

Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA)

TOPS Processing Quick Reference Guide For Submitting Grades

06/29/2021

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS PRIOR TO SUBMITTING GRADES, TO AVOID DELAYS IN PROCESSING.

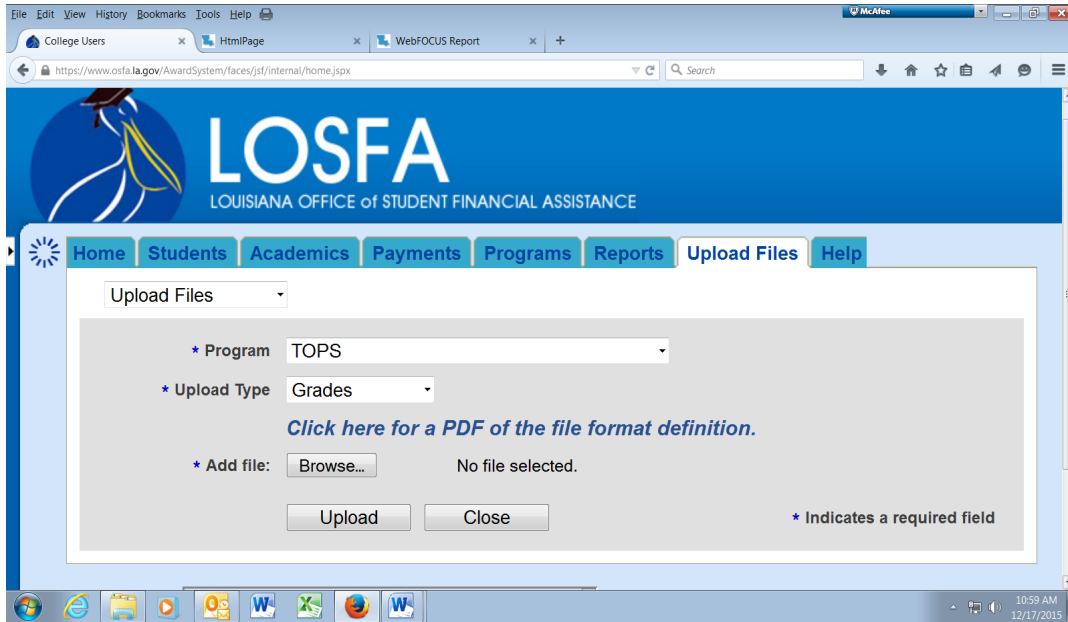
A. GENERAL GRADE REPORTING:

1. Grade reports are semester/term specific and NEVER cumulative.
2. **CREDIT EARNED WHILE IN HIGH SCHOOL:**
 - a. Report with a '00' Academic Standing REGARDLESS OF THEIR FUNDING SOURCE.
 - b. NEVER SUBMIT with a "DU" Academic Standing.
3. **WHAT NOT TO REPORT:**
 - a. **DO NOT report audit classes**, CLEP hours, or advanced placement hours.
 - b. **DO NOT report W's**. If student has withdrawn from ALL classes after 14th class day (10th class day for La. Tech), report a resignation code "10".
 - c. **DO NOT report a resignation code along with academic data** (Quality Points, GPA Hours, Earned Hours). If the student resigns, quality points and hours must reflect zeroes.
 - d. **DO NOT report high school grades with a "DU" Academic Standing**. Use "00" instead.
 - e. **DO NOT report an "FT" Academic Standing as a grade submission**. "FT" SHOULD ONLY be reported through the payment request process.
4. **REMEDIAL/DEVELOPMENTAL CLASSES:**
 - a. If a student took a remedial class at another school, **THAT SCHOOL MUST REPORT IT** to LOSFA.
 - b. If a remedial or developmental course is assigned a letter grade of A, B, C, D, or F, the school **MUST report QUALITY POINTS, GPA HOURS, and EARNED HOURS**, even if it's school policy to only give the student pass credit.
5. **REPEAT/DELETE CLASSES:**
 - a. All repeat/delete classes must be reported to LOSFA.
 - b. Although it may be school policy to remove prior grades/credit, **ALL CREDIT EARNED and ATTEMPTED count towards the TOPS Academic Year Hour requirement and TOPS GPA. BOTH DETERMINE CONTINUING ELIGIBILITY**. Removing this credit could result in erroneous award cancellations.
6. **P/F AND P/NC CLASSES:**
 - a. Whenever a **P (pass) is earned**, report hours as '**EARNED HOURS**'.
 - b. Whenever an **F (failed) or NC (no credit) is earned**, report hours as '**GPA HOURS**'.
7. **SPLIT SESSIONS** - If the school offers split sessions (Session I / Session II), **DO NOT submit a grade report for each individual session**. Submit ONE grade report reflecting ALL CREDIT attempted/earned for the entire semester.
8. **DUALLY ENROLLED** (Cross-enrolled in multiple schools):
 - a. Report a "DU" Academic Standing so that continuing eligibility will be placed on hold until the second set of 'DU' grades are received and processed. This is to prevent the student from being made eligible when they may otherwise be placed on suspension, resulting from the second 'DU' grade.
 - b. NEVER submit grades for another school. Each school is responsible for posting their own grades.
9. **GRADE CORRECTIONS:**
 - a. If an error is made while submitting grades, return to the TOPS GRADE SUBMIT screen via ACADEMICS tab to edit. This can ONLY be done when the grade report is in 'PENDING' status. Contact LOSFA if you are unable to find it so that we put it in 'PENDING' status in order for an edit to be made.
 - b. If a grade report reflects an error on a student's LOSFA account, a correction should be submitted in its entirety, reflecting ALL attempted and earned credit for that ENTIRE semester. PLEASE REMEMBER that a correction overrides ALL PRIOR submissions from a school. Therefore, submit it as if you are posting it for the first time and not as a supplemental to an earlier submission.
10. Send grades through the TOPS portal. **ALL GRADES for ALL STUDENTS should be submitted**, even if a student does not have a LOSFA account. Please refer to TOPS Bulletin T2014-7, <http://www.osfa.la.gov/MainSitePDFs/T2014-7.pdf>, and USDE letter in the following link: http://www.osfa.la.gov/MainSitePDFs/T2006-4_attachment.pdf. Submitting all

