

A black and white photograph of a student from behind, wearing a backpack and walking through a brightly lit, modern building with large glass windows and curved architectural elements.

Pennsylvania State Grant Program Virtual Workshops

2020-21 Academic Year & 2021 Summer Term

Maintaining Your Institution Eligibility

June – August 2020



Institution Requirements



This content has been abridged and does not supersede current program policy. For complete guidance on program administration, please refer to the *2020-21 PA State Grant Program Handbook*.

School Requirements

- Commonwealth regulations stipulate requirements for approval and participation
- All schools required to:
 - Be accredited or a recognized candidate for accreditation by an approved entity
 - Have completed a Master Program Participation Agreement
 - Submit the Headquartered and Domiciled (HQD) Certification
 - Comply with 22 Pa. Code § 121.3 (discrimination prohibited)
 - Notify PHEAA of any student not meeting the satisfactory character requirement

Approved Program of Study

- Programs must meet minimum length requirements and program structure requirements per 22 Pa. Code § 121.33

Program Length

At least 2 academic years in duration

60 semester credits/ 90 quarter credits/ 1,800 clock hours

Program Structure

HQD = Distance education programs may be eligible

Non-HQD = Programs must be at least 50 percent in-classroom

- Programs cannot be eligible for both PA State Grant and PA Targeted Industry Program (PA-TIP)
- Baccalaureate degree programs that require more than 4 academic years of full-time study must be annually reported to PHEAA

Approved Program of Study

- New or changed programs of study:

**Business, Trade,
& Technical (BTT)**

- Must report changed programs of study
- Request approval from PHEAA for new programs by the academic year or summer term deadline

**Hospital School
of Nursing
(HSON)**

- Must report all program structure changes

2-Year & 4-Year

- No additional required reporting
- Confirm a student's program of study is PA State Grant eligible before awarding

- Deadline to report new or changed programs is August 1 (for the academic year) and May 1 (for the summer term)

Term Start Dates



- Used to determine institution disbursement dates and student eligibility for the term
- Institutions must:
 - Comply with quarter/semester date ranges
 - Submit term dates annually
 - If unreported, hold placed on school's account
 - Review dates on file via FG4B in OC/WebConnect
 - Follow the academic calendar on which transcripts are generated for awarding purposes

Term Start Dates

Term Disbursement	Term Start Dates	Date Tolerance*	Disbursement Period
Fall Semester	July 16 – November 15	July 13 – November 15	12-month period for a school on a semester schedule
Spring Semester	November 16 – March 15	November 13 – March 15	
Summer Semester	March 16 – July 15	March 13 – July 15	
Fall Quarter	August 2 – November 1	July 30 – November 1	12-month period for a school on a quarter schedule
Winter Quarter	November 2 – February 1	October 30 – February 1	
Spring Quarter	February 2 – May 1	January 30 – May 1	
Summer Quarter	May 2 – August 1	April 29 – August 1	

**A maximum of 1 to 3 days is permitted at the beginning of the term.*

Term Length

- Programs must comply with term length requirements
 - Term: Period of instructional time that spans from the first day of classes to the last day of final exams
 - Term length requirements may be met using modules
 - Module: Period that does not span the entire length of the term
 - Modules must **1)** comply with term start date tolerances and **2)** be consecutive/overlapping during the academic year
 - Intersessions, used by some semester schools, cannot be used to meet term length requirements
 - A maximum of 5 credits from an intersession can be used toward fall or spring
- Report program of study as 00-Other when students do not meet term length requirements

Term Length

- Academic year term length definitions:

Term	22 Pa.§121.1 Definition	Standard Range
Semester	A period approximately 17 weeks normally comprising one-half of the academic year	Minimum of 15 weeks Maximum of 18 weeks
Quarter	A period of approximately 11 weeks normally comprising one-third of the academic year	Minimum of 10 weeks Maximum of 12 weeks

- If the number of weeks exceeds the maximum by more than 3 days, students **must** enroll in additional credits
 - Required calculation outlined in **Chapter 1, Section E**
 - May also impact the minimum credits needed to meet Academic Progress

