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LOUISIANA STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE COMMISSION OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Student Financial Aid Bulletin

SFA No:	S2021-5
DATE ISSUED:	December 9, 2021
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DISTRIBUTION:	College and University Financial Aid Offices and Registrars, Louisiana Community and Technical College System Personnel
TOPICS:	Completers Grant – Revised Framework

The [framework](#) for the Completers Grant has been revised with assistance from the Louisiana Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (LASFAA). The revised detailed framework for the Completers Grant can be found at <https://mylosfa.la.gov/wp-content/uploads/Completers-Framework.pdf> and on the following pages of this bulletin.

The following highlights are included in the revised framework.

- A federal subsidized and unsubsidized loan is not considered a resource.
- Schools have the ability to award students who are eligible for the Fall 2021 (1S2022) under the changes in the revised framework. For example, if a student received a federal subsidized/unsubsidized loan for Fall 2021, the school has the option to return loan funds and award the Completers Grant in the amount not to include a refund that a student may have received.
- For schools where book charges do not appear on the fee bill, a book allowance can be allocated to students as long as the school documents such costs and maintains the information for audit purposes. Book costs should not exceed the amounts indicated in the LASFAA budget.
- Teacher education has been added as a priority major

Addressed in the [Completers Grant Q&A](#):

Students in default who have made satisfactory repayment arrangements and are now eligible for Title IV aid can receive the Completers Grant provided they meet the other eligibility requirements.

Questions regarding the Completers Grant should be emailed to completers@la.gov.

COMPLETERS GRANT
REVISED ELIGIBILITY FRAMEWORK
December 2021

The Board of Regents has approved for a limited time, a revised financial aid framework, the Completers Grant, which is designed to incentivize near-completers in all majors with equal priority given to the following high demand fields: healthcare, other Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fields and teacher education at Louisiana's public two- and four-year institutions to earn their undergraduate degrees and to incentivize enrollment in and completion of short-term credential programs at two-year institutions. All degree programs are eligible for funding assistance. The Completers Grant will provide grants to students who are within 30 credit hours of completing a degree at a two- or four-year campus or completing on-ramp credential and/or credential of value programs as identified by Louisiana Workforce Commission data, along with two-year institutions and private sector partners' input. The intent of this program is to provide no more than two consecutive semesters of funding. The Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) will administer this grant program which is being funded using one-time Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund dollars which are available through September 30, 2022.

Schools have the ability to award students who are eligible for the Fall 2021 (1S2022) under the changes in the revised framework. For example, if a student received a federal subsidized/unsubsidized loan for Fall 2021, the school has the option to return loan funds and award the Completers Grant not to exceed the total of tuition, fees and books minus other sources of aid.

A student's eligibility for federal subsidized and unsubsidized loans is not to be considered a resource.

Under the framework, institutions will have the ability to structure the award to best fit the needs of their students. Funds will be available for on-ramp credential and credential of value programs and any degree program at two- and four-year institutions beginning Fall 2021. Each academic year, equal priority shall be given to those students who are within 30 hours of completing their degree in healthcare, remaining Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) fields and teacher education or who will be completing an on-ramp credential or credential of value as identified by the Louisiana Workforce Commission as follows:

- First, to those students who are expected to complete their program of study/graduating in the fall who have significantly depleted or who have no other sources of financial aid;
- Second, to those students who are expected to complete their program of study/graduate in spring who have significantly depleted or who have no other sources of financial aid;
- Third, to those students who are expected to complete their program of study/graduate in summer who have significantly depleted or who have no other sources of financial aid.

The framework includes eligibility requirements for recipients, allocation information, the manner in which institutions are to calculate awards, requirements for institutional packaging policies, and reporting mandates. Institutions should read the Framework carefully to ensure compliance.

Student Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for the Completers Grant, a student must:

- Be a Louisiana resident;
- File a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the academic year during which the award will be received;
- Meet one of the priority criteria listed above;
- For credit programs, students shall meet the enrolling institution's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy for receipt of Title IV aid;

- For non-credit programs, students shall successfully complete course(s) sufficient to continue in their program of study as determined by the institution;
- Be enrolled through the 14th class day.

Billing for a grant constitutes certification that the student meets one of the priorities set forth herein and has met the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements for receipt of Title IV aid. Postsecondary institutions shall submit bills to LOSFA on or after the 15th class day.

Institutional Allocations

Allocation of funds to eligible participating two- and four-year public institutions have been determined by a formula developed by the Board of Regents based on the number of students projected to complete degrees and/or non-credit programs at the institution. (See Appendix A.) System offices have the authority to allocate funds to institutions within its system.

