

**NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION
PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES MANUAL**

CHAPTER 11

FINANCIAL AID

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Section 1. Regents' Service Program

Title 4, Chapter 18 of the Board of Regents' *Handbook* establishes the Regents' Service Program so that NSHE students can make a contribution to the critical needs of the community. The following procedures outline the program's structure.

1. Intent

Institutional models previously entitled Regents' Award Program shall be renamed to Regents' Service Program. Programs must include:

- a. An overall focus that will make a contribution to the State of Nevada, the surrounding community, or the institution.
- b. Literacy programs that meet the needs of students in K-12 shall receive first priority. Recipients may be placed as off-campus tutors or coordinators for these programs.
- c. All awards must have an on- or off-campus service/work obligation that provides the student clear responsibility and an opportunity to develop a record of accomplishment.
- d. Institutions shall have the flexibility to design work, stipend, scholarship or graduate assistantship programs that meet the needs of their students.
- e. Positions may not be used to supplant personnel needs on campus, or used in the same general way as work-study positions.
- f. Positions may not provide class instruction.
- g. If graduate assistantships are funded, the function of these positions must be different from other state-funded graduate assistants, and recipients of this program may not be employed as teaching assistants.
- h. Non-resident graduate assistants under this program shall not be charged tuition in accordance with NSHE Board of Regents' *Handbook* Title 4, Chapter 15, Section 3, Number 3.

2. Eligibility

Awards must be made pursuant to the Board-established guidelines for student access (Title 4, Chapter 18) providing that at least 80 percent of funds shall be used for need-based programs. The remaining funds will go toward access-oriented programs. For the purposes of this program, federal government methodology criteria for determining need shall be replaced with the following:

- a. Enrolled in a degree or certificate program, in at least six credits of academic work at the institution for which they will participate in the Regents' Service Program.

- b. Meet at least one of the following criteria:
 - i. Head of Household;
 - ii. Single Parent;
 - iii. Age 22 or over and have never attended college or have had a break in enrollment of two or more years;
 - iv. No support from parents or family;
 - v. Unusual family or financial circumstances; or
 - vi. First generation college-bound.
- c. Students who meet multiple criteria shall be given priority in the program.
- d. Priority shall be given to eligible Nevada residents.
- e. International students may be employed under this program provided they meet other institutional and federal employment requirements.
- f. If and when an institution meets all demonstrated eligibility based on these criteria for its student population and for those students who apply for the Regents' Service Program, this ratio may be relaxed. Remaining funds from the 80percent category may be applied to "access-oriented" student financial assistance.
- g. For the remaining access-oriented programs (no more than 20 percent), students must demonstrate an ability and willingness to work in a service program approved by the institution.
- h. Each institution must establish a minimum grade point average (GPA) or good standing requirement to be applied to all students participating in the program. This requirement cannot be less stringent than current practice for other student employment programs, although it may be more restrictive if the institution deems it appropriate.

3. Program Development

Each institution must develop a plan for use of the positions.

- a. At least one individual must have oversight over the program.
- b. Summer programs are allowed in which students may work as much as full-time without being enrolled; however, this is limited to continuing students who were enrolled at the institution in six credits either the prior spring or are enrolled in six credits the following fall.
- c. Positions must:
 - i. Be consistent with the student's career objective, service objective, or academic area of interest.
 - ii. Make a contribution to the state of Nevada, the community, and/or the institution.
 - iii. Be designated as on- or off-campus. Off-campus employers must sign a participation agreement or contract, as determined by the institution.
 - iv. Reflect a high level of skill or knowledge needed for service programs. Examples include: tutor, mentor, literacy programs assistant, public policy research assistant, graduate intern, peer advisor.

4. Payment

Institutions are appropriated Regents' Service Program funds as a line item in the state budget.

- a. 100 percent of the funding for each position will be from state funds including benefits (workers' compensation, alternative retirement, etc).
- b. At no time may the institution require an employer match, even for off-campus positions.
- c. These positions should not supplant work-study funds that do require a match.
- d. Fringe benefits for student employment positions in literacy programs may be paid from these funds.
- e. Work schedules and rate of pay will be determined by the nature of the service required, and may be established as a separate category in the institution's student employment wage classification document.
- f. Funds may be used for tuition assistance.
- g. The institution may choose to pay resident fees for assistantships from these funds if it is deemed appropriate.

5. Administrative Costs

Each institution may allocate a portion of the funds from the Regents' Service Program to fund personnel, associated fringe, travel, and operating expenses incurred in the administration of the program.