Term Length

- Term length requirements extend to summer terms
 - Non Year-Round Curriculum:
 - Term must be no less than 5 weeks in length
 - Combined modules do not need to be consecutive in summer
 - Year-Round Curriculum:
 - 5-week summer term length requirement does not apply
 - Follow tolerances set forth in academic year term length definitions
- Notify PHEAA each year if your institution does not wish to participate in the summer term



Term Length

Modular Enrollment

- All enrollment in modular periods must be considered when determining a student's eligibility
 - Applies regardless if student is:
 - Already meeting term length requirement
 - Already meeting enrollment definitions and requirements
- Monitor and report changes that impact a student's eligibility or enrollment mode as a result of dropping, adding, or withdrawing from classes
- For students enrolled in modules, postpone crediting until the final module begins

Modules

- PHEAA College of Technology receives their Fall 2020 Term Disbursement Roster on August 18.
- Student Jerry S. is listed as PA State Grant eligible on the roster and enrolled in-classroom for the Fall 2020 term.
- The school reviews Jerry's eligibility and enrollment in order to credit the award on August 31.

"Jerry Seinfeld"			
Variables	Term A (Fall)	Module G (Fall)	Module R (Fall)
Number of Weeks	15	3	2
Date of Registration	7-1-2020	9-9-2020	10-13-2020
Start Date	8-31-2020	9-21-2020	11-30-2020
Number of Credits	9	3	2

Questions

- When and under what status can Jerry be credited the PA State Grant?
- How does the additional modular enrollment impact Jerry's award?

Modules

Answers

- When PHEAA College of Technology goes to credit the award on August 31, the school should issue a half-time award for Jerry.
 - A half-time PA State Grant award can be credited on August 31 because Jerry was not registered for Module G or Module R at the time of award certification.
- The enrollment in the additional modules requires PHEAA College of Technology to update Jerry's enrollment and eligibility.

"Jerry Seinfeld"			
Variables	Term A (Fall)	Module G (Fall)	Module R (Fall)
Number of Weeks	15	3	2
Date of Registration	7-1-2020	9-9-2020	10-13-2020
Start Date	8-31-2020	9-21-2020	11-30-2020
Number of Credits	9	3	2

Modules



- On January 5, PHEAA College reviews student enrollment in the winter intersession.
- The school receives their Spring 2021 Term Disbursement Roster on January 8.
- Student Elaine B. is listed as PA State Grant eligible on the roster.

"Elaine Benes"		
Variables	Winter Intersession	Spring Term
Number of Weeks	3	15
Date of Registration	10-1-2020	10-1-2020
Start Date	1-4-2021	1-25-2021
Number of Credits	6	6

Questions

- Could Elaine receive a PA State Grant award for her enrollment during the intersession?
- When and under what status can Elaine be credited the PA State Grant?

Modules



Answers

- No. Intersession periods do not meet the term length requirements therefore students cannot receive a PA State Grant award for this enrollment period.
- Elaine's award can be credited on January 25 once the Spring 2021 term begins. The award should be credited as half-time.
 - A maximum of 5 credits from intersession enrollment can be used toward the fall or spring term ($5 + 6 = 11$).
 - The student would not be eligible for a full-time award.

"Elaine Benes"		
Variables	Winter Intersession	Spring Term
Number of Weeks	3	15
Date of Registration	10-1-2020	10-1-2020
Start Date	1-4-2021	1-25-2021
Number of Credits	6	6



Program Reviews



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Program Reviews

- Reviews performed to:
 - Assess the capability of schools to manage programs administered by PHEAA; and
 - Assist with maintaining the integrity of Commonwealth postsecondary programs
- Reviews may include all PHEAA-administered programs in which the school participates



Types of Program Reviews

Routine Review

- Conducted routinely to review policies and procedures
- Scheduled every 2-3 years

Follow-Up Review

- Conducted when error rate exceeds 4.0% or if ≥ 4 administrative findings are identified
- Scheduled for the following year

Probationary Review

- Conducted if error rate exceeds 8.9% or if ≥ 4 administrative findings are identified for the second year in a row
- Scheduled for the following year

School Closing

- Conducted when an institution closes or intends to close
- Scheduled within 30 days before/after closure

