Pennsylvania State Grant Program Workshops

June-July 2022
Housekeeping
PA State Grant & Special Programs (SGSP) staff welcome attendees, review the agenda, and explain how attendees should access event materials.

Presentation
Attendees receive an overview of the program policy as set forth by the 2022-23 PA State Grant Program Handbook.

Wrap-Up
PHEAA staff will issue reminders, provide additional resources, and share responses to questions posed during the session by attendees.

This content has been abridged and does not supersede current program policy. For complete guidance on program administration, please refer to the appropriate year PA State Grant Handbook.
Summary of Changes

2022-23 Handbook features:
- Introduction and Summary of Changes
- Five (5) chapters
  - New notes, examples, and clarifications
  - Several new content sections added
  - Updates to prior operational guidance
  - One (1) policy change
  - Evaluation of PA State Grant satisfactory Academic Progress for transfer students starting in fall
School & Program Eligibility
Institutional Requirements

- Participating institutions required to:
  - Maintain State Board approval and accreditation
  - Notify PHEAA, in writing and as soon as possible, of any institutional changes (e.g., location, ownership, name, etc.)
    - Institutions required to report to PHEAA changes in the institutional accreditor
    - Changes may impact participation in other PHEAA-administered programs
    - Failure to report may result in administrative findings during a program review
  - Report additional locations to PHEAA for review
  - Have programs of study that comply with the minimum length, structure, and approval requirements
    - Business, Trade, and Technical (BTT) and Hospital Schools of Nursing (HSON) must notify PHEAA of any program changes as soon as they occur
    - Programs cannot be eligible for the PA Targeted Industry Program (PA-TIP)
General Administration Requirements

• Participating institutions must also comply with all administrative requirements

References to PA State Grant Program

• Must reflect recognition that funding is paid in part or in whole by the Commonwealth of PA and that PHEAA’s role is the program’s administrator
• Must utilize the program’s proper name (PA State Grant)

PHEAA recommends that content on school websites and materials direct students back to PHEAA.org.

Demonstrate Administrative Capability

• Includes maintaining an adequate number of staff to administer the program
• Must ensure proper internal training of all staff responsible for managing the program

Resources to support internal training are available on PHEAA.org/training as well as in the school portal.
Term Start Dates

• Must be reported annually during Educational Cost Collection process
  – Ensure dates comply with the ranges provided by PHEAA
  – Review submitted dates via FG4B in OC/Webconnect
• Used to determine disbursement dates and eligibility for the term
• Notify PHEAA, in writing, of term start date or academic schedule changes

All modular periods must also comply with term start dates in order to be used towards the term length requirements.
Term Length Requirements

• Programs and the student’s term enrollment must meet term length requirements
  – Breaks that are one week or longer do not count toward term length requirements
  – Academic Year: 15-18 weeks (semester); 10-12 weeks (quarter)
  – Summer Term: 5 weeks (for non-year-round curriculum)

• Modules may be combined to meet term length requirements
  – Must be consecutive or overlapping during the academic year only
    • Schools that do not require the combining of modules to meet the minimum term length requirements may still have modules that overlap with the regular term
  – Award crediting may be delayed due to modular enrollment

• Intersessions cannot be used to meet term length requirements
  – A maximum of 5 credits from an intersession can be used towards fall or spring enrollment

• Report program of study as 00-Other when students do not meet term length requirements
2 Student Certification of Eligibility
Approved Program of Study

• Program of study is either the initial program of study under which the student was admitted to the institution or the program of study under which the student is currently enrolled
  – Institutions must confirm the correct program of study code is listed on the student’s record
    • PHEAA initially assumes the student’s program of study based on their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) responses
    • Program of study codes may impact maximum number of payments, application deadlines, and overall eligibility
      – If requesting an exception to the student’s ineligibility for reaching the maximum number of payments (Reject Y), school must counsel the student on the use of additional award counters and retain documentation of counseling
        • Exceptions may be approved by PHEAA in select situations
  – Do not consider the student’s specific major when determining enrollment eligibility (except for BTT schools)
Enrollment & Eligibility Reporting

