

HORRY-GEORGETOWN TECHNICAL COLLEGE

PROCEDURE

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Related Policy: 9.6.8
Title: Student Financial Aid Procedure
Responsibility: Vice President of Finance and Administration

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Area Commission

Horry-Georgetown Technical College administers a variety of services/programs providing financial aid resources to students. The following procedures outline general eligibility requirements and the area of responsibility for each type of aid.

I. Grants

Grants are based on eligibility criteria usually including demonstration of financial need. A grant does not have to be repaid. Horry-Georgetown Technical College participates in two grant programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act and other Federal and State programs as awarded to the College. To apply for Title IV aid, students must complete and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), available online at <https://studentaid.gov/>

Deadlines for submission of all documentation required by the financial aid application process are established by the Horry-Georgetown Technical College Enrollment Calendar. Students who do not complete all requested application documentation by the "Priority Deadline" posted on the Enrollment Calendar for each term must pay for tuition and fees via cash, check, credit card, or by enrolling in the College's payment plan. Applications received after this deadline will be processed in the order they are received. Should a late application result in an award of financial aid, these students will have that aid applied to their account later in the term.

A. Federal Pell Grants

Federal Pell grants are administered through the Financial Aid Office. To qualify for a Federal Pell Grant a student must meet the financial and other eligibility requirements established by the federal government under Title IV of the Higher Education Act. Federal Pell grants may be used for all educational expenses.

B. Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG)

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants are administered through the Financial Aid Office. A limited amount of FSEOG funds is available and can be awarded to Federal Pell Grant students who demonstrate exceptional need. FSEOG may be used for all educational expenses. Priority funding will go to applications completed by April 1st of each year.

C. South Carolina Need-based Grants (SCNBG)

The South Carolina Need-based Grant Program is designed to provide additional financial aid assistance to South Carolina students demonstrating extraordinary need. These grant funds are awarded to students who are determined to be eligible under Title IV Federal Financial Aid guidelines and meet all other State-established criteria. To be considered, applicants must first complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

D. South Carolina Lottery Tuition Assistance Grant (LTA)

The South Carolina Lottery Tuition Assistance Grant was created by the South Carolina General Assembly to assist South Carolina residents in meeting the cost of tuition at in-state two-year colleges. A student must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to be eligible for Lottery Tuition Assistance. Dual enrollment students, students in an ineligible major, and students who have previously received a bachelor's degree, can complete the Lottery Tuition Assistance Waiver form, since they are not eligible to receive federal funds. The amount of this grant is based on current funding levels established by the South Carolina Technical College System in conjunction with the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education. Students eligible to receive a Pell Grant that covers tuition are not eligible for Lottery Tuition Assistance.

E. Other Grant Opportunities

Horry-Georgetown Technical College administers other federal and state grant programs.

II. Scholarships

Scholarship funds are awarded based on donor-specified criteria often including academic achievement and/or financial need or other factors. Scholarships do not have to be repaid and most are awarded competitively. The following are types of scholarships available to students at Horry-Georgetown Technical College:

A. Horry-Georgetown Technical College Foundation-sponsored Scholarships

The Horry-Georgetown Technical College Foundation actively solicits scholarship contributions from private sources to support the financial needs of students. These

scholarships are primarily administered through the Foundation Office. Scholarship recipients are selected by the College Scholarship Committee, designated College divisions/departments, or other donor-stipulated agents. Demonstrated academic achievement and financial need are considered when awards are made; however, many scholarships also have donor-stipulated criteria that must be adhered to. Demonstrated academic achievement is defined to include high school, college, or other academic performance.

Upon notification of a Foundation-sponsored scholarship, the recipient is required to write a personal "thank you" letter to the donor(s) and submit the original letter to the Financial Aid Office. Disbursements of scholarship proceeds will not be released without evidence that this requirement has been satisfied.

B. Legislative Incentives for Future Excellence Scholarship (LIFE)

LIFE scholarship is a state funded program that was approved by the General Assembly during the 1998 legislative session and signed into law on June 19, 1998.

The LIFE scholarship is available for the fall and spring semesters and may be used for the summer term if student meets the criteria and chooses to attend at least 12 hours for summer. Students must take their hours at their home institution. Students who wish to use LIFE in the summer must self-identify to the Financial Aid office. Those who use LIFE scholarship in the summer will not have their LIFE eligibility extended. Additional State established eligibility criteria must be met before LIFE awards are made.

C. Palmetto Fellows

The Palmetto Fellows Scholarship is a merit-based program, administered by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education, that recognizes the most academically talented high school seniors and encourages these students to attend college in the State. Palmetto Fellows recipients may receive up to \$6,700 their first year and up to \$7,500 for their second year. The Palmetto Fellows Scholar must complete a Palmetto Fellows Affidavit every year to be awarded and meet other established eligibility criteria.

