



Publication Date: May 3, 2019
DCL ID: 2020-01

Subject: 2019-2020 State Scholarship, Grant and Loan Program Regulations
Tuition Award Charts
Invoicing and Extension Request Deadlines

Dear Colleague:

The 2019 Legislative Session included several bills related to programs administered by the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC). Several of those bills passed and GSFC's Board of Commissioners has approved updated regulations for 2019-2020 that incorporate the resulting changes. Details of those regulatory changes are below. However, please note that some changes are still pending Governor Kemp's final signature. Final regulations will be posted on May 14, 2019.

Perhaps just as important as the bills that passed were those that did not receive final passage, including House Bill 444 related to Dual Enrollment. GSFC worked very closely with the Governor's office and members of the General Assembly to update the program to provide more intentionality and to control the rapid growth of expenditures. Ultimately, however, no agreement was reached on the policy changes that would provide more program structure and control costs, while maintaining access for specific student groups.

GSFC is now tasked with administering the Dual Enrollment program within the available state program budget of approximately \$100M, even though our original projections indicated more than \$125M is required to meet demand and student participation. Since the end of the legislative session, we have worked with the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget to evaluate possible regulatory changes within our statutory authority that could assist in balancing the program budget by cutting expenses by \$25M.

Accordingly, GSFC will implement a change to the award rates paid on behalf of Dual Enrollment students. Beginning in the Fall term 2019 (FY 2020), the payment rate for book and fee awards will be \$0. Updated award charts will be posted online by May 14, 2019.

While we recognize the impact this may have on your institutions, this action will minimize the direct impact to students and not directly eliminate any one or more student groups from participation. Additionally, this will allow for continued discussions with policy makers and our partners in the coming months regarding more substantive policy changes that will ensure longer term program sustainability.

Please note that institutions must still accept payment from GSFC as full payment for Dual Enrollment students and will not be permitted to charge mandatory fees or book charges to students.

Details on the program and regulatory changes for the upcoming year are below.

2019-2020 State Program Regulations

The Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) and the Georgia Student Finance Authority (GSFA) Boards approved the Program Regulations at their May 3, 2019 Board meeting. The Program Regulations are effective July 1, 2019 and awards are effective Fall term 2019. The Program Regulations, updated award charts, and an executive summary will be posted at gsfc.org by May 14, 2019. A link to the Program Regulations can also be found at GAfutures.org under “Shortcuts.”

The FY 2020 Program Regulations include clarifications, revisions and changes made due to legislation passed during the 2019 session of the Georgia General Assembly and as a result of feedback and suggestions from our postsecondary partners. Listed below are several award amount and regulatory changes that affect the administration of the state programs. Please review the FY 2020 Program Regulations for all revisions.

- A three percent increase is approved for HOPE Scholarship – Public and Private Institutions and HOPE Grant institutions, effective Fall term 2019 (FY 2020) (HB 31).
- A \$500 per semester/\$375 per quarter increase is approved for Zell Miller Scholarship – Private Institutions, effective Fall term 2019 (FY 2020) (HB 31).
- A ten-year expiration of eligibility limit for students who receive their first HOPE or Zell Miller Scholarship payment in Summer term 2019 (FY 2020) or later (HB 218).
- Effective Fall term 2019 (FY 2020), Dual Enrollment award rates for tuition, mandatory fees and book costs will be published annually by GSFC. Rates for tuition, mandatory fees and book allowance may vary based on course type, course delivery method, institution sector, or term of enrollment.
- Eligible Postsecondary Institutions must adhere to the Dual Enrollment award rates published annually; accept award amount as full payment of tuition, mandatory fees and book costs up to the 15 semester or 12 quarter credit hours per term limit.
- The REACH Program is being codified into law, though provisions are subject to available funding (SB 83):
 - Participating School Systems with five or more high schools may be approved to select up to twelve scholars annually. School Systems will be notified annually of the approved funds in the Annual Student Selection Approval form.
 - The proportionate share of funding required to be provided by the Participating School Systems has been revised. For scholars in the 2019-2020 Cohort from participating school systems the rate is based on the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Job Tax Credit tier designation and has been revised.

Award Charts

State Program Award Charts for 2019-2020 for HOPE Scholarships – Public and Private Institutions, HOPE Grant, Zell Miller Scholarship, Zell Miller Grant, and Dual Enrollment, effective Fall term 2019 (FY 2020), will be posted no later than May 14, 2019, and can be found at GAfutures.org under “Trending.”

FY 2020 (Upcoming Fiscal Year) Invoicing

[The FY 2020 Invoicing and Extension Request deadline chart is now available.](#)

FY 2019 Invoicing and Extension Request Deadlines

As in the past, the Program Regulations require that all invoices for a term be fully submitted, processed, and approved for payment by the invoicing term deadline. Spring term 2019 invoices are due June 8, 2019. A postsecondary institution needing an extension to process current fiscal year invoices beyond June 8 must submit a request for extension to GSFC by June 8. [The FY 2019 Invoicing and Extension Request deadline chart is available for reference.](#)

The request for extension must include the reason an extension is needed, program(s), number of invoices, and the approximate total dollar amount of the invoices to be submitted. Extensions for the current fiscal year’s invoices may be granted through June 21, 2019.

The Program Regulations require postsecondary institutions to complete a year-end reconciliation of each state program for which funds were received for the year and submit a year-end reconciliation form by July 15.

Prior Year Invoices

Invoices for prior fiscal years will not be paid except under certain extraordinary and narrowly defined circumstances. The Program Regulations allow an invoice to be paid after the year-end invoicing only if failure to meet the deadline was due to the need for supplemental documentation including, but not limited to, information required for the student’s college admission (e.g., proof of citizenship or residency), late grades, grade changes or other adjustments made to the student’s official academic transcript that result in a change in a student’s eligibility. A postsecondary institution needing to submit a prior year’s invoice(s) must email GSFC’s Student Aid Services Department with the invoice, student information, and the reason for missing the deadline (e.g., the documentation that became available after the deadline, as noted above).

If a postsecondary institution needs to submit invoices or increase the award amount on existing invoices after the year-end reconciliation, the director of financial aid must submit a written request to GSFC’s Student Aid Services Department including the following:

1. The reason for the prior year late invoice request
2. The number of invoices
3. The total dollar amount of the invoices to be submitted

If the requests for the invoices to be paid after the year-end reconciliation total more than ½ percent of the total amount disbursed to the postsecondary institution for the corresponding program in the current fiscal year, the institution's president must submit a written request to GSFC's Student Aid Services Department including the following:

1. The reason for the prior year invoice request
2. The number of invoices
3. The total dollar amount of the invoices to be submitted
4. A corrective action plan outlining measures that will be taken in the future to meet the published invoicing deadlines which shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - a. Staff and/or system changes implemented that ensure timely submission of invoices
 - b. Dates and content of training to prepare staff for timely submission of invoices
 - c. Supplemental documentation relating to delays

If you have questions relating to regulations, deadlines, or eligibility, please contact Pennie Strong, Vice President, Student Aid Services, at 770.724.9014 or email at pennies@gsfc.org.

Sincerely,



Caylee Noggle
President