• Students must be:
  – Unconditionally admitted, matriculating, and degree seeking at your institution
    • Request a primary school change if student at your school but not listed
      – School must have a signed statement from the student authorizing the enrollment change (i.e., FAFSA® may not be used)
  – Enrolled at least half-time in addition to being enrolled in the minimum term length
    • Remedial courses may be counted toward enrollment
      – Only report remedial exception if credits are needed to meet minimum enrollment minimums
      – Extra remedial credits during an exception term should be excluded from enrollment mode reporting
    • Repeat credits must be counted toward enrollment status and mode
• Report enrollment mode for all awarded students on a term-by-term basis
  – Treat enrollment mode like all other eligibility items and adjust as necessary regardless of eligibility impacts
• Correct or address any discrepancies (e.g., name, domicile, etc.) before crediting
# PA State Grant Academic Progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Select a Yearly Cycle</td>
<td>• Determine if a Review is Needed</td>
<td>• Gather Transcript Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Summer Header</td>
<td>- Only review if student was awarded</td>
<td>- Verify credits successfully earned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Review students after Spring</td>
<td>in last 10 years</td>
<td>during last award year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Summer Trailer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Review students after Summer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 4</th>
<th>Step 5</th>
<th>Step 6</th>
<th>Step 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Check Academic Progress</td>
<td>• Report Lack of Progress</td>
<td>• Re-evaluate Progress</td>
<td>• Report Changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Compare the credits needed for awarding to credits earned</td>
<td>– Reject “P” replaces award value</td>
<td>– Reinstate for the next term if deficient credits were earned</td>
<td>– Cancel winter/spring if deficiency still exists</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PA State Grant Academic Progress Considerations

• Use remedial credits toward progress only when:
  1. Student received an exception; and
  2. Number of regular credits is not sufficient

• Repeat courses should only be counted if the first attempt did not result in credits earned

• Verify when the home school checks progress for students visiting during the summer term

• Transfer students must be evaluated for Academic Progress
  – Credits completed at the prior school do not need to be transferrable to your school in order to be included in the total
  – Timing for a transfer student’s first review depends upon the review cycle and the student’s first term at your school

Students not making progress due to extenuating circumstances may complete an Exception Form for reconsideration.
Academic Progress & Transfer Students

If the student’s first term at your school is:

**Fall**
- School must review Academic Progress in accordance with their normal cycle
  - **After Spring:** Summer credits will not be considered until after the next review cycle
  - **After Summer:** No impact on review cycle; review prior to fall award

**Winter/Spring**
- If no award in current year, check immediately (before crediting Winter/Spring award)
- If award in current academic year, school can choose to:
  - Check immediately (before crediting winter/spring award); **or**
  - Assume previous school conducted review before crediting fall award, and check with normal cycle

**Summer**
- Check immediately:
  - If your school normally checks after spring; **or**
  - If last year of aid was not in the previous award year
- Check after summer, if the last year of aid was during the prior award year
Academic Progress & Transfer Students

If the student’s first term at your school is fall:

**Example 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Cycle</th>
<th>Fall 2021</th>
<th>Spring 2022</th>
<th>Summer 2022</th>
<th>Fall 2022</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student A</td>
<td>School A</td>
<td>School A</td>
<td>School A</td>
<td>School B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Action:** School must check Academic Progress before crediting the Fall 2022 award.

**Example 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Cycle</th>
<th>Fall 2021</th>
<th>Spring 2022</th>
<th>Summer 2022</th>
<th>Fall 2022</th>
<th>Spring 2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student B</td>
<td>School A</td>
<td>School A</td>
<td>School A</td>
<td>School B</td>
<td>School B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Action:** School must check Academic Progress after the Spring 2023 term and only include the Summer 2022, Fall 2022, and Spring 2023 terms in the review.
Different Educational Costs

- Educational costs are the first consideration when calculating PA State Grant Need and award amounts
  - All institutions required to submit costs annually during Costs on the Web (COTW) process
    - If unsubmitted by the deadline, institution will be placed on a processing hold and incur administrative findings during a program review
- Compare annual costs approved by PHEAA to actual student tuition and fee charges on a term-by-term basis
  - Student award calculations should be based on actual costs, as listed in their institutional account
    - If student's actual costs are at least 25% less than costs used by PHEAA, institutions must withhold crediting and report the reduced tuition and fees via a cost override
    - Refer to the 2022-23 Institutional Cost Policies & Instructions document for allowable fees
    - Do not submit cents and do not round up or down

If actual tuition and fees are more than 25% greater than those reported during COTW, reporting is optional.
3 PA State Grant Costs & Award Adjustments
Adds, Drops, & Withdrawals

- PA State Grant term awards may require a change (e.g., adjustment, cancellation, enrollment status update, etc.) when a student initially enrolls but adds, drops, or withdraws from one or more courses prior to the end of the term.