grades prevents the risk of a student receiving payment when they would otherwise be ineligible due to GPA. **REFUNDS WILL BE PURSUED** for those found to be ineligible upon reevaluation.

B. BATCH FILES:

1. To submit a BATCH FILE, you will need to set up a TEXT FILE at your school, which can be done using Excel ... Log onto the portal, select UPLOAD FILES, select TOPS, select ADD FILE, select BROWSE, select the file, then select UPLOAD. It must be sent in the correct format as a .txt file. See screen below.



2. Each student’s grade information should be in a text string with no spaces. If just one character is left off or an extra zero gets added, it affects all columns and the batch would have to be deleted.
3. There are two file formats which grades can be submitted, including one for decimal grades. Please count off the number of characters in your text string prior to submitting the grades, otherwise; all columns will be off.
4. **IT IS THE SCHOOL’S RESPONSIBILITY TO REVIEW BATCH FILES PRIOR TO SUBMISSION.** Very often, when LOSFA receives batch submissions, obvious problems can be spotted immediately. In fact, some schools have to submit grades multiple times before a correct batch can be processed. LOSFA staff has to manually review grades for ALL schools. ****It is IMPERATIVE that someone at the school BE RESPONSIBLE for reviewing the data ONCE the programmer runs the report. This MUST BE DONE** prior to the grade reports/batches being sent to LOSFA.
5. **DO NOT REPORT PENDING GRADES AS INCOMPLETES** if you are waiting on grades to be added to the transcript.
6. If LOSFA contacts you by phone or email, detailing specific problems with your batch, **PLEASE CORRECT ALL ERRORS BEFORE SUBMITTING A CORRECTION.** If you have been informed that there are five problems, do not correct only two, then resubmit the entire batch with other errors remaining. It is LOSFA’s policy to refer students to the school if there is a problem with grades not being reported timely or accurately.

GRADE REPORT FIELDS

ACADEMIC STANDING CODES:

00	Continuous Enrollment – Use when no other codes apply
10	Officially Resigned
11	Accelerated Program - <i>Must be approved by LOSFA</i>
DO	Degree Only – No classes taken, but degree earned (Bachelor, Associate, Certificate, Diploma).
DU	Dual enrolled – Will not allow grades to process without both sets of grades posted as ‘DU’.
EX	Exchange Student – Submit at the beginning of a semester with zero data (QP, etc). Final grades are to be submitted with a ‘00’ Academic Standing. DO NOT code ‘EX’ or ‘XE’, which will reject.

DEGREE INFORMATION:

Report **ALL degree type and date** when submitting your batch. ***Degree date MUST MATCH*** semester being reported. Ex: Students who graduate in fall 1S2017/1T2017 should have a degree date of 201612 or 201611 (for La. Tech). If degree data is not yet available, it is your responsibility to report it as soon as possible. If a student enrolled for a Degree Only, but did not take any classes, report zeroes for QUALITY POINTS and GPA/EARNED HOURS, along with a "DO" Academic Standing, degree type AND degree date. DO NOT enter projected degree dates.

ETHNIC CODES: Refer to http://www.osfa.la.gov/MainSitePDFs/references/Field_Value_Definitions.pdf.

QUALITY POINTS should be reported as whole numbers ... **DO NOT figure in +'s or -'s** (example: A+ or A- should be reported as an A, 4 quality points per hour earned).

GPA Hours:

Schools are to submit GPA/quality HOURS for every course in which a letter grade of **A, B, C, D, F, NC** (no credit), or **NS** (non-satisfactory) was earned.

Do not report GPA

Do not include W's

Do not report Pass or Satisfactory credit

Do not report Incompletes

EARNED HOURS: Report hours for every class in which a grade of A, B, C, D, P, or S was earned.

INCOMPLETE HOURS:

- Should **ONLY** be reported in the INCOMPLETE HOURS field.
- **Incompletes are converted to F's when determining a TOPS GPA.** Therefore, it is **IMPORTANT** that an updated grade report be submitted once a grade is earned for the incomplete.

PROGRAM TYPE:

Please be sure you are submitting the correct program type. If a student was paid as "A" program type, grades **MUST** also reflect 'A'. Otherwise, continuing eligibility cannot be determined. **THEY MUST MATCH.** Be sure to report the program type that the student was enrolled in at the point they were full time following the 14th class day (*10th class day for La. Tech*), not what they may have changed to later in the semester. Do not base a student's program type on the TOPS Award Level they are awarded at. ****It is IMPERATIVE that someone at the school CONFIRM PROGRAM TYPE once the programmer runs the report. This MUST BE DONE** prior to the grade reports/batches being sent to LOSFA.

**** Refer ALL Grade Submission inquiries to: SGAR@La.Gov**