- a. Institutions may allocate up to 9percent of the total budgeted funds for administrative costs.
- b. The administrative cost allowance must be used to administer the Regents' Service Program and may not be allocated elsewhere in the institution.

6. Reporting

A report will be submitted no less than annually by each institution to the NSHE System Administration Office. Reports will be collected as part of the annual financial aid report, as well as an individual Regents' Service Program report.

On an annual basis, the Board of Regents' Academic, Research and Student Affairs Committee (ARSA) will review these reports and may provide recommendations if deemed appropriate.

(Added 11/06; A. 10/09, 9/10, 3/16)

Section 2. Silver State Opportunity Grant Program

Title 4, Chapter 18 of the Board of Regents' Handbook directs the Chancellor to establish procedures and guidelines to comply with the requirements of the Silver State Opportunity Grant Program created by Senate Bill 227 (Chapter 387, *Statutes of Nevada 2015*) and codified under Chapter 396 of *Nevada Revised Statutes*.

1. Eligible Institutions. Eligible institutions include each NSHE community college and state college that shall award grants under the SSOG Program according to procedures established herein.
2. Apportionment of Funds between Eligible Institutions.
 - a. State funding for the SSOG program will be allocated to each community college and state college annually, and shall be based on the proportion of undergraduate FTE during the prior fall term. Institutional allocations shall be reviewed and approved by the Chancellor.
 - b. Institutions shall not award funds exceeding the amount allocated pursuant to this section.
 - c. Dollars that are in jeopardy of not being awarded and disbursed at the institution where originally allocated shall be divided among the remaining eligible institutions based on the distribution of unawarded SSOG eligible students.
3. Eligibility Requirements. To be eligible for the SSOG Program, a student must:
 - a. Enroll in at least 15 credit hours each semester of award at a community college or state college;
 - b. Be enrolled in a program of study leading to an undergraduate degree or certificate;
 - c. Be placed into college-level English and mathematics courses in accordance with Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 1;
 - d. Be classified as a resident in accordance with Title 4, Chapter 15;
 - e. Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); and
 - f. Meet institutional Title IV financial aid satisfactory academic progress requirements. For the purposes of continuing eligibility, a student must successfully complete 15 credits during the prior term in which an SSOG disbursement was received. In addition:
 - i. A student who loses eligibility for SSOG may reinstate during a subsequent semester by successfully completing 15 credits in a single semester without the grant and maintaining financial aid satisfactory academic progress. Subject to available funds, this student would be eligible to receive SSOG in future semesters, provided all eligibility requirements for the program are met.
 - ii. Each institution shall utilize its existing federal Title IV satisfactory academic progress appeals process to allow SSOG recipients who are not making satisfactory academic progress to appeal their status. A student who is approved through the institutional appeals process to receive Title IV aid may also receive SSOG during the semester for which an appeal is approved, providing the eligibility requirements set forth under this Section are met. Although students with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status do not qualify to receive Title IV aid, such students who are not making satisfactory academic progress may appeal their status under an institutional appeals process for the purpose of the SSOG award.

4. Amount of the SSOG Award

- a. Grant awards are subject to the limit of the funds available for the SSOG Program and are intended to pay for a portion of the Cost of Attendance at a community college or state college.
- b. Maximum SSOG Award. The maximum annual amount of the grant each student is eligible to receive shall be equal to the Cost of Attendance established for the purpose of the SSOG program minus the amounts determined for the student contribution, family contribution, and federal contribution, as defined and calculated pursuant to this section, and shall not exceed \$5,500 for Academic Year 2016-17.
- c. Minimum SSOG Award. Students who are not eligible to receive an annual SSOG award of at least \$200 for Academic Year 2016-17 based on the SSOG award calculation shall not receive the grant.

5. Cost of Attendance

- a. For purposes of calculating SSOG awards, the annual Cost of Attendance (COA) for all eligible institutions for Academic Year 2016-17 shall be:
 - i. \$18,830 for students living off-campus and not with a parent;
 - ii. \$12,717 for students living with a parent; and
 - iii. \$15,280 for students living on campus.
- b. The institution may pro-rate the COA in cases where a student enrolls for a single semester.
- c. Under no circumstances shall the grant received under the SSOG Program, along with other financial assistance received, exceed institutional COA.