Recipients of the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship must enroll full-time, at least 12 hours per semester, to receive any scholarship funds. Developmental course studies do not count toward degree requirements. In addition to this, Palmetto Fellows recipients must be first degree seeking undergraduates. Students receiving Palmetto Fellows Scholarship are not eligible to receive the LIFE Scholarship, LTA, or South Carolina Workforce Industry Needs Scholarship (SCWINS).

D. South Carolina Workforce Industry Needs Scholarship (SCWINS)

SCWINS is a statewide technical college scholarship program designed to address workforce shortages in South Carolina. The scholarship supplements LTA to help cover any tuition and mandatory fees left after applying all other scholarships or grants. The SCWINS guidelines outline priority program categories for all colleges in the South Carolina Technical College System. These academic programs were selected by the state, based on state-wide data in critical workforce areas and includes programs in both academics and workforce development.

The SCWINS Scholarship is available to Dual Enrollment students who are already receiving LTA for the current academic year and majoring in a critical workforce area as defined by the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education. An additional affidavit will need to be completed and submitted to the Office of Financial Aid.

Recipients of SCWINS must be in an eligible program, complete an affidavit, and meet other established eligibility criteria. SCWINS funds are “last dollar” and will be applied after all other sources of aid are applied toward the cost of tuition, fees, and course required materials. SCWINS cannot be refunded to students.

E. Other Sponsored Scholarships

Horry-Georgetown Technical College oversees and/or manages scholarships provided through numerous funding sources. These scholarships are administered according to the stipulations of the funding agency with the Financial Aid Office serving as the central clearinghouse for scholarship information.

III. Veterans' Educational Benefits

The College is approved for veterans' educational benefits by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education License Division for training veterans and dependents under the following statutes:

A. Title 38 of the U.S. Code

1. Chapter 30, “Montgomery GI Bill”
2. Chapter 31, Disabled Veterans
3. Chapter 35, Children and Widows of Disabled or Deceased Veterans Resulting from Service-Connected Conditions
4. Chapter 33, Post 911 GI Bill

B. Title 10 of the U.S. Code, Chapter 1606, Members of the Selected Reserve

C. Rules Pertaining to Veterans Educational Benefits

1. The amount of monthly stipend the eligible student receives depends on the academic workload the student is carrying and the particular Chapter of the U.S. Code for which the student is eligible. Complete information is available from the Veterans' Affairs Coordinator in the Financial Aid Office.
2. Students may receive veterans' educational benefits only for subjects that apply toward minimum graduation requirements in the program in which they are enrolled. Transfer credit is given for applicable courses that have been successfully completed at other post-secondary institutions. Eligible students may not take (for payment purposes) any subject if that subject or an equivalent subject has been passed previously at this or another institution, regardless of whether VA benefits were being received at the time the subject was passed. Students receiving veterans' educational benefits are responsible for seeing that they are scheduled for the proper classes. (Exception: VA will pay for a subject if the time limit has expired on the subject, and it is required for graduation).
3. Newly enrolling veterans and other VA-eligible students may receive advance payments if application is made at least 45 days prior to the first day of class (Chapters 30, 35 and 1606). Former students may also request this payment if there has been a break of at least one term since their last attendance. The check, made payable to the eligible student, will be held at the College for the student to pick up.
4. Eligible students pursuing post-secondary programs on at least a half- time basis may receive additional money from the VA to pay for tutorial aid if they are having problems passing a required subject. Payment for remedial training is limited to the equivalent of two academic semesters and requires documentation of demonstrated need.
5. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that tuition is paid.
6. Students must notify the Veterans' Affairs Coordinator of any change in enrollment status.
7. Specific CFR 12.4255 refund regulations may apply to students receiving Veterans' Educational Benefits.

IV. Federal Work Study Program (FWS)

Horry-Georgetown Technical College makes employment opportunities available through the Federal Work Study Program (FWSP). FWSP is one of the Federal Title IV "need-based" programs designed to aid eligible students in meeting their post-secondary educational expenses.

In order to be eligible for employment under the FWSP, a student must meet all the general eligibility requirements for Title IV Financial Aid Programs established each academic year and apply for a work study position through the Office of Career Resources. Awards are based on need as defined by the federal government. It is the practice of this college to disburse these limited funds to the maximum number of eligible students on a "first come-first served" basis until these funds are exhausted. Students may be employed at the College, or in community service by a third party that meets the qualifications of the Work Study program, and will be paid an hourly wage equal to or exceeding minimum wage. To the extent possible, the College will attempt to employ students in areas that complement and reinforce their educational program or vocational goals.

