The new system should include the following capabilities for Financial Aid Administration:

1) Support automatic data interchange between UCR’s system and those of external data systems such as the State of California (California Student Aid Commission), U.S. Department of Education (DOE), Internal Revenue Service (IRS), NCAA software, and other agencies as needed.

2) Enhance data interchange between campus systems. Must easily interface in order to automate the process of information exchange between the Personnel Payroll System, General Ledger (PeopleSoft), UCRFSlite, SUPERDOPE, Billings Receivable System, STARRS, PAWS, and departmental databases as necessary.

3) Must perform standard federal student aid processing. The system must be flexible enough to quickly respond to the ever-changing nature of financial aid. The system must:
   a) Automatically send, receive and log data records from all internal and external sources, ensuring that proper monitoring is available to ensure no data is lost. Ability to tie the upload of records to UCR student status.
   b) Automatically load and modify user specified student budgets, and perform all mandated need analysis in accordance with annual federal standards.
   c) Ability to monitor records and account for differences in student identifiers due to dissimilar record keys, (e.g., federal SSN vs. institutional ID) and correct inconsistencies. This function must be present to monitor possible differences in internal UCR databases (currently SDUP process).
   d) Provide audit trail containing federal, state and institutionally specified data for the necessary retention periods, including counselor comments. Provide for automatic purging of financial aid records and performance of periodic system maintenance (e.g., FAM has reached its segment limit in some areas).
   e) Provide automated notification of students’ admission and enrollment, and changes to student status (SIR status, grades, last date of attendance, withdrawal/dismissal actions for computation of federal refunds, and on-line calculation of federal Return to Aid, etc.).

4) Provide an official third week file for Financial Aid data. As of now there is no ability to compare third week data historically. This would help to improve the consistency between financial aid data reported to requesting sources by the Financial Aid Office and data of the same type requested/reported by other campus offices. This is currently an ongoing issue in the provision/reconciliation of data reported to the UCOP Corporate Student System.

5) Provide product with a user friendly interface easily managed by desktop users, which will empower them to use integrated data from all available sources: STARRS, PAWS, GROWL, web applications, mainframe data, etc.
6. Perform automated aid packaging, re-packaging, and packaging simulations to optimize the utilization of funds, incorporating fund restrictions (e.g., federal loan limits). Must be able to track/process aid revisions, cancellations, rejects and re-packaging based on user specified triggers (e.g., enrollment changes.) The system should be able to monitor the effect of these changes on other departments/system modules, modify data, and notify affected parties as necessary.

7. Maintain distinct academic year and summer session components, especially in the aid packaging module. Have a methodology in place to coordinate the timing of data inputs which cross processing years to ensure ‘apples to apples’ data integrity (reduce the negative effect of timing differences in data interpretation).

8. Track document requests, and receipt of documents in STARRS. Create document files to easily produce printed tracking letters, award letters, and e-mail correspondence, based on specified system data characteristics for groups of students. Ability to track this output and print duplicates.

9. Redesign of FAM’s data presentation paradigm to facilitate the grouping of data to mirror the aid processing workflow. FAM currently has over 40 screens, which were designed at a time when financial aid regulations and procedures were significantly different. Inherent in this redesign is a need for a simple, yet secure, system for the assignment and maintenance of individual system accesses, which compliments the new design.

10. Allow for timely and efficient disbursement of student financial aid. The disbursement process must be automated in all areas, adhering to regulations as they pertain to periods of award, allowable disbursement dates, holding of aid payments, eligibility of students to receive aid, etc. This will again require the effective integration of all system modules.

11. Track system fund expenditures and counts of students awarded by fund, real-time, including automatic system updates on actual payments made from the BRS and/or PeopleSoft system. Currently the data flow of IA PLUS has no provision for the updating of financial data from other campus systems (exception: PPS updates work-study paid to dates.) Due to system incompatibilities, certain critical data we require is not available in the General Ledger, such as student level payment detail. As we are a feeder system, we only have fund level activity. Financial Aid is required to reconcile to the student as well as the fund level. Due to the sheer number of accounts and transactions involved, a tremendous amount of effort is needed to reconcile ‘across’ FAM, BRS and the General Ledger. This could be greatly reduced by automating the processes between the systems to perform fund monitoring and reconciliation.

12. Provide a method to monitor UC inter-location activities such as multi-campus enrollment, and facilitate the inter-location transfer of funds and expenses.

13. Provide ‘SQL-like’ ability to the user to enable them to acquire reports of a routine nature. A possible example of this would be a query of data for scholarship selection. This would free programmers to work on other endeavors.