

Q&A: Student Success Completion Grant

1. **QUESTION: THE DEFINITION OF ACADEMIC YEAR CONFLICTS WITH SUMMER PAYMENT FOR QUARTER SCHOOLS: THEY USE SUMMER AS A HEADER, WHICH CONFLICTS WITH THE TRAILER BILL LANGUAGE DESCRIBING THE ACADEMIC YEAR.**

ANSWER: Colleges may award summer payments based on the college's institutional awarding policies. This may be based on year round Pell or for quarter schools.

Citation: 88931(c)(2) (A) If funding is available after making awards to students in the primary terms, a community college may grant additional awards to students who take a sufficient number of units during the summer term to bring their total number of academic units to 24 units or more for the academic year. The chancellor's office shall work with colleges to determine the summer grant amounts based on available funds.

2. **QUESTION: ENROLLMENT. SOME SCHOOLS HAVE FRACTIONAL UNITS, HOW WOULD THEY TREAT THESE STUDENTS?**

ANSWER: Schools should not round up fractional units to whole number units to make students eligible for award payment. No rounding is allowed for Pell grants nor for Cal grants.

Examples of fractional enrollment units

- 11.5 units enrolled – cannot round up to 12 to pay the grant
- 14.5 units enrolled – cannot round up to 15 to pay the grant

3. **QUESTION: WHAT HAPPENS IF THE STUDENT HAS DIFFERENT ENROLLMENT STATUSES PER TERM IN RELATION TO THE ANNUAL MAXIMUM AMOUNT?**

ANSWER:

- a. If a student is attending 12+ units per semester term, they receive half the award year based amount of the SSCG or the quarter equivalent – see tables below
- b. If a student in less than 12 but adds units in a corresponding intersession/summer, may add units to pay in the primary term based on institution's awarding policies
- c. **AFTER** awarding all eligible students during Fall and Spring, a community college may grant additional summer awards to students who take a sufficient number of units during the summer term to bring their total number of academic units to 24 units or more for the academic year
- d. **AFTER** awarding all eligible students for the Summer term , a community college may grant additional awards to students who take a sufficient number of units of 30 units or more for the academic year

Term Based

Attendance status	Semester units and term	Quarter units and term
For students who enroll in 12 to 14.99 units	\$649 per primary term	\$432/433 per primary term
For students who enroll in 15+units	\$2,000 per primary term	\$1,333/1,334 per primary term

Award Year Based

Attendance status	Award Year units	Award Quarter units
For students who enroll in 24 to 29.99 units	\$1,298 per award year	\$1,298 per award year
For students who enroll in 30+ units	\$4,000 per award year	\$4,000 per award year

Citation: 88931.

(A) Six hundred forty-nine dollars (\$649) per semester, or quarterly equivalent, for eligible students who enroll in 12, 13, or 14 units per semester, or the quarterly equivalent number of units.

(B) Two thousand dollars (\$2,000) per semester, or quarterly equivalent, for eligible students who enroll in 15 units per semester, or the quarterly equivalent number of units.

(2) (A) If funding is available after making awards to students in the primary terms, a community college may grant additional awards to students who take a sufficient number of units during the summer term to bring their total number of academic units to 24 units or more for the academic year. The chancellor's office shall work with colleges to determine the summer grant amounts based on available funds.

(B) It is the intent of the Legislature that the available grants would be prorated to allocate a larger amount to students who take a sufficient number of units for a total of 30 units or more for the academic year.

4. QUESTION: IF MAKING SUMMER PAYMENTS, IS THE CAP \$4,000? OR IS THE SUMMER AWARD ADDITIONAL TO THE ACADEMIC YEAR TOTAL FOR FALL AND SPRING?

ANSWER: The maximum award year amount is \$4,000 – this includes primary terms and intersession/summer.

Citation: 88931.

(2) (A) If funding is available after making awards to students in the primary terms, a community college may grant additional awards to students who take a sufficient number of units during the summer term to bring their total number of academic units to 24 units or more for the academic year. The chancellor's office shall work with colleges to determine the summer grant amounts based on available funds.

5. QUESTION: IS THIS GRANT AN ENTITLEMENT?

ANSWER: No.

6. IS IT OK UNDER THIS NEW BILL TO PAY FOR PRE-REQUISITE COURSES, REQUIRED CAL WORKS COURSES, AP AND TRANSFER CREDITS, ETC.?

ANSWER: There is nothing in the trailer bill preventing award payments for these students for as long as they continue to meet federal satisfactory academic progress. Financial aid offices are encouraged to support Guided Pathways and AB 705 so that we help more students get to success/complete their education goals in 120 units or less.

7. QUESTION: WHAT DO YOU DO WITH PROGRAM/MAJOR CHANGES? ARE THESE STUDENTS STILL ELIGIBLE?

ANSWER: Students are eligible but must continue to meet federal satisfactory academic progress to maintain eligibility.

8. QUESTION: WHERE DOES THE COMPLETION GRANT FALL IN THE GRANT HIERARCHY? DOES IT COME AFTER ALL OTHER GRANTS BUT BEFORE LOANS?

ANSWER: The SSCG is a supplemental grant and comes *after* all other grants and scholarships but *before* federal work-study and loans. The payment priority for SSCG and other categorical grants is a local decision based on the institution's awarding policies.

Citation: 88931. (2) The grant award shall be considered a supplemental grant, and shall not supplant any other grant, fee waiver, or scholarship aid received by the student, including, but not necessarily limited to, federal grants, Cal Grant awards, institutional grants, merit-based scholarships, and athletic scholarships.