### Adds

Student registers for a course or courses after the start of the term which will appear on the transcript.

### Drops

Student was registered for a course or courses, but later removes them from the schedule and thus no attempted course exists on the transcript; charges may or may not be incurred.

### Withdrawals

Student registers for a course or courses but later removes them from the schedule and attempted credits exist on the transcript; charges are incurred.
Evaluating Adds & Drops

• Monitor and report changes due to adds and drops
  – Could occur at any point within the academic period (e.g., during modular periods, etc.)
  – Must be considered even if award has already been credited
    • May establish eligibility or cause a loss of eligibility
    • Consider all eligibility impacts (e.g., re-evaluation of remedial exceptions, etc.)
    • Report enrollment mode changes even when eligibility is not impacted
  – Courses added in later modules may impact when PA State Grant can be credited
• Refunds to PHEAA may be required due to adds or drops that occur after disbursement
  – May also elect to employ excess cash/netting principles
Evaluating Withdrawals

• Encompasses situations when a student: fully or partially withdraws; takes a leave of absence; passes away; is terminated/dismissed; changes to a non-approved program of study

• May only be applied when:
  1. PA State Grant awards are final; and
  2. Student was certified as eligible; and
  3. Award was disbursed to the school and previously credited to the student's account

• A refund may be required based upon the date of withdrawal and tuition refund policy of the institution

• Students that withdraw to at least half-time may be kept as full-time or reported as half-time

• When combining modules, institutions must subtract withdrawn credits before issuing a payment at the beginning of the last module and report enrollment changes, if applicable
4 Disbursements & Cash Management
Maintaining & Accounting for Funds

• Institutions required to have cash management and accounting procedures in place
  – Funds may not be used for any other purposes outside of paying eligible students
  – Maintain records that reflect all PA State Grant transactions
  – Separate bank account recommended
    • Report banking changes to PHEAA in a timely manner

• Awards are term-specific and intended to assist students with costs incurred during that term
  – Outstanding items and noncompliance with policies result in holds which prohibit students from receiving awards in a timely manner
## Roster & Fund Availability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roster Type</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Certify When</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-disbursement</td>
<td>Used to clean up enrollment and eligibility</td>
<td>On or after the term start date</td>
<td>Accepted any time after the term begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Snapshot of student enrollment and eligibility that accompanies an EFT</td>
<td>On or after the term start date</td>
<td>Within 45 days of roster generation date or latest module start date</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Reconciliation  | Close out report used to confirm school and PHEAA records match         | After performing the final eligibility review | • Academic Year: Within 30 days of generation or by June 1, whichever is later  
|                 |                                                                         |                                   | • Summer Term: Within 30 days of generation or by October 31, whichever is later |

• Certification of the term roster means that enrollment updates have been made, eligibility has been reviewed, and funds have been credited for those eligible students listed on the roster.

• Must return each roster in order to receive subsequent disbursements and to prevent administrative program review findings.

Rosters do not list a student unless they previously had a complete status with an award for at least one term on a previous roster or they have a future term award.
Award Crediting

• Final award crediting must occur on a term-by-term basis once the term begins, after the certification of all eligibility requirements, and:
  – Must be removed or adjusted in accordance with the student’s eligibility change (e.g., withdrawal, enrollment mode changes, etc.).
  – Recorded as “PA State Grant” with the term, date of crediting, and award amount
  – Cannot occur before a student’s final enrolled module begins
    • Applies when student has enrolled in at least one module
    • Required to re-review student’s eligibility if student enrolls in a later module after initial award crediting occurs
    • Preliminary crediting may be used to assist students enrolled in modules with financial decisions
  – Should not be withheld from the student’s account beyond the necessary processing time
• If student not enrolled when term disbursement or reconciliation roster received, cancel award
Partner Interface Enhancements

Rosters & Disbursements

- All rosters **must** be certified using Partner Interface
  - Each roster generated will appear as a roster card and contain disbursement information, if applicable
  - Institution must determine who has responsibility for roster certification

