

In this issue:

- ▶ Summer Awarding
- ▶ Important Dates
- ▶ Federal Loans
- ▶ HOPE/Zell GPA
- ▶ Staff Spotlight
- ▶ Verification and the Data Retrieval Tool

Financial Aid focus

GEORGIA COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID NEWSLETTER 2018-2019

Summer Awarding

The Georgia College Office of Financial Aid has begun awarding financial aid to eligible students enrolled in classes for summer 2019. The office does not require an application for summer, except if they are applying for a Stafford Loan, and students are awarded based on their enrollment at the time of their review. Students will be notified of their summer semester eligibility via their GC Bobcat email account with instructions for accessing

the on-line award letter via their PAWS account. Please note that special messages regarding summer will appear at the top of the award letter in green print. Summer 2019 is the second year that students who received their full time Pell awards in fall and spring may be eligible for Pell during the summer if they are enrolled in at least 6 hours. Any students who were not enrolled full-time are still able to receive their remaining eligibility.

Students are eligible to receive their HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarships during summer term as long as they continue to maintain the GPA requirements after the upcoming spring checkpoint which will occur for all HOPE and Zell recipients by May 20, 2019. Any students who are eligible to receive Federal Stafford Loans during summer semester will need to complete a Stafford Loan application available under the Financial Aid Tab in



Congratulations to the graduating class of 2019 and their families!

PAWS. In order to be eligible for Stafford Loans, students must be enrolled at least half-time. Study Abroad Programs, Georgia Film Academy and USG Goes Global are some of the various programs who are eligible for financial aid for summer term, however, their financial aid specifications can vary and will be noted in the Bobcat Den.

Important Dates

May 13, 2019
First day of Summer term

May 16th, 2019
Nelnet Payment Plan opens for Fall 2019

New Student Orientations:
June 7, 14, 21
July 12, 19, 26
Transfer Orientations:
June 20
July 25

July 1, 2019
Soft deadline for a complete 2019-2020 FAFSA file

August 19, 2019
First day of Fall Term

Federal Loans

Student loans can be difficult to understand. Loans are a type of financial aid a student must pay back to the lender. There are two types of federal loans applied for through the FAFSA. One type of loan is a Subsidized Stafford Loan and this loan does not incur interest while the student is in school. The Subsidized loans are need based loan. The other type of student loan is an Unsubsidized Stafford Loan. Unsubsidized loans accrue interest while students are in school. Both loans can be paid early without any penalty. A student may adjust a loan or cancel it at any time before the loan is disbursed and 30 days after the loan has been placed on the student's account. If students do NOT know if loans are needed, they are encouraged to please visit our office so that we can assist with the decision. Loans MUST be paid back with repayments beginning 6 months after graduating from school or dropping below half-time enrollment. Half-time is 6 hours for undergraduate student and 5 hours for graduate students. Once a MPN is signed and Loan Entrance Counseling is completed, these are good for 10 years. Once the FAFSA has been completed annually and needed documents are submitted, loan(s) will disburse to students' accounts every year. Students should regularly check their Bobcat DEN for awarded loans, and can cancel any unwanted loans there. Loan histories can be viewed at nslds.ed.gov.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT:

Bianca Miller is the Financial Aid Advisor for students with last names H-L. She also serves as the Scholarship Coordinator.



Beth Gamble is the Financial Aid Advisor for students with last names M-R. She is also the Student Employment Coordinator.



Do you know your HOPE/Zell GPA?

The College HOPE Eligibility Calculation Service (CHECS) provides a centralized HOPE GPA calculation system. CHECS enables students to check their HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship status through their My GAfutures account. The calculation includes the HOPE GPA, Checkpoints, Attempted and Paid Hours for students. Students are now able to track their HOPE GPA on GAfutures from high school through college. This is available at www.gafutures.org.

Are you selected for Verification?

Approximately 30% of completed FAFSAs are selected by the Department of Education or GC for a process called Verification. This means that additional documents are needed in order to process the FAFSA for awarding. These documents vary from worksheets to tax information. Our office sends out an email to the student's Bobcat email account when these documents are needed, as well as sending reminder emails every few weeks. Students can also see their document requirements in their PAWS account, under the Financial Aid tab,

then Financial Aid Status. Descriptions of each document requirement can be found here: <https://www.gcsu.edu/financialaid/forms>. If students have a document requirement of Tax Return Transcript for either the parent or the student, this requirement may be able to be satisfied by transferring this information electronically through the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT). This can be done by logging back into the FAFSA and under the Financial Information section, use the "Link to IRS" button. IF a student or parent is unable to use the DRT,

A request can be made by visiting www.irs.gov to request the Tax Return Transcript online or by mail. Click "Get my Tax Record" and following the instructions there.

Our "soft" **deadline** to receive all documents for **Fall 2019 is July 1st**. This soft deadline is to guarantee financial aid eligibility is reviewed by the first day of class for Fall Semester. The earlier we receive the documents the earlier we can award the student's file. Any documents submitted after this date will be reviewed as time permits.