

**PART 691—ACADEMIC COMPETITIVENESS GRANT (ACG) AND NATIONAL SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS ACCESS TO RETAIN TALENT GRANT (NATIONAL SMART GRANT) PROGRAMS**

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**Subpart A—Scope, Purpose, and General Definitions**

**§ 691.1 Scope and purpose.**

(a) The ACG Program awards grants to help eligible financially needy first- and second-year undergraduate students, who complete rigorous secondary school programs of study, meet the cost of their postsecondary education.

(b) The National SMART Grant Program awards grants to help eligible financially needy third-, fourth-, and, in the case of a program with at least five full years, fifth-year undergraduate students who are pursuing eligible majors in the physical, life, or computer sciences, mathematics, technology, or engineering or a critical foreign language meet the cost of their postsecondary education.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a–1)

[71 FR 38004, July 3, 2006, as amended at 74 FR 20221, May 1, 2009]

**§ 691.2 Definitions.**

(a) The following definitions used in this part are in the regulations for Institutional Eligibility under the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, 34 CFR part 600:

Award year

Clock hour

Correspondence course

Credit hour

Eligible institution

Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Programs

Regular student

Secretary

State

Title IV, HEA program

(b) The following definitions used in this part are in subpart A of the Student Assistance General Provisions, 34 CFR part 668:

Academic year

Enrolled

Expected family contribution

Federal Pell Grant Program

Full-time student

Half-time student

HEA

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Payment period  
Three-quarter time student  
Undergraduate student  
William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) Program

(c) The following definitions used in this part are in 34 CFR part 77:

Local educational agency (LEA)  
State educational agency (SEA)

(d) Other terms used in this part are:

*ACG Scheduled Award:* The maximum amount of an ACG that would be paid to a full-time first-year student or a full-time second-year student for the applicable year.

*Annual award:* The maximum ACG or National SMART Grant amount a student would receive for enrolling as a full-time, three-quarter-time, or half-time student and remaining in that enrollment status for one year.

*Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP):* A taxonomy of instructional program classifications and descriptions developed by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics used to identify eligible majors for the National SMART Grant Program. Further information on CIP can be found at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2002165>.

*Eligible major:* A major, as identified by the Secretary under §691.17(a), in one of the physical, life, or computer sciences, mathematics, technology, engineering, or a critical foreign language as defined in section 103(3) of the HEA; or a qualifying liberal arts curriculum as identified by the Secretary under §691.17(b).

*Eligible program:* An eligible program as defined in 34 CFR 668.8 that—

(1) For purposes of the ACG Program—

(i) Is an undergraduate program of at least one academic year, but less than two academic years, in length that leads to a certificate at a two- or four-year degree-granting institution of higher education;

(ii) Is an undergraduate program of at least two academic years in length that leads to a certificate at a two- or four-year degree-granting institution of higher education;

(iii) Leads to an associate's degree or a bachelor's degree;

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(iv) Is at least a two-academic-year program acceptable for full credit toward a bachelor's degree; or

(v) Is a graduate degree program that includes at least three years of undergraduate education; or

(2) For purposes of the National SMART Grant Program—

(i) Leads to a bachelor's degree in an eligible major or is a graduate degree program in an eligible major that includes at least three years of undergraduate education; and

(ii) In the case of a five-year program, is a program that—

(A) Requires at least five full undergraduate years to complete, as certified by an appropriate institutional official in accordance with the institution's policies and procedures and documented in the institution's records;

(B) Contains not less than 24 semester hours, 36 quarter credits, or 900 clock hours in each year of the program, including the fifth year; and

(C) Is not a program that is a qualifying liberal arts curriculum identified as an eligible major under §691.17(b).

(3) For purposes of paragraph (2)(ii)(A) of this definition, the appropriate official of an institution is the chief executive officer, provost, dean, academic department chairman, or other official with responsibility for setting a degree program's coursework.

*Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR):* An electronic record that the Secretary transmits to an institution that includes an applicant's—

(1) Personal identification information;

(2) Application data used to calculate the applicant's EFC; and

(3) EFC.

*National SMART Grant Scheduled Award:* The maximum amount of a National SMART Grant that would be paid to a full-time third-year, fourth-year, or fifth-year student for the applicable year.

*Payment Data:* An electronic record that is provided to the Secretary by an institution showing student disbursement information.

*Student Aid Report (SAR):* A report provided to an applicant by the Secretary showing the amount of his or her expected family contribution.

*Valid Institutional Student Information Record (valid ISIR):* An ISIR on which all the information used in calculating the applicant's expected family contribution is accurate and complete as of the date the application is signed.

*Valid Student Aid Report (valid SAR):* A Student Aid Report on which all of the information used in calculating the applicant's expected family contribution is accurate and complete as of the date the application is signed.

(e)(1) As used in this part, the terms "first-year," "second-year," "third-year," "fourth-year," and "fifth-year" refer to a student's grade level in the student's eligible program as determined by the institution for all students in the eligible program.

(2) A student's grade level for purposes of the ACG and National SMART Grant programs must be the same grade level as used for determining annual loan limits under the FFEL and Direct Loan programs (34 CFR parts 682 and 685).

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-1)

[71 FR 38004, July 3, 2006, as amended at 72 FR 61263, Oct. 29, 2007; 72 FR 62034, Nov. 1, 2007; 74 FR 20221, May 1, 2009; 74 FR 61245, Nov. 23, 2009; 75 FR 66968, Oct. 29, 2010]

#### §§ 691.3–691.5 [Reserved]

#### § 691.6 Duration of student eligibility—undergraduate course of study.

(a) While enrolled in an ACG-eligible program, a student is eligible to receive up to one ACG Scheduled Award while enrolled as a first-year student and one ACG Scheduled Award while enrolled as a second-year student.

(b)(1) While enrolled in a National SMART Grant-eligible program, a student is eligible to receive up to one National SMART Grant Scheduled Award while enrolled as a third-year student, one National SMART Grant Scheduled Award while enrolled as a fourth-year student, and, in the case of a National SMART Grant-eligible program with five full years of coursework, one National SMART Grant Scheduled Award while enrolled as a fifth-year student.

(2)(i) A student's eligibility to receive up to one National SMART Grant Scheduled Award as a fourth-year student, in the case of a National SMART Grant-eligible program with less than

five full years of coursework, extends from the beginning of the student's fourth year until he or she completes his or her first undergraduate baccalaureate course of study.

(ii) A student's eligibility to receive up to one National SMART Grant Scheduled Award as a fifth-year student, in the case of a National SMART Grant-eligible program with at least five full years of coursework, extends from the beginning of the student's fifth year until he or she completes his or her first undergraduate baccalaureate course of study.

(c) A student may not receive more than two ACG Scheduled Awards and three National SMART Grant Scheduled Awards during the student's undergraduate education in all eligible programs.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-1)

[74 FR 20222, May 1, 2009]

#### § 691.7 Institutional participation.

(a) An institution that offers one or more eligible programs, as defined in § 691.2(d), for purposes of the ACG Program, and that participates in the Federal Pell Grant Program under 34 CFR part 690 must participate in the ACG Program.

(b) An institution that offers one or more eligible programs, as defined in § 691.2(d), for purposes of the National SMART Grant Program, and that participates in the Federal Pell Grant Program under 34 CFR part 690 must participate in the National SMART Grant Program.

(c) If an institution begins participation in the ACG or National SMART Grant Program during an award year, a student enrolled and attending that institution is eligible to receive a grant under this part for the payment period during which the institution begins participation and any subsequent payment period.

(d) If an institution becomes ineligible to participate in the ACG or National SMART Grant Program during an award year, a student who was eligible for a grant under § 691.15 who was attending the institution and who submitted a valid SAR to the institution, or for whom the institution obtained a