The overall coordination of the work study program is the responsibility of, and FWSP awards are made by, the Financial Aid Office. Work responsibilities are assigned and monitored by the employing faculty/staff or third-party employer supervisor. Wages earned are paid by the Finance Office. Questions and inquiries regarding the FWSP should be directed to the Financial Aid office.

V. Loans

A. Federal Direct Stafford Loan (Direct Loan)

1. Student Eligibility

- a) Students must meet the general federal eligibility requirements and have a completed FAFSA on file. If selected for verification, all requirements must be completed.
- b) All students borrowing a Stafford loan for the first time at Horry-Georgetown Technical College are required to complete Entrance Loan Counseling through <https://studentaid.gov/entrance-counseling.com> before a loan application is disbursed.
- c) Students must execute a Master Promissory Note (or have one on file). The promissory note may be accessed at <https://www.studentloans.gov/mpn/>
- d) Students must be enrolled in an eligible program of study and attending at least six (6) credit hours.

- e) If the student has had previous Direct loans at Horry-Georgetown or another institution, Entrance Counseling and a new Master Promissory Note is not required. The student may be required to submit proof if required documentation is not found on the Department of Education's Common, Origination, and Disbursement (COD) system.

2. Award Amounts

- a) Dependent Students: Grade Level 1 - \$5,500
\$3,500 max subsidized; Grade Level 2 - \$6,500
\$4,500 max subsidized
- b) Independent Students: Grade Level 1 - \$9,500
\$3,500 max subsidized; Grade Level 2 - \$10,500
\$4,500 max subsidized.
- c) The annual amounts are cumulative, regardless if student attends one or multiple institutions. The Financial Aid Counselor is responsible for checking NSLDS for previous loan awards to prevent over-awarding. Loan proration is required when student's final loan period is shorter than an academic year.
- d) No award will result in a student exceeding the aggregate loan limit established by federal regulations. Once the aggregate loan limit has been met, a student cannot borrow any additional loan funds. The aggregate loan limit for a dependent* student is \$31,000, of which \$23,000 may be subsidized. The aggregate loan limit for an independent student is \$57,500, of which no more than \$23,000 may be subsidized.

*Note: If Parent PLUS loan is denied because of credit, student can receive an additional \$4,000 in unsubsidized loans.

- e) a subsidized award will not exceed the cost of attendance less the expected family contribution and other financial aid awards. An unsubsidized award can replace the expected family contribution but will not exceed the cost of attendance less other financial aid awards, including a subsidized Stafford loan.
- f) Grade levels are defined as follows:
 - (1) Students enrolled in a certificate or diploma program will always be Grade Level 1 (Freshman), regardless of number of credit hours completed or previous degrees earned.

- (2) Students enrolled in a degree program will be a Grade Level 1 (Freshman) if the total number of hours earned is less than 30.
 - (3) Students enrolled in a degree program will be a Grade Level 2 (Sophomore) once the total number of hours earned is at least 30.
 - (4) Students can never be classified above Grade Level 2 (Sophomore) at Horry-Georgetown Technical College.
 - (5) A transfer student's hours earned at other institutions(s) will not be counted toward the grade level until the Registrar (or designee) has reviewed the academic transcript(s) and assessed the number of hours that will be accepted at HGTC. The hours accepted will count toward the grade level.
3. Loans will disburse in at least two disbursements (Fall/Spring/Summer is three disbursements).
4. Loan Denials and Loan Reductions
 - a) Per the Department of Education, on a case-by-case basis, schools may refuse to certify/originate a loan for the borrower. Similarly, schools may certify/originate a loan for an amount less than the borrower's maximum eligibility. However, schools must ensure their decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, and do not constitute patterns or practices that deny access to borrowers based on race, sex, color, income, religion, national origin, age, handicapped status, or selection of a particular lender or guarantor.
 - b) Academics (GPA, completion rate, grade level), total loan debt, classes enrolled, etc., are all considered when denying/reducing loans.
 - c) If loan is denied or reduced, the student is notified in writing and a copy is kept on file. The denial or reduction is signed by at least two certifying individuals.
5. Appeals for Loan Denials – Students who have been denied a loan or had their loan reduced may appeal the decision. A letter and supporting documentation are required to override the denial/reduction. All letters of appeal for loan denial or reduction should be sent to the Director of Financial Aid within fifteen (15) working days of the denial. The decision reached on the appeal is final.
6. Exit Loan Counseling - Students, who graduate, withdraw below six (6) credit hours, or stop attending college are notified by e-mail of the exit-counseling requirement. Students complete this requirement at <https://studentaid.gov/exit-counseling/>.