6. Student Contribution

- a. A standard student contribution that will be used by each community college and state college in the calculation of all grants awarded under the SSOG Program will be calculated by determining what a student could earn by working at minimum wage a reasonable number of hours during the school year and over the summer. This calculation should in no way be construed as requiring a student to seek or obtain employment as a condition of eligibility for the SSOG Program.
- b. For purposes of calculating SSOG awards, the student contribution shall be set at \$5,500 for Academic Year 2016-17. The institution shall pro-rate the student contribution in cases where a single semester cost of attendance is utilized.
- c. The student contribution may be covered by, but is not limited to, the following:
 - i. Student earnings or savings;
 - ii. Private, institutional, state or federal scholarships, including the Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship;
 - iii. Grants not listed under Subsection 6 of this section;
 - iv. Veterans education benefits;

- v. Student loans; and
 - vi. Financial assistance from family or friends.
7. Family Contribution. The family contribution shall be equivalent to the federal nine-month Estimated Family Contribution (EFC), as calculated by the U.S. Department of Education based on FAFSA data and reported on the Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR). The EFC may be prorated for an award period of less than nine months.
8. Federal Contribution
- a. The federal contribution shall be equivalent to the total of federal grant aid a student is awarded during the same award year from the following programs only:
 - i. Federal Pell Grant;
 - ii. Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG); and
 - iii. Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant.
 - b. Under no circumstances shall the federal contribution include the amount the student is awarded in student loans.
9. Guidelines for Awarding and Disbursing SSOG funds
- a. Only students who are enrolled in 15 or more credits that count toward their program of study are eligible to receive an SSOG disbursement.
 - b. A student who previously earned a bachelor's degree is not eligible to receive the SSOG award.
 - c. A student with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status may be eligible for the SSOG award. Such students must complete the FAFSA and identify themselves to the institutional financial aid office as having DACA status. DACA students must provide documentation they have been granted Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals before they can be awarded an SSOG grant.
 - d. A student placed into remedial math or English pursuant to Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 1 of the *Handbook* is not eligible for SSOG until all such remedial coursework is completed. However, enrollment in corequisite coursework where academic support is provided to students while enrolled in college gateway courses shall be considered college level courses for purposes of SSOG eligibility.
 - e. Each institution shall award SSOG funds to eligible students in ascending EFC order up to 8500 EFC, until available funds are exhausted. This order shall apply each time SSOG funds are awarded and applies only to the population of students meeting all eligibility requirements as of the date awarding is carried out.

10. Award Date. For academic year 2016-17, institutions shall make initial SSOG awards no earlier than July 1, 2016, and no later than July 8, 2016. Future award dates shall be set by the Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs in consultation with institutional financial aid offices.

11. Course Availability to Meet the 15-Credit per Semester Requirement

- a. Each community college and state college shall ensure that adequate courses are offered each semester so that a student otherwise eligible for the grant and desirous of enrolling in 15 credits is able to do so. If situations arise where such a student is, due to course availability, unable to enroll in 15 credits that count toward the student's program of study, the institution shall consider feasible alternatives, including, but not limited to:
 - i. Course substitutions;
 - ii. Adjustment of a student's academic plan; and
 - iii. Opening a new course section.
- b. Credits taken at another eligible institution to meet degree requirements at the student's home institution shall count towards the eligibility requirement of Subsection 1(a). In order to take advantage of this provision, a student must complete the NSHE SSOG Co-Enrollment form by the end of the semester for which he or she is requesting funding. For purposes of this subsection, "home institution" means the institution at which the student is enrolled in a program of study leading to a recognized degree or certificate and, if eligible, is receiving Title IV Federal Student Aid.
- c. Each community college and state college shall ensure advisors are available to assist SSOG students who experience difficulty in registering for 15 credits that count toward their program of study.

12. Reporting Requirements. On an annual basis, the Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs shall request from institutions data necessary to evaluate the success of the SSOG program.

13. Communications Strategies. Institutions shall establish strategies to communicate the availability of the SSOG to students. Type and method of communications may vary by institution; however, all institutions in jeopardy of not expending all allocated funds must send targeted communications to students in an effort to encourage more students to become eligible by taking action (e.g. adding a class, taking the placement test, completing the FAFSA).

14. Definitions. The following definitions apply for purposes of this Section:

- a. Award – The SSOG amount offered to a student on their Financial Aid Award letter. In order to receive the funds offered, a student must meet all eligibility requirements at time of disbursement.
- b. Disbursement – The SSOG amount actually paid by the institution to a student account.

(Added 6/15; A. 9/15, 3/16, 6/16)