Systems with two-year institutions have the authority to allocate funds between credit and non-credit programs. System offices must provide both the Board of Regents and LOSFA with the allocation of funds to each institution within its system. If an allocation to an individual institution changes, system offices must notify the Board of Regents and LOSFA in advance of the reallocation.

Award Amounts

Postsecondary institutions shall determine the minimum and maximum award amounts for enrollment in short-term credential and any baccalaureate or associate degree program, as well as amounts for students who enroll on a less than full time basis. All majors are eligible for Completers but priority should be given to students in their final semester majoring in health care, remaining Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) fields and teacher education. **Awards shall be limited to tuition, fees, and books as set forth on the student's fee bill.** Institutions **shall not** award the maximum amount set for the program of study if that amount would exceed the student's cost of attendance as defined in the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. The suggested minimum award amount should not be less than \$100.

Award Calculations

- Institutions should allocate funds with the primary goal of helping students complete the credential/degree as soon as possible. Institutions are expected to make a good faith effort to distribute Completers Grant allocations in a manner that reaches students with the most financial need, and who are closest to completion, within 30 credit hours of finishing a degree at a two- or four-year institution or have enrolled in on-ramp credential and credential of value programs. The Completers Grant may be provided in addition to any other state or federal aid awarded to the student, provided that the award cannot cause the student's aid to exceed the cost of attendance. The Completers Grant shall be applied to those costs evidenced on the student's fee bill, which shall include only tuition, fees, and books; other sources of student aid may be applied to other costs of attendance. It is not the intent of Completers Grant funds to provide refunds to students. A book allowance can be allocated to students as long as the school documents such costs and maintains the information for audit purposes. Book costs should not exceed the amounts indicated in the LASFAA budget.

Packaging Policy

Institutions must have a written packaging policy for Completers Grant Awards that provides:

- Award amounts:
 - May not exceed the amount of the tuition, fees, and books which are evidenced on the recipient's fee bill
 - Must have a basis for any institutionally set minimum and maximum award amounts.
- Procedures for identification of transfer and/or re-entering students which ensure such students receive awards on the same basis as continuing students.

- Students receiving the award with 30 or fewer hours remaining to completion shall receive the award in subsequent semesters until completion, provided that the student has met the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements for receipt of Title IV aid.
- Method for determining a student's financial need. The institution must mandate that the student file the FAFSA.

Schools should prioritize student eligibility using the hierarchy outlined below:

- Students who have exhausted federal aid eligibility (grants and federal subsidized/unsubsidized loans and state aid eligibility (TOPS, Go Grant, etc).
- Students who have limited availability for federal aid and other sources of aid.
- Other eligibility criteria determined by the institution.

NOTE: Eligibility criteria MAY NOT:

- Use any academic criteria other than Satisfactory Academic Progress for receipt of Title IV aid; or
- Automatically eliminate students receiving other financial assistance, including TOPS.

Reporting Requirements

Institutions will need to report the following data at the end of each semester, quarter, or term:

- Demographic information of recipients;
- The number of students who meet each priority, and for those who complete within a semester/term, the CIP code of the degree/certificate/credential;
- The number of students who met each priority and received a grant under this program;
- The number of students who met each priority and did not receive a grant under this program;
- The minimum, maximum, and average of award amounts provided; Dollars needed to fund all eligible students in each priority;
- The number of students who received the minimum award amount;
- The number of students who received the maximum award amount.

Questions regarding this bulletin or the Completers Grant Framework should be directed to Deborah Paul at deborah.paul@la.gov.

COMPLETERS GRANT
SYSTEM ALLOCATION:

System	Completer Fund Allocation @ 30 hours & All degrees
LCTCS*	\$4,650,000
LSU	\$2,330,000
SU	\$670,000
ULS	\$5,650,000
Total	\$13,300,000
*LCTCS has the authority to allocate funds to credit and non-credit programs.	

Credential Count - 30 Hours or Less					
	All Degrees		4&5 Star Job Aligned		
System	Bacc	Assoc	Certificate	Diploma	Total
LCTCS	-	16,247	2,268	6,286	24,801
LSU	7,372	1,673	48	-	9,093
SU	1,938	655	55	50	2,698
ULS	20,762	1,141	-	-	21,903
Total	30,072	19,716	2,371	6,336	58,495
Weight	1	1	0.1	0.25	
Weighted Total - 30 hours or Less					
	STEM Bacc		4&5 Star Job Aligned		
System	Bacc	Assoc	Certificate	Diploma	Total
LCTCS	-	16,247	227	1,572	18,045
LSU	7,372	1,673	5	-	9,050
SU	1,938	655	6	13	2,611
ULS	20,762	1,141	-	-	21,903
Total	30,072	19,716	237	1,584	51,609

Source: Board of Regents -Statewide Student Profile System