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.
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
School Requirements

- Schools must be located in Pennsylvania or a reciprocal state
  - Schools must be authorized to conduct business by the appropriate state licensing or approval authority in the state
  - Out-of-state schools must be non-profit

- Report, in writing, **any** institutional changes that occur (e.g., location, status, 2-year to 4-year, name, ownership, etc.)
  - Failure to notify PHEAA may result in administrative findings
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)  
  Hospital School of Nursing (HSON)  
  2-Year & 4-Year

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

  • Must report all program structure changes

  • 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

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

*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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>22 Pa.§121.1 Definition</th>
<th>Standard Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>A period approximately 17 weeks normally comprising one-half of the academic year</td>
<td>Minimum of 15 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maximum of 18 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter</td>
<td>A period of approximately 11 weeks normally comprising one-third of the academic year</td>
<td>Minimum of 10 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maximum of 12 weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Term A (Fall)</th>
<th>Module G (Fall)</th>
<th>Module R (Fall)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Weeks</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Registration</td>
<td>7-1-2020</td>
<td>9-9-2020</td>
<td>10-13-2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start Date</td>
<td>8-31-2020</td>
<td>9-21-2020</td>
<td>11-30-2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Credits</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Jerry Seinfeld”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variables</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Credits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• 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.

**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?

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**“Elaine Benes”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Winter Intersession</th>
<th>Spring Term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Weeks</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Registration</td>
<td>10-1-2020</td>
<td>10-1-2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start Date</td>
<td>1-4-2021</td>
<td>1-25-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Credits</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.
Program Reviews

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.
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review Type</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Routine Review</strong></td>
<td>- Conducted routinely to review policies and procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Scheduled every 2-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Follow-Up Review</strong></td>
<td>- Conducted when error rate exceeds 4.0% or if ≥4 administrative findings are identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Scheduled for the following year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Probationary Review</strong></td>
<td>- Conducted if error rate exceeds 8.9% or if ≥4 administrative findings are identified for the second year in a row</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Scheduled for the following year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Closing</strong></td>
<td>- Conducted when an institution closes or intends to close</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Scheduled within 30 days before/after closure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audit</strong></td>
<td>- Conducted when fraud is reported or suspected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Visits will usually be unannounced</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINANCIAL</th>
<th>ADMINISTRATIVE</th>
<th>PROBATION/ TERMINATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Identified when PA State Grant funds have not been paid correctly</td>
<td>• Identified with further review of student and institutional records</td>
<td>• Program Improvement Plan may be required if error rate is ≥8.9 or ≥4 admin findings present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Result in an error rate calculation</td>
<td>• Do not count towards error rate calculation</td>
<td>• School placed on Probation I or II after error rate has been &gt;8.9% for multiple years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Acceptable 0% - 4.0%</td>
<td>• ≥4 requires Follow-Up Program Review</td>
<td>• Failure to comply or improve will result in termination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Discrepancies Exist 4.1% - 8.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

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 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
• 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

PHEAA - Creating affordable access to higher education.
Thank You!