison with other departments on campus.
Conducted presentations at Lobo Orientation.

REFERENCES

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