LOUISIANA STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE COMMISSION
OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) Bulletin

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TOPICS:	Guidance on Submission of Payment Requests and Grades

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide additional information and guidance regarding the process for submitting payment requests and reporting grades for TOPS.

To determine whether a student is eligible for TOPS payment, review the TOPS Award Level, Disposition (Status), and Eligible Term not Paid (Only Term Eligible) for all awarded students on either the TOPS Master Roster or the TOPS Student Roster on the Louisiana Award System. If a student is not listed as eligible for TOPS, you may not submit a payment request for that student.

TOPS Opportunity, Performance, Honors and TOPS Tech award level recipients are eligible for TOPS funding if enrolled full-time on the 15th class day or the day they actually become full-time if later than the 15th class day in either an Academic or Technical Program. TOPS Tech recipients must enroll in a technical program to receive funding. Payment Requests that include Academic Program type for TOPS Tech award level students WILL BE REJECTED.

NOTE: The registrar's office at your school should know which programs of study are technical and which programs of study are academic. If you are unsure whether a student's program of study is academic or technical, you should check with the registrar.

Students enrolled in prerequisite courses for Technical programs are considered to be enrolled in the Technical Program. **NOTE:** If you submit a payment request for a student's enrollment in a technical program of study for a particular semester, you must report grades as technical grades for that semester, regardless of whether the student changes his course of study during the semester.

Examples:
1. In the fall semester of 2014 (1S2015), a student is enrolled in his first semester in an Associate of Applied Science program (a technical program of study). His program type is Technical, so you must submit a payment request for this student as "T" (regardless of TOPS award type). The courses in which the student is enrolled are pre-requisites to enter the technical courses required

for the program. Even if the courses appear to be academic courses, the student is still considered to be enrolled in a technical program of study. Because the payment request for this semester was submitted as "T", grades for this semester must be reported as "T".

2. In the fall semester of 2014 (1S2015), a student is enrolled in his first semester in a Certificate of General Studies program (a technical program of study). His program type is Technical, so you must submit a payment request for this student as "T". The student changes his program of study to Associate of General Studies (an academic program of study) during the semester. When you report grades for the fall semester of 2014 (1S2015), you must report those grades as "T". When you submit a payment request for the spring semester of 2015 (2S2015), you will submit the payment request as "A" because the student is beginning the semester in an academic program of study.

Failure to report the same program type (academic or technical) for both billing and grades for a particular semester will result in substantial delays in processing the student's TOPS eligibility for subsequent semesters.

TOPS Payment Error Reports are available for each institution on the Louisiana Award System. The type of error is noted for each student for whom payment was rejected. The institution is responsible for reviewing the Error Roster, making appropriate corrections, and resubmitting corrected Payment Requests for eligible students.

LOSFA will be conducting two webinars during the fall semester of 2014 to walk through the payment submission/grade submission process. Notification of the dates for these webinars will be provided at a later date.

For additional information, please contact Dr. John Bell, TOPS Awards and Renewals Manager, at john.bell@la.gov or call 225-219-7674.