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GOVERNOR



Timothy A. Connell  
PRESIDENT

August 26, 2005

Dear Colleagues:

We have received requests for further clarification of our June 29, 2005 "Dear Colleague" letter regarding HOPE issues raised at the June GASFAA Conference (a copy of the letter is attached). Hopefully, the supplementary information provided in this follow-up letter will be helpful to you.

Item #2 of the June 29, 2005 letter explained how schools should apply the Three-Term (3T) and End-of-Spring (EOS) checkpoints when a student was enrolled for at least one full-time term in a degree program whether prior to Summer term of 2004 or later. If the student has been full-time for one term the 3T checkpoint does not apply.

Example:

- Student was enrolled full-time in a degree program for Spring 04;
- Student did not enroll for Summer 04 or Fall 04;
- Student enrolled part-time in a degree program for Winter 05 & Spring 05;
- Student's GPA at the end of Spring 05 was a 2.99;
- Student enrolled part-time in a degree program for Summer 05;
- The EOS checkpoint should have been applied at the end of Spring 05, rather than the 3T checkpoint at the end of Summer 05, and the student should not have received HOPE payment for Summer 05.

The student in the above example must have been enrolled as a full-time student in a degree program, rather than a certificate/diploma program, during Spring 04 in order for the EOS checkpoint to be applied. If the student in the above example had been enrolled full-time in a certificate or degree program for Spring 04, then the EOS checkpoint should not have been applied at the end of Spring 05, but rather the 3T checkpoint should have been applied at the end of Summer 05.

Questions have also been raised regarding the 3T checkpoint for students who have credit hours from a certificate or diploma program that were accepted into their degree program. Credit hours from a certificate or diploma program that are accepted toward a student's degree program should not be used to determine when or if the 3T checkpoint is applied to the student. Only terms in which a student was actually enrolled in a degree program should be used to determine the application of the 3T checkpoint.

Example:

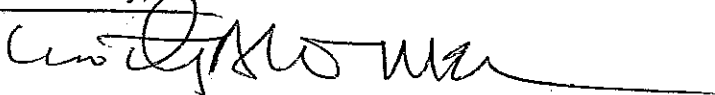
- Student is accepted into a degree program and has 10 credit hours earned from a previous diploma program that are accepted toward the student's degree program.
- Student enrolls part-time in a degree program for Winter 05, Spring 05, and Summer 05.
- The 3T checkpoint should be applied at the end of Summer 05. The 10 hours accepted from the diploma program do not change the location of the 3T checkpoint to Spring 05.

In light of the need to clarify this regulation further, as long as the institution made a good faith effort to enforce the applicable regulations, GSFC's Compliance Program Reviews will not assign a finding to institutions until Winter quarter of 2006 or Spring semester of 2006 in cases in which students received HOPE payments that were not in compliance with item #2 of the June 29<sup>th</sup> letter and/or this letter. However, if a student files an appeal with us to review his/her denial of HOPE, we will review it in accordance with both this and the June 29<sup>th</sup> letter and may award retroactive HOPE to the student.

Item #8 of the June 29, 2005 letter also addressed the issue of Selective Service registration. Institutions should not retroactively award HOPE for school terms during FY 05 to students who failed to register after reaching age 18. Although the memorandum does not require institutions to seek verification of Selective Service registration during FY 05, verification was done in some cases and these students were denied based on information available to the Financial Aid Offices at that time.

We appreciate the questions as they help all of us better administer the HOPE Program.

Sincerely,



Timothy A. Connell

TAC:mlc  
Attachment