Federal Update
March 28, 2013

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U.S. Department of Education

Topics
- Sequestration
- College Choice Tools
- studentaid.gov and Social Media
- Default Rates
- Statutory Changes
- Verification
- Unusual Enrollment History
- Gainful Employment
- Questions
2013-2014 Pell Grant Payment Schedules

- DCL GEN-13-06
- Maximum Scheduled Award - $5,645
  - $95 increase
- Maximum Eligible EFC – 5081
- Minimum Scheduled Award (formula) - $565
- Minimum Scheduled Award (schedules) $582
- No LEU Minimum
- CPS Reprocessing began on March 19

Sequestration
Sequestration

- Federal Pell Grant Program
  - No impact to either 2012-2013 or 2013-2014

- FWS and FSEOG Programs
  - No impact on 2012-2013 campus allocations
  - 2013-2014 allocations will be reduced
    - Will show in final allocations

Sequestration

- TEACH Grant and Iraq-Afghanistan Service Grant Programs
  - Reductions apply only when the first disbursement of the award is made after March 1, 2013.
  - TEACH Grant awards must be reduced by 12.6 percent from the award amount the recipient would otherwise have been entitled.
  - Iraq-Afghanistan Service Grant awards must be reduced by 37.8 percent from the award amount the recipient would otherwise have been entitled.
Sequestration

Federal Direct Loan Programs

- Direct Subsidized and Direct Unsubsidized loan fees are increased from 1.0 percent to 1.051 percent. For example, the fee on a $5,500 loan will increase by $2.80 from $55.00 to $57.80.

- Direct PLUS loan fees (for both parent and graduate student borrowers) are increased from 4.0 percent to 4.204 percent. For example, the fee on a $10,000 PLUS loan will increase by $20.40 from $400.00 to $420.40.

Pending further guidance, schools should continue to award, disburse, and report using 1% and 4%.

Both ED’s and schools’ systems (either their own or ones they contract for) will need to be modified. We will include implementation time for those modifications before the new fee structure will be required.

Institutions will not be liable for the difference between the 1 percent and 4 percent fees and the revised fee amounts.

If needed, ED work with the students/borrowers.
College Choice Tools
Know Before You Go
Know Before You Owe

College Scorecard
An online tool that will make it easier for students and families to compare colleges by comparing information such as: net price; graduation rates; default rates; student loan debt; and earnings potential
Financial Aid Shopping Sheet

Student Specific Information:
Cost of Attendance Elements
Grants and Scholarships
Net price After Grants
Work Options
Loan Options
Other Options Including Family Contribution

Institutional Metrics:
Graduation rate under “Student Right-to-Know”
Most recent cohort default rate
Median debt for completers
Loan repayment information
Contact information

Where Can I Find This Information?
http://collegecost.ed.gov/
FFEL/Direct Loan
Cohort Default Rates

What is the CDR Calculation?

- A cohort default rate is the percentage of the number of the school's FFEL and Direct Loan borrowers who enter repayment in one Federal Fiscal Year (October 1 through September 30) who default in that federal fiscal year or by the end of the next federal fiscal year.
HEOA Changes

- Increases the CDR monitoring period from two to three years.
- Beginning with the 2009 cohort, the calculation will be:
  - Borrowers who default in that federal fiscal year or by the end of the next two federal fiscal years
  - FY 2009 3-year rate is 13.4%
  - Establishes a three-year transition period for sanctions
HEOA Changes

- See Electronic Announcement from 03-18-2013
- FY 2011 draft 2 year rates released on 03-18-2013
- FY 2010 draft 3 year rates released on 03-25-2013
Statutory Changes

Ability-to-Benefit (ATB)

Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 –

- Eliminated Title IV eligibility for students without a high school diploma or equivalent (unless the student was homeschooled)
  - Beginning with the 2012-2013 award year
  - See DCL GEN-12-01 and DCL GEN-12-09
**Ability-to-Benefit (ATB)**

- Equivalent of a high school diploma:
  - A GED
  - A State certificate that is recognized by the state as the equivalent of a high school diploma.
  - Successful completion of at least a two-year program that is acceptable toward a BA.
  - Documentation that the student excelled academically in high school. Enrollment must be for an associate degree or equivalent.

