

credit hours but does not use a semester, trimester, or quarter system and does not have terms that are substantially equal in length with no term less than nine weeks in length, the lesser of—

(1) The length of the student's program (or the remaining portion of that program if the student has less than the full program remaining) at the school; or

(2) The academic year as defined by the school in accordance with 34 CFR 668.3.

(i) For a student who transfers into a school with credit or clock hours from another school, and the prior school originated or certified a loan for a period of enrollment that overlaps the period of enrollment at the new school, the new school may originate a loan for the remaining portion of the program or academic year. In this case the school may originate a loan for an amount that does not exceed the remaining balance of the student's annual loan limit.

(iii) For a student who completes a program at a school, where the student's last loan to complete that program had been for less than an academic year, and the student then begins a new program at the same school, the school may originate a loan for the remainder of the academic year. In this case the school may originate a loan for an amount that does not exceed the remaining balance of the student's annual loan limit at the loan level associated with the new program.

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§ 685.302 [Reserved]

§ 685.303 Processing loan proceeds.

(a) *Purpose.* This section establishes rules governing a school's processing of a borrower's Direct Subsidized, Direct Unsubsidized, or Direct PLUS Loan proceeds. The school shall also comply with any rules for processing loan proceeds contained in 34 CFR part 668.

(b) *General*—(1)(i) *A school that initiates the drawdown of funds.* A school may not disburse loan proceeds to a borrower unless the school has obtained an executed, legally enforceable promissory note from the borrower.

(ii) *A school that does not initiate the drawdown of funds.* A school may disburse loan proceeds only to a borrower for whom the school has received funds from the Secretary.

(2)(i) Except in the case of a late disbursement under paragraph (d) of this section, or as provided in paragraph (b)(2)(iii) of this section, a school may disburse loan proceeds only to a stu-

dent, or a parent in the case of a PLUS Loan obtained by a parent borrower, if the school determines the student has continuously maintained eligibility in accordance with the provisions of § 685.200 from the beginning of the loan period for which the loan was intended.

(ii) In the event a student delays attending school for a period of time, the school may consider that student to have maintained eligibility for the loan from the first day of the period of enrollment. However, the school must comply with the requirements under paragraph (b)(3) of this section.

(iii) If, after a school makes the first disbursement to a borrower, the student becomes ineligible due solely to the school's loss of eligibility to participate in the title IV programs or the Direct Loan Program, the school may make subsequent disbursements to the borrower as permitted by 34 CFR part 668.

(iv) If, prior to making any disbursement to a borrower, the student temporarily ceases to be enrolled on at least a half-time basis, the school may make a disbursement and any subsequent disbursement to the student if the school determines and documents in the student's file—

(A) That the student has resumed enrollment on at least a half-time basis;

(B) The student's revised cost of attendance; and

(C) That the student continues to qualify for the entire amount of the loan, notwithstanding any reduction in the student's cost of attendance caused by the student's temporary cessation of enrollment on at least a half-time basis.

(3) If a student does not begin attendance in the period of enrollment, disbursed loan proceeds must be handled in accordance with 34 CFR 668.21.

(4)(i) If a student is enrolled in the first year of an undergraduate program of study and has not previously received a Federal Stafford, Federal Supplemental Loans for Students, Direct Subsidized, or Direct Unsubsidized Loan, a school may not disburse the proceeds of a Direct Subsidized or Direct Unsubsidized Loan until 30 days after the first day of the student's program of study unless—

§ 685.304

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(A)(I) Except as provided in paragraph (b)(4)(i)(A)(2) of this section, the school has a cohort default rate, calculated under subpart M of 34 CFR part 668, or weighted average cohort rate of less than 10 percent for each of the three most recent fiscal years for which data are available; or

(2) For loans first disbursed on or after October 1, 2011, the school in which the student is enrolled has a cohort default rate, calculated under either subpart M or N of 34 CFR part 668 of less than 15 percent for each of the three most recent fiscal years for which data are available;

(B) The school is an eligible home institution originating a loan to cover the cost of attendance in a study abroad program and has a Direct Loan Program cohort rate, FFEL cohort default rate, or weighted average cohort rate of less than 5 percent for the single most recent fiscal year for which data are available.

(ii) Paragraphs (b)(4)(i)(A) and (B) of this section do not apply to any loans originated by the school beginning 30 days after the date the school receives notification from the Secretary of a cohort default rate, calculated under subpart M or subpart N of 34 CFR part 668, that causes the school to no longer meet the qualifications outlined in paragraph (A) or (B), as applicable.

(iii) Paragraph (b)(4)(i)(B) of this section does not apply to any loans originated by the school beginning 30 days after the date the school receives notification from the Secretary of a cohort default rate, calculated under subpart M or subpart N of 34 CFR part 668, that causes the school to no longer meet the qualifications outlined in that paragraph.

(c) *Processing of the proceeds of a Direct Loan.* Schools shall follow the procedures for disbursing funds in 34 CFR 668.164.

(d) *Late Disbursement.* A school may make a late disbursement according to the provisions found under 34 CFR 668.164(g).

(e) *Treatment of excess loan proceeds.* Before the disbursement of any Direct Subsidized, Direct Unsubsidized, or Direct PLUS Loan proceeds, if a school learns that the borrower will receive or has received financial aid for the pe-

riod of enrollment for which the loan was intended that exceeds the amount of assistance for which the student is eligible (except for Federal Work-Study Program funds up to \$300), the school shall reduce or eliminate the overaward by either—

(1) Using the student's Direct Unsubsidized, Direct PLUS, or State-sponsored or another non-Federal loan to cover the expected family contribution, if not already done; or

(2) Reducing one or more subsequent disbursements to eliminate the overaward.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 1840–0672)

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§ 685.304 Counseling borrowers.

(a) *Entrance counseling.* (1) Except as provided in paragraph (a)(8) of this section, a school must ensure that entrance counseling is conducted with each Direct Subsidized Loan or Direct Unsubsidized Loan student borrower prior to making the first disbursement of the proceeds of a loan to a student borrower unless the student borrower has received a prior Direct Subsidized, Direct Unsubsidized, Federal Stafford, or Federal SLS Loan.

(2) Except as provided in paragraph (a)(8) of this section, a school must ensure that entrance counseling is conducted with each graduate or professional student Direct PLUS Loan borrower prior to making the first disbursement of the loan unless the student borrower has received a prior Direct PLUS Loan or Federal PLUS Loan.

(3) Entrance counseling for Direct Subsidized Loan, Direct Unsubsidized Loan, and graduate or professional student Direct PLUS Loan borrowers must provide the borrower with comprehensive information on the terms and conditions of the loan and on the responsibilities of the borrower with respect to the loan. This information may be provided to the borrower—