

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

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

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DISTRIBUTION:	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:	TOPS Cumulative Grade Point Average (Opportunity, Performance, Honors)

Beginning with the 2015-16 academic year (Fall 2015), all grades reported for TOPS Opportunity, Performance, and Honors recipients whether academic or technical will be combined to result in the TOPS Cumulative Grade Point Average (Opportunity, Performance, Honors). For students with only academic program grades or only skill, occupational or technical program grades, combining all grades reported will not result in a change in the cumulative GPA. For students who have both academic grades and skill, occupational or technical program grades, combining all grades will likely result in a change in the cumulative GPA.

If combining all grades causes the a student's TOPS Award to be suspended at the end of the spring semester of 2016, and the suspension is due solely to the combination of academic and technical grades, the student will remain eligible for an additional semester (for the fall semester of 2016). If the student does not achieve the required cumulative GPA for his award by the end of the fall semester of 2016, his award will be suspended, and he must achieve the required TOPS Cum GPA within 24 months from the date of the suspension. This additional semester does not apply to students who were first-time, full-time for the fall 2015 semester or later or who were suspended for the fall 2015 semester.

Unless student's award is canceled for failure to meet the initial, full-time or continuous enrollment requirements or the 24 hour requirement, the student's cumulative GPA at the conclusion of the 2014-15 academic year will be noted by a Term designated as 9C2015. This new status will be located on the TOPS Grade Information screen of the TOPS Student Tab on the Award System on both the School and Student Accounts. The 9C2015 grade record will be used by LOSFA to determine whether the combination of grades is the sole reason why a student's award would be suspended beginning in the 2015-2016 academic year.

Examples:

1. Student earns 12 hours in an academic program at the end of the fall 2014 semester with a 1.00 GPA and his TOPS award is suspended. The student enrolls in a technical program for the spring 2015 semester and earns 12 hours with a GPA of 2.50. The student's TOPS award will be paid for the fall 2015 semester.

The student enrolls in a technical program for the fall 2015 and spring 2016 semesters and each semester earns 12 hours with a 2.50 GPA. Student's cumulative GPA, including all 48 academic and technical hours, is 2.12.

Generally, the student's TOPS award would be suspended; however, since the sole reason that the student is not eligible is the inclusion of the academic grades from the fall 2014 semester, the student's TOPS award will be paid for one additional semester (fall 2016) and he will have that semester to meet the minimum requirement or his TOPS award will be suspended for the spring 2017 semester.

2. A student enrolls for the first time as a full time student in an academic program for the fall 2015 semester and earns 12 hours with a 1.50 GPA and his TOPS award is suspended. The student enrolls in a technical program for the spring 2016 semester and earns 12 hours with a cumulative GPA of 2.25. The student's TOPS award will be suspended for the fall 2016 semester.

Since the student was first-time, full-time for the fall 2015 semester and the suspension was not caused by combining grades earned previous to the 2015-2016 academic year, the additional semester does not apply.

3. The student earns 12 hours in an academic program at the end of the fall 2014 semester with a 1.50 GPA and his TOPS award is suspended. The student enrolls in a technical program for the spring 2015 semester and earns 12 hours with a 2.25 GPA.

The student's TOPS award is suspended for the fall 2015 semester. Since the student's award was suspended for the fall 2015 semester, the additional semester does not apply.

Questions regarding the TOPS Cumulative Grade Point Average (Opportunity, Performance, Honors) should be directed to John Bell, 225-219-7674 or John.Bell@la.gov.