**Ability-to-Benefit (ATB)**

- Exception:
  - Students who were, enrolled in a Title IV eligible program anytime prior to July 1, 2012, may continue to qualify under one of the ATB alternatives
    - Approved ATB test
    - Completion of six credit or 225 clock hours
Pell Duration of Eligibility

Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 –
- Establishes the duration of a student’s eligibility to receive Pell Grant to be 12 semesters or its equivalent.
  - Effective with the 2012-2013 award year.
  - Applies to all students
  - Includes all years of the Pell/Basic Grant Program
  - Back to the 1973-1974 Award Year
  - See DCL GEN-12-01 and various Electronic Announcements and Tech References

Calculate the 12 semester equivalency by adding together each of the annual percentages of a student’s scheduled award that was actually disbursed to the student

- Results in LEU – Lifetime Eligibility Used
- Once LEU reaches 600%, student no longer eligible for Pell Grant funding
- If LEU more than 500% but less than 600%, partial eligibility for the award year
Pell and IASG Reporting

• See Federal Register dated February 28, 2013
• See EA from March 15, 2013

“For disbursements (or adjustments to previously made disbursements) made on or after April 1, 2013, an institution must submit Federal Pell Grant or Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant disbursement records, as applicable, no later than 15 days after making the disbursement or becoming aware of the need to adjust a student’s previously reported Federal Pell Grant or Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant disbursement.”

No Subsidized Loans for Grad Students

The Budget Control Act of 2011 –

- Ended the eligibility of graduate and professional students for Subsidized Loans
- Effective for loans made for loan periods beginning on or after July 1, 2012
- Subsidized Loans for loan periods beginning before July 1, 2012 remain unchanged
- COD will monitor
Grace Period Interest Subsidy
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012

- Temporarily eliminates the interest subsidy on Direct Subsidized Loans during the six month grace period
  - Applies to new Direct Stafford Loans for which the first disbursement is made on or after July 1, 2012, and before July 1, 2014
  - Accrued grace period interest not paid will be capitalized
  - Borrower could have some loans with interest subsidy and some without when in grace period

Subsidized Loan Limitation
P.L. 112-141

- Established a limit of how many years a student may receive subsidized loans
  - Applies to “new borrowers” on or after July 1, 2013
    - Borrower with no balance on a FFEL or Direct Loan on July 1, 2013.
  - When student has received subsidized loans for 150% of the published length of the academic program -
    - Student may not receive additional subsidized loans for enrollment in that program.
Subsidized Loan Limitation Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Length</th>
<th>Limitation on Subsidized Loan Eligibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-Year Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>6 Years of subsidized loan eligibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Year Associates Degree</td>
<td>3 Years of subsidized loan eligibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-Year Certificate Program</td>
<td>1 ½ Years of subsidized loan eligibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Week Certificate Program</td>
<td>15 Weeks of subsidized loan eligibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subsidized Loan Limitation

- Transfers –
  - Students maximum time to receive subsidized loans is established based on the length of the program the student is enrolled in
  - Remaining subsidized eligibility is calculated by subtracting from maximum eligibility for the program, the time the student has already received subsidized loans for enrollment in any program.
**Subsidized Loan Limitation**

- **Transfer Examples** –
  
  - Student receives two years of subsidized loans while enrolled in a two-year program
    - Student transfers to a four-year BA program
      - Student has four years of remaining subsidized loan eligibility
  
  - Student receives three years of subsidized loans while enrolled in a four-year BA program
    - Student transfers to a two-year AA program
      - Student has no remaining subsidized loan eligibility

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**Subsidized Loan Limitation**

- ED/FSA will track, calculate, and inform students and institutions.
  - Likely to be codes and comments on SARs and ISIRs.
  - COD editing and enforcement.
- Schools will need to:
  - Provide program information, including length of program, to both COD and to NSLDS; and
  - Update and correct loan academic year dates and loan period dates.
State Authorization

- You must study 34 CFR 600.9 (state authorization regulations) on ifap.ed.gov
- If you have questions about the state authorization regulations contact the Dallas School Participation Division at 214-661-9490
- If your state has questions about the state authorization regulations they should contact Sophia Mcardle at (202) 219-7078
2012-2013 Verification Items

- Electronic Announcement (EA) posted to IFAP on November 2
  - Copy of tax return acceptable if tax filer unable to secure IRS Tax Return Transcript
  - Documentation of transcript request failure
  - Completed IRS Form 4506T-EZ or Form 4506-T to school.
  - School does not submit to IRS unless there is a question about the submitted return
- Applies only to 2011 tax returns for 2012-2013, not to 2012 returns for 2013-2014.
2012-2013 Verification Issue

- Applicable to 2012-13 only
- Do not assume this will apply to future award years
- 2013-14 FSA Handbook AVG has been corrected
- Make sure your paper 2013-14 AVG shows the “FSA HB FEB 2013” date, not the “FSA HB JAN 2013 date”
- See Errata posted February 28, 2013 on IFAP

2013-2014 Verification Issue

See Lower Left Hand Corner of odd numbered pages for date
Don’t Overlook This.....

