

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

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

TOPS BULLETIN NUMBER:	T2009-05
DATE ISSUED:	October 5, 2009
EFFECTIVE DATE:	As Indicated
DISTRIBUTION:	High School Counselors, College, University and LAICU Chancellors, Financial Aid Offices, Business Offices, Registrars and Auditors; Louisiana Legislators, Officials and the Congressional Delegation; Higher Education Board; Libraries; Commission Members; Technical College Campus Deans and Student Personnel Services Officers
TOPICS:	Summer Payment, Academic Year Extension, and Military Extension

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The Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission (LASFAC) recently implemented changes that: allow certain students to use their TOPS award during a summer semester/term; include the Spring Intersession as part of the academic year; and extend the deadline for students returning from the military to enroll in a postsecondary institution.

I. Summer Payment:

Effective with Summer Session 2010, LOSFA will allow payment for summer sessions for TOPS recipients who have earned at least 60 semester/term hours prior to the beginning of the summer session. Students must enroll full-time in a summer session/term to be eligible for payment. Any hours earned during the summer semester/term cannot be used to meet the TOPS 24-hour annual requirement and the grades earned during the summer session/term will be included in the student's TOPS cumulative grade point average. Students desiring to utilize TOPS payment for a summer semester/term must submit a completed TOPS Request for Summer School Payment Request and Acknowledgment Form, available on the LOSFA Portal. Institutions must retain the completed form for five (5) years or until audited by LOSFA, whichever occurs first.

II. Academic Year Extension

Effective with AY 2008-2009, the TOPS Academic Year will include the intersession that begins after the close of spring semester/term and terminates prior to the beginning of summer session (spring intersession, or "2I2009"). By rule an "intersession" is "an academic term between regular semesters/terms that provides credit courses to students in an intensive, condensed format."

Hours earned during the spring intersession may be used to meet the TOPS 24-hour annual requirement. To be included in the 24 hours, the hours must be included on the institution's transcript as earned during spring intersession. Hours earned during summer sessions/terms may not be included when reporting hours earned during spring intersession.

Spring intersessions are not eligible for TOPS funding.

Active TOPS records with 2I2009 grades/hours on file will be reprocessed to include any hours earned during 2I2009 in the computation of AY2008-2009 annual hours. No action is required by the institution for 2I2009 grades already submitted. Reprocessing will be initiated upon receipt of any additional 2I2009 Academic Information Records. For AY2009-2010 and thereafter, as with present practice, records will be evaluated for renewal upon receipt of 2S or 3T Academic Information Records and recipients will be notified if they are cancelled or suspended. Records will be reprocessed upon receipt of 2I grades and recipients will be notified if their TOPS status changes. All changes will be reflected on the TOPS Master Roster.

Reprocessed records will be required to meet the Renewal TOPS Cum GPA requirement at the conclusion of 2I to remain eligible for TOPS Funding.

III. Military Extension

Students who join the United States Armed Forces within one year after graduating from high school and return for postsecondary education have an application deadline of not later than the semester, excluding summer semesters/terms, immediately following the 5th anniversary of the date the student graduated from high school or the one year anniversary of the student's separation from active duty, **whichever is earlier**. Students who complete an approved home study course are considered to have graduated on May 31 of the academic year (high school) during which the home study course is completed.

No action is required on the part of the postsecondary educational institution.

If you have questions concerning these TOPS changes, contact John Bell, TOPS Awards and Renewals Manager at 1-800-259-5626, ext. 1113 or jbelle@osfa.la.gov.