

## Quick facts about **Academic Issues and Financial Aid**

### AID PROGRAM CENSUS DATES

Aid programs have one of three possible census dates, the date on which payment eligibility is tested. The most straightforward is date of payment which means eligibility is not tested after a payment is made. The most usual is Quarter of Term which means that eligibility is based on enrollments that are effective as of that date only. The less often used is End of Term which means that eligibility is continually tested throughout the entire semester.

All courses have start, end, and Quarter of Term dates defined, and the Quarter or Term date will vary depending upon the length of the course.

For aid programs that test as of Quarter of Term, as long as a student is in a course on that course's census date, it counts for aid purposes. A course dropped before, or added after that date is not counted when calculating the student's enrollment level for the term.

### ENROLLMENT LEVELS

Enrollment Level by Number of Credits	Full Time Enrollment	Three Quarter Time Enrollment	Half Time Enrollment	Less than Half Time Enrollment
Undergraduate	12	9-11	6-8	1-5
Graduate Certificate	9	7-8	5-6	1-4
Master's Degree	9	7-8	5-6	1-4
Doctoral Degree	6	4-5	3	1-2
Medical	12	9-11	6-8	1-5

Some awards require enrollment of half time or more, others require full time, and some awards will pay 100% at full time, 75% at three quarter time, 50% at half time, and 25% at less than half time.

#### ***Adding or Dropping Courses:***

**Dropping credits before the *quarter of term date* of the course** will result in a full refund of tuition, but also may result in an adjustment in financial aid if the student changes enrollment levels.

**Dropping credits effective after the *quarter of term*** will forfeit tuition. Most award programs will not be changed if already paid. A few awards, however, adjust based on enrollment changes throughout the term.

**Adding courses** will result in tuition charges, and may result in additional aid if added before the *quarter of term date*. **Courses added after the *quarter of term date* of the course** will not count for aid purposes.

**Federal Stafford loans pay 100% if the student is half time or more** and will not increase if a student adds credits to become three-quarter or full time.

If the student is contemplating dropping or adding courses, it is always wise to consult the enrollment chart (above) or contact the Office of Financial Aid to determine how aid will be affected.

## **LATE OR RETROACTIVE COURSE ADDS**

It was recently an accepted practice that either the Office of Financial Aid or the Student Accounts Office would ask the Registrar to back-date a late add so the student would be enrolled on the census date, allowing financial aid to pay out.

This practice was recently changed. OFA and SA understand that these offices have no way of knowing whether or not the student was actually attending the class on the census date. Only the person teaching the course can authoritatively state that the student was attending on that date. Therefore, students who realize that they are missing out on aid because of a late add are now told that they must go back to their instructor and request an email be sent to the RO on their behalf, asking to back date the add if that is appropriate.

## **INCOMPLETE GRADES**

Courses with I grades (or ET or DF) are ignored at the end of the term when OFA calculates the term GPA and the cumulative GPA for SAP purposes. OFA then reviews these students again at midterm of the next semester. If the student has not completed the coursework by that time, the calculation assumes a 0.0 grade earned. The GPA is recalculated at that point with the earned grade or the assumed zero point. If the student then fails SAP due to the recalculated GPA, a Warning or Denial hold is placed as appropriate. Allowing a student who is marginal to extend the course with an incomplete grade only makes sense if the instructor believes that the student will complete the class with a grade that will keep them out of SAP failure.

## **ZERO POINT GRADES AND FINANCIAL AID (SPECIFICALLY, PELL GRANTS)**

Students receiving Pell Grant funds are reviewed at the end of each semester. Students who fail one or more courses are reviewed to determine whether this is an "earned" failure (the student attended through the census date) or if the student simply stopped coming to class before the census date, which we would characterize as an informal drop.

OFA must rely on the date that the faculty member enters when putting in the 0.0 grade to tell us if the student was still attending the class on census date. Many faculty members omit this information, so OFA must assume the student was not in the class if there is no "last date of attendance" that falls after the quarter of term. OFA bills back any "unearned" portion of the grant for courses where the student was not in attendance on the census date of that course.