

**LOUISIANA STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE COMMISSION
OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

***Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS)
Bulletin***

TOPS BULLETIN NUMBER:	T2014-2
DATE ISSUED:	May 7, 2014
EFFECTIVE DATE:	Immediately
DISTRIBUTION:	High School Counselors, College and University Financial Aid Offices and Registrars, LAICU Financial Aid Offices and Registrars, Louisiana Community and Technical College System Deans and Louisiana Community and Technical College System Personnel
TOPICS:	Amends the Scholarship and Grant Program Rules to provide TOPS Recipients Who Complete a Certificate, Diploma or Associate's Degree and Who Have Remaining TOPS Eligibility May Delay Enrollment in a Second Program of Study

On November 21, 2013, the Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission (the "Commission") amended Sections 701, 705, and 805 of the TOPS Administrative Rules to provide that TOPS recipients who complete a certificate, diploma, or associate's degree and who have remaining TOPS eligibility may delay enrollment in a second program of study until the fall semester following the one year anniversary of the completion of the certificate, diploma or program, effective with students who have returned and enrolled for AY2012-13 or later. For example, if a student graduated in December 2013 or May 2014, the student would have until the fall 2015 semester/quarter to enroll in an eligible institution to receive their TOPS award.

The Commission also amended Section 1903 of the administrative rules to provide that colleges and universities must report a student's completion of program of study; whether the program of study was academic or technical; the type of credential earned (degree, certificate, diploma, baccalaureate), and the semester of completion. Beginning with the Spring semester/quarter of 2014, postsecondary institutions must report the appropriate Degree Type Code as follows:

- Degree Type 1: Associate Degree
- Degree Type 2: Bachelor's Degree
- Degree Type 3: Master's Degree
- Degree Type 4: Certificate or Diploma

This information must be reported with the TOPS Academic Information Reports for all students completing a program of study. Each record with a Degree Type must also include whether the program of study was academic or technical, the Degree Date (the last month of the semester, quarter or term the degree, certificate, or diploma was awarded).

Please submit this data information when reporting Spring semester/quarter of 2014 grades and for all semesters thereafter. For students who request to take advantage of this rule change who completed a program of study prior to the Spring semester/quarter of 2014, you will be required to provide this information upon request.

Questions concerning this rule change should be directed to: John Bell, Manager TOPS Awards and Renewal Section at John.Bell@la.gov, or by phone: 225-219-7674.