

**LOUISIANA STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

***Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS)  
Bulletin***

TOPS BULLETIN NUMBER:	T2020-3 <b>REPLACES TOPS BULLETIN T2020-1</b>
DATE ISSUED:	April 7, 2020 at 4 pm
EFFECTIVE DATE:	Immediately
DISTRIBUTION:	College and University Financial Aid Offices and Registrars, LAICU Financial Aid Offices and Registrars, and Louisiana Community and Technical College System Personnel, Proprietary and Cosmetology Schools
TOPICS:	Academic Standing Codes for Institutions to Use to Report a Student's Inability to Complete the Spring Semester 2020 Due to Lack of Technology Resulting from COVID-19.

**LOSFA first issued this bulletin on March 24, 2020. It is being updated now to reflect Proclamation # 41 JBE 2020.**

All postsecondary institutions (2 year, 4 year, LAICU, proprietary, and cosmetology) must respond to the survey provided on March 24, 2020, indicating whether the institution has a contingency plan to allow students who do not have access to on-line and/or modified learning options to complete the semester. Survey responses will become the basis for grade reporting and tracking of exceptions related to COVID-19. The intent of the survey codes is to automate the exceptions process, making it easier for students to obtain exceptions and for institutions and LOSFA to track and report on exceptions. As a result, it is imperative that schools complete the survey and return it LOSFA. If your institution has not responded, please complete the survey at <https://mylosfa.la.gov/schools/2020-contingency-survey/>.

Based on your response to the survey, your school will be assigned a special circumstance code of C01 (there is no contingency plan at your school) or C02 (there is a contingency plan at your school). If the survey is not submitted and you have students that withdrew spring 2020, these students will be required to submit a Request for Exception.

**Proclamation 41-JBE-2020 suspends the continuation requirements for TOPS recipients who were not able to successfully complete the spring semester of 2020. Under normal circumstances, students who do not remain continuously enrolled throughout a semester or who do not earn 24 hours must request an exception and provide documentation of the circumstances that caused them not to meet these requirements. The suspension of these requirements in Proclamation 41-JBE-2020 allows this process to be automated such that students will not have to file an exception request or submit documentation if they do not meet the continuation requirements. Reporting grades for TOPS recipients as indicated below will provide the students with an automatic exception to these requirements.**

Grade reporting and processing for the spring semester of 2020 will occur as follows:

For students who do complete the spring semester of 2020, schools should report quality points and hours in accordance with normal grade reporting requirements.

For students who do not complete the spring semester of 2020 due to COVID-19 related issues, the following will apply:

For all 2 year and 4 year institutions:

1. If a school has a contingency plan, the school must enter:

- Academic Standing Code **W2**.
  - This code should also be used for LF (less than full time) or EP (eligible part-time) students.
- 2. If a school does not have a contingency plan, the school must enter:
  - Academic Standing Code **W1**.
    - This code should also be used for LF (less than full time) or EP (eligible part-time) students.

For proprietary and cosmetology schools:

1. If a school has a contingency plan, the school must enter:
  - Academic Standing Code **W2** to indicate Satisfactory Progress instead of SP.
2. If the school does not have a contingency plan, the school must enter:
  - Academic Standing Code **W1** to indicate Satisfactory Progress instead of SP.

All grades reported will be process through the normal grade processing programming with the following modifications:

1. If the student qualifies for continuing eligibility at their current award level – process as usual
2. If a student qualifies for continuing eligibility, but his award would be changed to Opportunity Award Level – the student will be given a Special Circumstance code such that the Award Level will not be changed and processing will continue as usual
3. If a student does not qualify for continuing eligibility – the student will be given a Special Circumstances code such that his award
  - will not be canceled for failure to maintain continuous enrollment or failure to earn 24 hours during the 2019-2020 academic year; and
  - will not be suspended for failure to meet the statutory cumulative GPA requirement
  - will not be canceled for failure to bring his GPA up within 2 years (if Opportunity, Performance, Honors recipient) or 1 year (TOPS Tech recipient).

In circumstance #3, the student will finish with same result as the sequentially previous grade.

Questions? Please e-mail [sgar@la.gov](mailto:sgar@la.gov).