- You need to have a written, public Verification Policy
- It should address:
  - The time period in which students must submit verification documentation
  - The consequences for failing to submit those documents in time
  - The method you will use to notify students if their EFC and Title IV aid amounts change
  - The procedures you or students will follow to correct FAFSA data
  - The procedure you will follow to refer a student to the Office of Inspector General

2013-14 Verification Items

- Annual Federal Register notice—
  - Items to verify
  - Acceptable documentation
- 2013-2014 Federal Register Notice: July 12, 2012
- DCL GEN-12-11, July 17, 2012
2013-14 Verification Items

- Same core FAFSA items as in 2012-2013
  - AGI
  - Taxes Paid
  - Four Untaxed Income Items
  - Education Credits
  - Number in Household
  - Number in College
  - SNAP, if reported on FAFSA/ISIR
  - Child Support paid, if reported on FAFSA/ISIR

2013-14 Verification Items

- Fraud Detection and Prevention –
  - Two new verification items to combat fraud
    - High School Completion Status
    - Identity/Statement of Educational Purpose
2013-14 Verification

Move Toward Customized Verification

- Verification Tracking Groups
  - Group V1 - Standard Verification Group
    - Same core FAFSA items as in 2012-2013
  - Group V2 - SNAP Verification Group
    - SNAP Only
  - Group V3 - Child Support Paid Verification Group
    - Child Support Paid Only

- Five Verification Tracking Groups
  - Group V4 - Custom Verification Group
    - High School Completion
    - Identity/Statement of Educational Purpose
    - SNAP, if reported on ISIR
    - Child Support Paid, if reported on ISIR
  - Group V5 - Aggregate Verification Group
    - All items from Groups V1 and V4
2013-14 Verification

- No ED Developed Verification Worksheet(s)
- Suggested Text Provided
  - Not required
  - Cannot change Statement of Educational Purpose
  - See January 18 Electronic Announcement

How Do I Verify SNAP?

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
(SNAP-Food Stamps)

(1) A statement signed by the applicant/parent affirming that SNAP–Food Stamps benefits were received by someone in the household during the 2011 and/or 2012 calendar years.

(2) If school has concerns with accuracy of information, the institution must obtain documentation from the agency that issued the SNAP-Food Stamps benefits
How Do I Verify Child Support Paid?

(1) Statement signed by the applicant/parent certifying—
(a) The amount of child support paid;
(b) The name of the person who paid the child support;
(c) The name of the person to whom child support was paid; and
(d) The names of the children for whom child support was paid.

(2) If the institution has reason to believe that the information provided in the signed statement is inaccurate, the applicant must provide the institution with supporting documentation, such as—divorce decrees, checks, signed statements, etc.

How Do I Verify HS Completion?

• Documentation of high school completion status:
  • High school diploma; or
  • Final official high school transcript that shows the date of graduation

Note: If a copy of an applicant’s high school diploma or final official high school transcript is unavailable, the institution may accept alternative documentation
  • Student self-certification not allowed
How Do I Verify HS Completion?

• Documentation of high school completion status: Recognized equivalent of a high school diploma
  • General Educational Development (GED) Certificate;
  • State certificate received by a student after the student has passed a State-authorized examination that the State recognizes as the equivalent of a high school diploma;
  • Academic transcript of a student who has successfully completed at least a two-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward a bachelor's degree; or

How Do I Verify HS Completion?

• Documentation of high school completion status: recognized equivalent of a high school diploma (cont.)
  • For a person who is seeking enrollment in an educational program that leads to at least an associate degree or its equivalent and has not completed high school but has excelled academically in high school, documentation from the high school that the student excelled academically in high school and documentation from the postsecondary institution that the student has met the formalized, written policies of the postsecondary institution for admitting such students
How Do I Verify HS Completion?

- Documentation of high school completion status: Homeschooled
  - Transcript, or the equivalent, signed by the parent or guardian, that lists the secondary school courses completed by the applicant and documents the successful completion of a secondary school education; OR
  - A secondary school completion credential for home school (other than a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent) provided for under State law

How Do I Verify Identity/SOEP?