- Disbursement Summary replicates information from FG3S (in OC/Webconnect)
  - Use summary during reconciliation to identify funds due your institution or PHEAA

- Refund cards provide convenient method for verifying PHEAA’s posting of a refund
  - Identify PHEAA as the payee for all refunds

Additional Partner Interface resources are available on [PHEAA.org/SGSPResources](http://PHEAA.org/SGSPResources).
5 Program Review
Program Reviews

• Program Reviews conducted to assess the institution’s compliance with program statutes, regulations, and policies

• Reviews conducted based on the policies outlined in the PA State Grant Handbook for the year and/or summer term being reviewed
  – PHEAA’s review cycle spans September 1 – August 31
  – Special Crediting Instructions, if issued, will be used as well

• PA State Grant findings will be financial and/or administrative
  – Error rate calculated based on PA State Grant financial findings only
  – PA State Grant administrative findings detailed in PA State Grant Handbook
  – Review results (financial and/or administrative) will be communicated to the institution and may lead to further reviews or other administrative requirements
    • Findings across multiple programs may be jointly evaluated to determine follow-up actions
PA State Grant Program Review Tips

• Perform all eligibility tests on all awarded students
• Adhere to all published deadlines
  – Make sure that all rosters and refunds have been returned
  – Complete the academic period reconciliation process in a timely manner
• Identify methods to reduce over-disbursements (e.g., avoiding “blanket” certification, etc.)
• Follow your organization’s written policies and procedures
  – Communicate with other campus offices to ensure their compliance with PA State Grant policies
• Ensure “PHEAA Grant” is replaced with “PA State Grant” across all platforms
• Conduct internal compliance reviews
  – Maintain well-trained staff using internal procedures and PHEAA resources
• Escalate unique enrollment, financial, and eligibility questions to PHEAA
Reminders, Wrap Up, & Resources
Handbook Appendices

- **PA State Grant Handbook** appendices provide additional tips, examples, and information to assist with eligibility review and certification.

  - **A** How to Submit Corrections to Student Data & Certify
  - **B** Viewing Data & Reports
  - **C** Resources, Contacts, & Reason Code Lists
  - **D** 2023 Summer Reconciliation Examples
  - **E** PA State Grant Rosters
  - **F** PA State Grant Certification Checklist
  - **G** Determining Students’ Status & Providing Assistance
  - **H** Crediting PA State Grant Awards During Modular Enrollment
2021-22 Academic Year and Summer Term

- Awarding, disbursement, and reconciliation underway
- Complete reconciliation by the announced deadlines to avoid disbursement holds and program review findings

2022-23 Academic Year and Summer Term

- 2022-23 Academic Year conditional awards announced in May
  - New award formula maintains 2021-22 maximum award
    - PHEAA’s Board of Directors approved up to an additional $750 added to the maximum award amounts as a pandemic inflation adjustment
    - Refer to April memoranda for details on the award formula and cost tier award maximums
- Order the 2022-23 PA State Grant Handbook via PHEAA.org/Order-Online
- Post-workshop Q&A released in the fall
PHEAA-Administered Program Reminders

• Retain student and institutional records used in awarding and disbursing in accordance with SGSP Record Retention guidelines

• Report new or changed contacts for each of the PHEAA-administered programs
  – Refer to the SGSP Institutional Contacts Report
  – Update PA State Grant contacts in Partner Interface

• Review SGSP Items Due to PHEAA Report to know when items are due to PHEAA
  – Be sure to also review Partner Interface and other PageCenter reports to identify other tasks requiring school action (e.g., award certification, etc.)

• Perform annual review of user access levels in Business Partner Access Management System (BPAMS)
Join Us Next Time!
Visit PHEAA.org/SGSPTraining to sign up for our enhanced learning modules!

June 30, 2022
Rolling with Enrollment – Part 1

July 7, 2022
Rolling with Enrollment – Part 2

July 14, 2022
Your Students & The Progress They Make

July 21, 2022
The 3 R’s: Rosters, Reconciliation & Reviews

July 28, 2022
Getting Technical with PA State Grants
Resources

Connect With Us!

sghelp@pheaa.org

1.800.443.0646, Option 3, Option 1

PHEAA Sponsored Events & Other Financial Aid Events

PHEAA.org
Thank You!