



June 29, 2005

Dear Colleagues:

Congratulations on a great GASFAA Spring Conference. Thank you for the interest and support you demonstrated for the programs and services that GSFC provides. We appreciate the valuable feedback and reality-based questions you shared with us. In response, we hope this correspondence will help to clarify the issues you raised.

1. Students who reach a HOPE checkpoint, but have taken **only** Learning Support coursework and have not received any letter grades, are not eligible to have their HOPE Scholarships renewed. For example, if a student takes 12 hours Fall semester and 12 hours Spring semester of Learning Support coursework and the college assigns an "S" or "U" rather than letter grades, then the student would not have a grade point average at the End-of-Spring checkpoint. Since the student does not have a grade point average, he or she does not meet the requirement of having a 3.0 GPA at the End-of-Spring Checkpoint, and therefore loses HOPE Scholarship eligibility. However, if this student takes at least one class for which a grade is issued and receives a 3.0 or better, he or she would keep his or her HOPE Scholarship eligibility because he or she would have a HOPE GPA of 3.0 or better. Courses that do not have letter grades count towards attempted hours but do not count in the calculation of the HOPE GPA.

However, if a student reaches a HOPE checkpoint without having earned at least one letter grade, and therefore loses HOPE eligibility, he or she may request an exception through the HOPE Appeals Process. An exception may be granted that provides retroactive HOPE payment from the checkpoint in which the student lost HOPE eligibility, if the student has earned at least a 3.0 GPA after attempting 12 hours of coursework for which he or she

received letter grades and the student meets all other HOPE eligibility requirements.

2. The Three-Term Checkpoint does not apply to students who were enrolled in college for at least 12 hours in a school term prior to Summer term of 2004. If a student has ever been enrolled full-time, the student is treated as a full-time student for purposes of the End-of-Spring Checkpoint. For example, if a student was enrolled 12 hours for Spring quarter 2004, 5 hours for Summer quarter 2004, 5 hours Fall quarter 2004, 5 hours Winter quarter 2005, and 5 hours Spring quarter 2005, then the Three-Term Checkpoint would not be applied at the end of Winter quarter. Since the student was enrolled for 12 hours Spring quarter 2004, the End-of-Spring Checkpoint must be applied at the end of Spring quarter 2005.
3. When evaluating a student's eligibility at any of the HOPE Scholarship checkpoints, the student's HOPE Grade Point Average must be cumulative, including grades from coursework taken during school terms prior to Summer 2004. For example, in the case described in paragraph 2 above, the grades from Spring 2004 must be included in the HOPE GPA.
4. A student's HOPE Book Allowance funds should be disbursed to the student in its entirety. Any portion of the Book Allowance not disbursed to the student must be returned to GSFC. For example, if an account is established with the HOPE Book Allowance funds of \$150 at the college's bookstore and the student spends \$140 of those funds, then the remaining \$10 should be disbursed to the student. If the college is unable to deliver the remaining funds to the student, then those funds should be returned to GSFC as part of the year-end reconciliation process. We recognize that some funds may have to be returned and therefore reconciled in the following fiscal year. (As announced at the GASFAA Conference, the new regulation for the 2005-2006 award year that prevents schools from applying HOPE Book Allowance funds to other charges, unless authorized by the student, will not be enforced until Winter quarter or Spring semester of 2006.)
5. For the 2005-2006 award year, the new Georgia Tuition Equalization Grant residency regulation for children of non-resident military members who are stationed in Georgia applies to Freshmen, plus Sophomore, Junior, and Senior level students, if those students would have met this new residency regulation had it been in place when they were Freshmen. For example, if the child of a non-resident military member stationed in Georgia graduated from a Georgia high school in 2003 and began attending an eligible

private college in the Fall of 2003, then the student did not receive the GTEG because he or she did not meet the residency regulation in place at that time. If for the Fall term 2005, the same student continues to be enrolled at an eligible private college as a Junior, then the student would be eligible to begin receiving GTEG payment for Fall term 2005. However, GTEG retroactive awards for prior years are not available to these students.

6. For the 2005-2006 award year, the new Georgia Tuition Equalization Grant residency regulation for students whose parents move from Georgia, applies to Freshmen, plus Sophomore, Junior, and Senior level college students. For example, if a dependent student began attending an eligible private college as an entering Freshman in the Fall of 2003, then the student would have met the Georgia residency requirements and received GTEG payment. Then, in November of 2003 the student's parents moved from Georgia and stopped being Georgia residents. Because of the 12-month residency rule, the student continued to receive GTEG payment through the Fall term of 2004. However, the student was not eligible for payment for Spring term 2005 because the parents moved from Georgia more than 12-months ago. For Fall term 2005 the student continues to be enrolled at an eligible private college as a Junior. This student is once more eligible to begin receiving GTEG payment for Fall term 2005. However, GTEG retroactive awards for prior years are not available to these students.
7. It is not necessary for a student to be enrolled for Fall term 2005 in order for the Summer term application deadline grace period to apply. For example, if a student is enrolled for Summer term 2005, but fails to file a HOPE application until October 2005, and the student was not enrolled during Fall term 2005, then the student is eligible for Summer 2005 HOPE payment. This application deadline grace period only applies to Summer term 2005.
8. If a male student reaches age 18 during a school term, the college is not required to verify his Selective Service registration prior to payment for subsequent terms during that award year, but verification must be conducted prior to payment for subsequent award years. For example, if a seventeen year old male student enrolled for Fall semester 2005 and reached age eighteen on October 17, 2005, then he is eligible for HOPE payment for Fall semester 2005 and Spring semester 2006. If he then registers in July 2006, he would be eligible for Fall semester 2006. (However, beginning in October 2005, this student would lose his eligibility for the Spring semester 2006 because GSFC will be verifying Selective Service registration each school term for all males who apply after

the GSFAPPS (standardized electronic application) system is implemented.)

9. GSFC's special request for data from the colleges regarding students who lost their HOPE Scholarships at the 2005 End-of-Spring Checkpoint should include the following:
- Student's Name;
 - Student's Social Security Number;
 - Federal School Code;
 - School Term the Student Lost HOPE.*

* The students included must have been enrolled for at least one term during the 2004-2005 award year.

If you have any questions, please contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shelley C. Nickel".

Shelley C. Nickel