

Financial Aid Highlights

Financial Aid Highlights is a periodic electronic news update provided by the Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships for the benefit of prospective and continuing CSUB students and parents, high school and community college counselors, faculty, and staff. The electronic publication will contain informational items pertaining to financial aid and scholarships of relevance to the CSUB community. Past issues are archived on the Financial Aid & Scholarships homepage at <http://www.csub.edu/finaid>. Additional information regarding any given topic may be obtained by calling the office at (661) 664-3016.

National Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) Program - FAH (Vol. 8, No. 5)

Overview/Background

The Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 (HERA) was signed into law by President Bush on February 8, 2006. This Act created the new Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) Program to be awarded to eligible students in their 1st and/or 2nd year of study, beginning in the 2006-2007 award year.

The maximum 1st year ACG award is \$750
The maximum 2nd year ACG award is \$1,300

Eligibility

To qualify, the student must meet all of the following conditions—

- Be a U. S. citizen (Permanent resident students are not eligible for this grant).
- Be a Federal Pell Grant recipient for that term.
- Be enrolled full-time (i.e., 12 units or more) in a degree program.
- Be enrolled in the first or second academic year of his/her program of study (academic years are defined at CSUB for this grant as: 1st year = 0 to 36 cumulative college earned units and 30 weeks of instruction, 2nd year = 37 to 72 cumulative college earned units and 30 weeks of instruction).
- Have completed an approved “rigorous high school program of study.” Students who graduated from a high school in California, and met the A-G course pattern requirements for regular admission to a CSU, are considered to have completed a “rigorous” approved program of study. All other students, including graduates of high schools in other states, must meet one of the other sets of requirements described in detail at the [U.S. Department of Education](http://www.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/competitiveness/ac-smart2.html) Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/competitiveness/ac-smart2.html>
- To qualify for 1st year ACG, students must have graduated from high school after January 1, 2006, and not have been previously enrolled as a regular college student in an undergraduate degree program.
- To qualify for 2nd year ACG, students must have graduated from high school after January 1, 2005, and have an overall cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater their freshman year in college (verified only once at point the student enters their 2nd year)
- Meet standard eligibility criteria for all Federal Title IV financial aid (e.g., complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid - FAFSA, not be in default on a student loan, demonstrate financial need, maintain satisfactory academic progress, etc.).
- Remedial courses are not considered as earned units.

Application Process

The U. S. Department of Education (USDE) uses the information collected on the FAFSA to identify potentially eligible students and notifies the university. The CSUB Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships (OFA&S) will work with the CSUB Office of Admissions to confirm that the student completed a rigorous high school program.

- Students do not need to contact the Office of Admissions or the OFA&S.
- Confirmation of eligibility will be performed automatically.

The CSUB OFA&S will then utilize information provided by the Office of the Records, and the Office of Admissions to determine if a student meets the requirements for either a 1st Year ACG or 2nd Year ACG.

Selection

ACG-eligible students who have already received their financial aid for the term will have their aid packages adjusted to reflect their eligibility for this new federal grant.

The law states that the ACG, in combination with the student's Expected Family Contribution (EFC), financial aid, and other resources, cannot exceed the student's Cost of Education. Therefore, in some cases, the ACG may replace other financial aid, especially student and parent loan eligibility. Students will be notified of the new award and any adjustment to other aid by CSUB RunnerMail.

Awarding

We will make awards and notify eligible students after Census Day each term.

For additional information about the Academic Competitiveness Grant, go to the U.S. Department of Education website at <http://www.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/competitiveness/ac-smart2.html>

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