9. QUESTION: IS THIS PROGRAM ONLY FOR FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN OR FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT ATTENDED BEFORE?

ANSWER: The SSCG can be paid to students entering anywhere along their educational path, while a SEP is encouraged but not required for award payment, students must meet federal satisfactory academic progress to remain eligible to receive SSCG payment.

10. QUESTION: CAN BOTH CAL GRANT B AND C PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE A COMPLETION GRANT?

ANSWER: Yes.

- Students with Cal Grant B or C reserved awards are not eligible
- Students with Cal Grant A reserved awards are not eligible

11. QUESTION: HOW LONG CAN A STUDENT BE PAID THE SSCG?

ANSWER: For as long as the student is attending full time, awarded a Cal Grant B or C and meeting federal SAP. Remember that Maximum Time Frame in SAP will act as a meter for this grant too.

12. QUESTION: COULD WE PAY A STUDENT A SSCG at a higher amount WHO TOOK 12 UNITS FOR FALL THEN ENROLLED IN 3 UNITS FOR INTERSESSION?

ANSWER: Yes. Units attempted during the intersession and units completed in a prior term (fall) or units attempted in a future term (spring) during the award year can be used to determine eligibility for payment. For those schools who offer intersession courses; schools may add such units to the fall or spring term for payment under the term based or the Award Year based payment per the institution's awarding policies.

13. QUESTION: WHEN SHOULD WE PAY THESE STUDENTS?

ANSWER: You should pay them at the earliest opportunity when students become eligible. When the student is eligible for their Cal Grant B or C award payment and attending full-time for the term/year, they are then eligible for the SSCG award payment for the term/year.

14. QUESTION: IF A STUDENT DROPS UNITS AFTER RECEIVING PAYMENT FOR A TERM, MUST WE TAKE BACK THE PAYMENT?

ANSWER: No. The student may keep that payment; however, going forward, the student would be ineligible for payment if they failed to maintain federal SAP.

15. QUESTION: IS THERE AN APPEAL PROCESS?

ANSWER: If appeals are permitted in the institution's federal SAP policy, the determination must be included and documented in compliance with federal regulation.

16. QUESTION: IF A STUDENT IS OVER MAXIMUM UNIT TIME FRAME, COMPLETES AN APPEAL AND IS APPROVED FOR THIS SEMESTER AND IS NOW ELIGIBLE FOR PELL and CAL GRANT WITH 15 ENROLLED UNITS, WOULD THE STUDENT BE ELIGIBLE FOR SSCG FOR THIS SEMESTER?

ANSWER: Yes, in accordance with your institution's federal SAP policies.

17. QUESTION: CURRENTLY WE OFFER SOME PROGRAMS THAT ARE NOT FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBLE AT OUR INSTITUTION, SUCH AS CSU CERTIFICATE OR IGETC CERTIFICATE; CAN THE SSCG BE PAID FOR STUDENTS IN THOSE PROGRAMS?

ANSWER: You can only pay for eligible programs listed on your PPA.

18. QUESTION: DOES IT MATTER IF A STUDENT SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETES COURSES TO RECEIVE SUMMER PAYMENT?

ANSWER: SAP may impact eligibility and summer can be used as a header or trailer depending on institutional awarding policies.

19. QUESTION: HOW DO WE TREAT RETROACTIVE PAYMENTS IF THE STUDENT HAS NOT BEEN PAID FOR THOSE PRIOR TERMS? DO WE PAY ON ATTEMPTED OR COMPLETED UNITS?

ANSWER: Pay based on Pell disbursement policies.

- All prior term coursework must be completed units
- All current and future term coursework must be attempted units

20. QUESTION: WHAT IF I RUN OUT OF MONEY?

ANSWER: We allocated 83% of the total funding during the Advance allocations. The rest of the funding will be allocated for P1 and you will also have an opportunity to release or request more funding during the mid-year report (P2) in April 2019.

21. QUESTION: WHAT TO DO IF I ANTICIPATE I WILL NOT USE ALL MY SSCG FUNDS?

ANSWER: You can return those funds during either the P1 or P2 process. We recommend you begin paying this grant as early as possible for the fall 2018 term to give you the opportunity to revisit your college data and determine if you would need additional funds or would need to return funds. The CO will diligently track SSARC data on a monthly basis to identify if any colleges may be running out of funds. For P1, any request for additional funding will be done on a first-come, first-serve basis. For P2, the CO will try to accommodate all requests for additional funding, but if there are not sufficient funds to accommodate all colleges requesting funds, the additional funding will be reallocated on a pro-rated formula based on number of awards paid up to the mid-year reporting period.

22. QUESTION: HOW DO WE REPORT THE SSCG?

ANSWER: We are setting up SSARC for schools to report SSCG payments. The new record layouts and acceptable field values will be made available as soon as they are finalized. As with FTSSG and CCCG all submissions should be a cumulative account of net payments for the Year-to-date.

23. QUESTION: WHAT IS THE LAST OPPORTUNITY TO REPORT 2017-18 FTSSG AND CCCG?

ANSWER: Reporting deadlines for the 2017-18 fiscal year are November 15, 2018. This set deadline will allow the CO two weeks to reconcile numbers before Fiscal certifies R1 on the first week of December. Adjustments will not be allowed after the deadline, as this would delay our internal reconciliation process.

24. QUESTION: HOW OFTEN SHOULD WE REPORT TO SSARC?

ANSWER: Colleges will be required to report SSCG data on a monthly basis, on the 1st of each month. Colleges will also have the option to report more frequently based on their disbursement dates. The monthly deadlines must be met regardless of when the college disburses.