Audit

- Conducted when fraud is reported or suspected
- Visits will usually be unannounced

Program Reviews

- Reviews conducted based on the policies outlined in the Handbook for the year and/or summer term being reviewed
 - If Special Crediting Instructions were issued for the year under review, they are used in conjunction
 - Old policy guidance will not be considered
- PHEAA staff will evaluate:
 1. Student eligibility
 2. Student financial aid files
 3. Student academic and administrative records
 4. General institutional eligibility
 5. Program administration
 6. Fiscal administration records

Review Results



FINANCIAL

- Identified when PA State Grant funds have not been paid correctly
- Result in an error rate calculation
 - Acceptable
0% - 4.0%
 - Discrepancies Exist
4.1% - 8.9%
 - Unacceptable
9.0% or higher

ADMINISTRATIVE

- Identified with further review of student and institutional records
- Do not count towards error rate calculation
- ≥ 4 requires Follow-Up Program Review

PROBATION/ TERMINATION

- Program Improvement Plan may be required if error rate is ≥ 8.9 or ≥ 4 admin findings present
- School placed on Probation I or II after error rate has been $> 8.9\%$ for multiple years
- Failure to comply or improve will result in termination

Top Program Review Findings

- From the 2017-18 Award Year
 - Program review period is one year behind current award year
- Special Programs findings also represent top findings



Transfer Academic Progress Evaluations



Late Return of Refunds



Standard Academic Progress Evaluations



Late Return of Rosters



Missing Remedial Exceptions

Tips to Prevent Program Review Errors



- Report all institutional changes in a timely manner (e.g., program changes, ownership changes, etc.)
- Review institution documentation and information to ensure “PHEAA Grant” is removed
- Verify that distance education courses are clearly identified

Tips to Prevent Program Review Errors

- Perform all eligibility tests on all awarded students
 - Monitor student changes and submit updates timely
 - Report changes that do not impact eligibility
- Credit student awards within 30 days of receiving the disbursement
 - Postpone crediting for those students enrolled in modules
- Review individual special programs guidelines for program requirements
 - Special programs findings considered administrative findings



Tips to Prevent Program Review Errors

- Identify methods to reduce over-disbursements (e.g., actively managing enrollment/eligibility updates, netting, etc.)
- Adhere to published deadlines
 - Example: submitting the Educational Cost Form, returning rosters, etc.
 - Use OC/WebConnect to track submission
- Review *Outstanding Items Report* to know when items are outstanding
- Maintain student documentation (e.g., transcripts) for 5 years



Wrap Up

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Reminders & Resources

Reminders



- 2020-21 PA State Grants finalized in May 2020
 - Maximum award increased to \$4,525
 - Award increase made possible by Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding
 - No award adjustment factor applied for online enrollment (HQD schools only)
 - Student award notifications began in June 2020
 - Award information accessible via Partner Interface and weekly PageCenter reports

Reminders

- 2019-20 Academic Year and 2020 Summer awarding, disbursement and reconciliation underway
 - Review [PHEAA.org/COVID19](https://www.pheaa.org/COVID19) for policy adjustments, FAQs, etc.
- Institutional contacts and information
 - Email PHEAA staff when contacts change or need updated
 - Confirm and update access to PHEAA systems annually or as needed



Reminders

- Post-workshop Q&A released this Fall
- Order the 2020-21 Handbook and other print materials from [PHEAA.org](https://www.pheaa.org)
- Please complete the survey
 - Feedback is used to plan for future workshops and to create new training materials



Resources



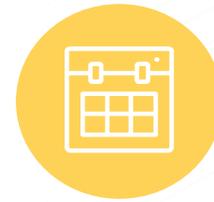
Web

- PHEAA.org
- [Alec](#)



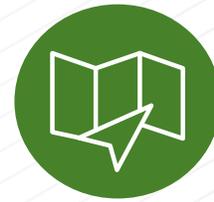
SGSP Staff

- Email: SGHelp@pheaa.org
- Phone: 800-443-0646



Events

- Webinar Series
- Conferences
- Workshops



Print

- Brochures
- Calendars
- FAQs

Thank You!