

TOPS RENEWAL: FULL-TIME ENROLLMENT, CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT AND ANNUAL HOURS REQUIREMENTS

Q-1. Can I get an exception to any of the requirements to enroll full time, to maintain continuous enrollment, or to earn at least 24 hours each academic year?

A. Yes. See the Q&A entitled Exceptions for more information.

FULL-TIME ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENT

Q-1. How many hours do I have to enroll in each semester to maintain my TOPS Award?

A. In order to maintain your TOPS Award, you must enroll full time each semester/quarter/term at your school. If you attend a semester school, you must enroll in at least 12 hours each semester. If you attend a quarter school, you must enroll in at least 8 hours. If you are enrolled in a term school, you must enroll in enough credit hours for the school to consider you full time, and this number of hours may differ depending upon the school and the type of program in which you are enrolled.

Q-2. I am a nursing student. I will be in clinicals next semester. Do I still have to take 12 hours for the semester to be full-time?

A. If your college considers you to be enrolled full-time (although less than 12 hours), you may enroll in the number of hours required by your program of study. You are considered program full-time and will not be required to earn 24 hours for the academic year. To be considered program full-time, your school must certify that you are considered to be enrolled full-time in your program of study when it bills LOSFA for your TOPS award. Ask the Dean of your current program of study to send an email or note to the financial aid office to let them know that you are considered enrolled full time in your program of study.

Q-3. I am attending a quarter school this fall, but I plan to transfer to a semester school for the spring. Will I be able to receive my TOPS Award in the spring?

A. Yes. Note that even if you transfer from a quarter school to a semester school, or vice versa, you must still earn at least 24 hours during the academic year. See below for more information on the Annual Hours Requirement.

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENT

Q-1. What is the continuous enrollment requirement?

A. This means that you must remain enrolled throughout a complete semester/quarter/term.

Q-2. I am currently enrolled full time this semester, but I need to resign from all of my classes. I am right-handed and I broke my right arm. What happens if I resign?

A. If you resign from all classes, your TOPS Award will be canceled. HOWEVER, you may request an exception to the requirement to maintain continuous enrollment. See the Q&A entitled Exceptions for more information.

Q-3. I am currently enrolled full time this semester, but I have decided to change my major, and I no longer need to earn credit for all of the classes I'm enrolled in. What happens if I withdraw from those classes?

A. Your TOPS Award will be canceled UNLESS you earn at least 24 hours by the end of the academic year. The academic year begins with the fall semester/quarter/term and ends immediately before the following fall semester/quarter/term.

ANNUAL HOURS REQUIREMENT

Q-1. How many hours must I earn to renew my scholarship?

A. You must **earn (pass with a "D" or better)** 24 hours each academic year to retain your TOPS award. Failure to earn (pass with a "D" or better) 24 hours will result in permanent cancellation of your award unless you are granted an exception for cause. (See the Q&A entitled Exceptions.) The academic year for the purpose of earning at least 24 hours begins with the fall semester and ends immediately before the next fall semester. It includes the summer sessions, terms, quarters, and intersessions.

Q-2. Do my Advanced Placement or Dual Enrollment hours earned in high school count toward the 24 hours required for the academic year for TOPS renewal?

A. **No.** Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment hours were earned in high school so they do not count toward the 24 hours required for TOPS renewal. **HOWEVER, grades earned in dual enrollment courses will be included in the calculation of your TOPS cumulative grade point average after your first semester in college.**

Q-3. Do hours earned in a summer session or intersession count toward the 24 hours required for the academic year for TOPS renewal?

A. Yes. The college "academic year" for the TOPS requirement to earn at least 24 hours each academic year **begins with the fall semester, quarter or term of the award year and concludes immediately before the next fall term commences.** Hours earned at any time beginning with the fall semester, quarter or term and until the next fall semester, quarter or term commences, including summer session and intersession hours, will count toward the 24 hour requirement. Hours earned in summer school before you enroll for the first time as a full-time student **DO NOT** count towards the 24 hour requirement for your first year of college.

If you have been awarded the TOPS Opportunity, Performance or Honors Award and you are enrolled in a technical program, you should read the Q&A entitled TOPS Tech.

Q-4. My college does not give credit for remedial hours. Do remedial hours count toward the 24 hours required for the academic year for TOPS renewal?

A. Yes. Remedial hours taken and passed during the academic year do count toward the 24 hours required even if your school reports a "P" for the remedial class. If you do not pass a remedial class, it will be treated as an "F" and will affect your TOPS Cumulative GPA.

Q-5. My award was suspended for GPA, but my friend's award was canceled for failing to earn 24 hours. What is the difference between suspension and cancelation?

- A. If your TOPS award is suspended for failure to earn the required TOPS cumulative GPA or for failure to maintain Steady Academic Progress, you will have an opportunity to have your award reinstated once you have attained the minimum required TOPS cumulative GPA if it was not below what is required to reinstate your award for more than two years (one year from the end of the semester or quarter the award is suspended for the TOPS Tech Award).

If your award is canceled due to failure to earn at least 24 hours during the academic year, you are not eligible for reinstatement of your award unless you are granted an exception. If your award is canceled and you can provide documentation that circumstances beyond your control prevented you from earning at least 24 hours, you can apply for an exception. Your Request for Exception form must be received no later than six months from the date of the email notifying you of the cancelation of your TOPS award. Even if the exception is approved, your award may still be suspended for failure to earn the required GPA or for failure to maintain Steady Academic Progress. A Request for Exception form with instructions describing the documentation required can be found on the LOSFA Web site at (<https://mylosfa.la.gov/students-parents/scholarships-grants/tops/tops-forms/>). obtained directly from LOSFA, or by emailing custserv@la.gov.