- Do not modify text of Identity/SOEP
- Student must appear in person to an Institutionally Authorized Individual (IAI)
- Student must show original, valid, government issued ID
- IAI must make photocopy and annotate it to show who received it and date received
- Suggestion: Identify IAI in P&P manual so everyone will know who they are
How Do I Verify Identity/SOEP?

- What if student can’t appear in person?
- Do not modify text of Identity/SOEP
- Student must submit photocopy of government issued ID along with original notarized statement
- Use form on page 14 of Appendix A of January 18, 2013 Electronic Announcement

How Do I Verify Identity/SOEP?

- Don’t destroy or shred the Identity/Statement of Educational Purpose until you see specific record retention requirements from ED
- No faxes, copies or scanned images
- Must be original document
- Record retention requirements will be forthcoming
Unusual Enrollment History

Unusual Enrollment Patterns

- Students identified based on history of receipt of Pell Grant
- New ‘C’ Code added to ISIR
- New Unusual Enrollment History Flag (UEH FLAG) added to ISIR
- Flag value will determine needed action
- Resolution guidance provided in DCL GEN-13-09 posted on March 8.
Unusual Enrollment Patterns

Resolving Unusual Enrollment History Flags

- An institution must take the following steps to resolve an ISIR reported UEH Flag.

  - **UEH Flag value is ‘2’**: The institution must review the student’s records to determine if, during the three award year review period the student received a Pell Grant at the institution that is performing the review.
    - If yes, no additional action is required.
    - If no, the institution must follow the guidance that is provided for a UEH Flag of ‘3’.

- **UEH Flag value is ‘3’**: The institution must review the student’s records to determine if academic credit was earned at each of the institutions during the award(s) when the student received Pell Grant funds for enrollment at that institution. Academic credit is considered to have been earned if the academic records show that the student completed any credit hours or clock hours during the award year.
Unusual Enrollment Patterns

Resolving Unusual Enrollment History Flags

- Academic Credit Earned: If academic credit was earned at each of the previously attended institutions during the relevant award years, no further action is required.

- Academic Credit Not Earned: Institution must -
  - If academic credit was not earned at a previously attended institution and, if applicable, at the institution performing the review, obtain documentation from the student explaining why the student failed to earn academic credit.
  - Determine whether the documentation supports (1) the reasons given by the student for the student’s failure to earn academic credit; and (2) that the student did not enroll only to receive credit balance funds.

Like professional judgment, dependency overrides, and SAP appeals the financial aid administrator (FAA) determines whether the circumstances of the failure of the student to receive academic credit, as evidenced by the student’s academic records and other documentation, support the continuation of Title IV, HEA program assistance eligibility.

These institutional determinations are final and not appealable to the Department, and the reasons for the decision must be documented and maintained for possible review.
Unusual Enrollment Patterns

Resolving Unusual Enrollment History Flags

- **Approval of Continued Eligibility** - If the FAA approves the student’s continued eligibility, the FAA may choose –
  - To require the student to establish an academic plan.
  - Counsel the student about the Pell Grant duration of eligibility provisions [Lifetime Eligibility Used (LEU)] and upcoming time limitations on the receipt of subsidized loans.

- **Denial of Continued Eligibility** - If the FAA denies the student’s continued eligibility, the student must be provided with –
  - An opportunity to question and appeal the decision, and
  - Information as to subsequently regain eligibility.

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**Authority** – The authority for an institution to deny Title IV, HEA program assistance under these circumstances is section 484(a)(4)(A) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, which requires the student to sign a *Statement of Educational Purpose*. [See also 34 CFR 668.32(h)]. By signing the *Statement of Educational Purpose* as part of the student’s submission of the FAFSA, the student certified that he or she would use the Title IV, HEA program assistance received only to meet educational costs.
Gainful Employment

GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT

- Gainful Employment Electronic Announcement #39
- On June 30, 2012, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, in the Association of Private Sector Colleges and Universities (APSCU) v. Duncan, issued a decision that vacated most of the gainful employment regulations that the Department published on October 29, 2010 and June 13, 2011 and remanded those regulations to the Department for further action.
GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT

- Reporting –
  - The Court’s decision vacated the gainful employment reporting requirements in 34 CFR 668.6(a). Therefore, institutions are not required, at this time, to submit gainful employment reports for the most recently completed 2011-2012 award year.
  - Institutions may voluntarily submit corrections to previously reported gainful employment information.

- New Gainful Employment Programs –
  - The requirements that went into effect on July 1, 2011, under 34 CFR 600.10(c) and 600.20(d), that addressed the types of new programs about which institutions had to notify the Secretary are no longer in effect.
  - Institutions must comply with those regulatory sections as they existed prior to July 1, 2011, and any other provisions that require institutions to obtain approval for new programs.
  - See GE Electronic Announcement #41, posted to IFAP on November 21.
GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT

- Disclosures –
  - The Court left in place the October 29, 2010 regulations at 34 CFR 668.6(b) that require institutions to disclose certain information about each of their Gainful Employment Programs. Those regulations took effect July 1, 2011.
  - Institutions must have updated their GE Program disclosures no later than January 31, 2013.
  - See GE Electronic Announcement #42, posted to IFAP on November 23.

- What about March 19, 2013 ruling?
  - ED is reviewing the details of the judge's most recent ruling and is evaluating the next steps.
  - Stay tuned to IFAP.
Selected Recent Communications

Dear Colleague Letters

- GEN-13-09 – Unusual Enrollment History School Guidance
- GEN-13-08 - Extension to Participate in Experimental Sites
- GEN-13-07 - Implementing the Net Price Calculator
- GEN-13-06 - 2013-2014 Federal Pell Grant Schedules
- GEN-13-05 - Implementation of Financial Aid Shopping Sheet
- GEN-13-04 - State Authorization Regulations
- GEN-13-03 - Experimental Sites Initiative
- GEN-13-02 - Regaining Title IV Eligibility After Exceeding Loan Limits and Treatment of Loan Funds When a Student Fails to Begin Attendance
- GEN -12-22 - Approval of Income-Based/Pay As You Earn/Income-Contingent Repayment Plan Request Form
- GEN -12-21 - Charges Incurred at Bookstores
Dear Colleague Letters

- GEN -12-18 - Declination or Return of Pell Grant Funds
- GEN -12-15 - Revised School Closure and False Certification Loan Discharge Applications
- GEN -12-13 - Guidance on Program Integrity Regulations Relating to Legal Authorization by a State
- GEN -12-12 - Financial Aid Shopping Sheet for 2013-14
- GEN -12-11 - 2013-2014 Award Year: FAFSA Information to be Verified and Acceptable Documentation
- GEN -12-10 - Implementation of E.O. 13607 - Establishing Principles of Excellence for Educational Institutions Serving Service Members, Veterans, Spouses, and other Family Members

Dear Colleague Letters

- GEN -12-09 - Title IV Eligibility for Students Without a Valid High School Diploma
- GEN -12-08 - Disbursing or Delivering Title IV Funds Through a Contractor
- GEN -12-07 - Acceptable Documentation for Verification
- GEN -12-06 - NSLDS Enrollment Reporting Process
- GEN -12-04 - Federal Student Loan Issues
- GEN -12-03 - Title IV Student Financial Assistance Disbursed to Students Without a Valid High School Diploma
Electronic Announcements

- Feb 8 - Direct Loan Closeout Information for 2011-2012 Program Year
- Feb 6 - Change to Login Process for All Federal Student Aid Systems Behind AIMS
- Feb 4 - FY 2011 2-Year and FY 2010 3-Year Draft Cohort Default Rates Release Scheduled for February 2013
- Jan 25 - Tentative 2013-2014 Funding Levels for the Campus-Based Programs
- Jan 18 - 2013-2014 Verification-Suggested Text

Electronic Announcements

- Jan 18 - Institutional Metric Data File for the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet
- Jan 18 - Helpful Social Media Tools to Promote FAFSA Completion
- Jan 18 - Verification Suggested Text
- Jan 11 - Availability of Updated NSLDS Enrollment Reporting Guide
- Jan 11 - Gainful Employment Electronic Announcement #43 - NSLDS Gainful Employment Spreadsheet Submittal Format
Electronic Announcements

- Dec 17 - Access Removed for Unconfirmed TG Numbers
- Dec 14 - Handbook Errata and Updates
- Nov 23 - GE Disclosures
- Nov 21 - GE Adding New Educational Programs
- Nov 20 - Availability of NSLDS Enrollment Reporting Information and Documentation
- Nov 19 - 2012-2013 Federal Student Aid Handbook
- Nov 09 - Packaging and Repackaging Title IV Student Aid
- Nov 05 - Disaster Guidance
- Nov 02 - Acceptable Documentation Update for 2012-2013 Award Year Verification

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