



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

May 29, 2008

GEN-08-07

Subject: Institutional Eligibility for the TEACH Grant Program

Summary: This letter clarifies how an institution will establish eligibility to participate in the TEACH Grant Program.

Dear Colleague:

As explained in Dear Colleague Letter GEN-08-01, posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site, the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (CCRAA), Pub. L. 110-84, authorized the Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program for implementation beginning with the 2008-2009 Award Year. This letter provides institutions with background information on the TEACH Grant Program with particular attention to institutional eligibility provisions. It also includes an attachment that provides information on the process institutions must use to request to participate in the TEACH Grant Program.

Background

The TEACH Grant Program provides up to \$4,000 a year in grant assistance to undergraduate, post-baccalaureate, and graduate students who agree to serve for at least four years as full-time “highly qualified” teachers in high-need fields in public or not-for-profit private elementary or secondary schools that serve students from low-income families. The link to schools serving low-income families is <https://www.tcli.ed.gov/CBSWebApp/tcli/TCLIPubSchoolSearch.jsp>. A TEACH Grant recipient who does not complete the required teaching service within eight years of completing his or her academic program, subject to certain exceptions, or fails to meet certain other requirements of the TEACH Grant Program, must repay the TEACH Grant as a Direct Unsubsidized Loan under the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program with interest, accrued from the date the TEACH Grant was disbursed.

The law identifies the following as high-need fields for purposes of the TEACH Grant Program –

- Bilingual education;
- English language acquisition;
- Foreign language;
- Mathematics;
- Reading specialist;
- Science;
- Special education; or
- Another field documented as high-need by the Federal government, a State government, or a Local Education Agency, and approved by the Secretary. This field must be listed in the Department’s annual Teacher Shortage Area Nationwide Listing at: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/pol/tsa.doc>

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We have recently completed a negotiated rulemaking process to develop a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) for the TEACH Grant Program. Those negotiations included representatives from the student financial aid community, student advocacy groups, and teacher training institutions and programs. The TEACH Grant NPRM was published on March 21, 2008. Final rules for the TEACH Grant Program are expected to be published in June of 2008, with implementation of the program beginning July 1, 2008.

TEACH Grant-Eligible Institution

Under section 686.4 of the regulations, a TEACH Grant-eligible institution that offers one or more TEACH Grant-eligible programs may elect to participate in the TEACH Grant Program. Before an institution decides whether it wants to participate in the TEACH Grant Program for the 2008-2009 award year, it should carefully review both the preamble and the regulatory provisions in the NPRM, paying particular attention to the definitions of “TEACH Grant-eligible institution,” “TEACH Grant-eligible program,” and “post-baccalaureate program” in section 686.2, and to section 686.4, titled “Institutional Participation.”

In general, those provisions provide that to participate in the TEACH Grant Program, an otherwise eligible institution must meet one or more of the following conditions –

1. The institution offers a high-quality teacher preparation program at either the baccalaureate or masters level (see 2(c), below, for institutions that have post-baccalaureate teacher preparation programs) and provides supervision and support services to teachers, or assists in the provision of such services, and the teacher preparation program is either –
 - a. Accredited by a specialized accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary for the accreditation of professional teacher education programs, such as Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) or National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), or;
 - b. Is approved by a state and provides extensive pre-service clinical experience.
2. The institution does not have a teacher preparation program but it –
 - a. Provides one or more two-year programs of study that are acceptable for full credit to either a baccalaureate teacher preparation degree program or a baccalaureate degree program in a high-need field at another TEACH Grant-eligible institution with which it has an agreement;
 - b. Offers a baccalaureate degree that, in combination with other training or experience, will prepare a student to teach in a high-need field and has an agreement with another institution that offers a teacher preparation program or a post-baccalaureate program that prepares students to teach; or,
 - c. Offers a post-baccalaureate program that will prepare a student to teach, but does not offer a baccalaureate teacher preparation program.

Documentation of Institutional Eligibility

An institution that is eligible under option 2(a), above, is required to demonstrate that it has one or more of the required agreements. An institution may demonstrate that it has an agreement with a TEACH Grant-eligible four-year institution with a formal articulation or consortium agreement between the institutions, actual student records that evidence full transfer of credit to an eligible program offered by a TEACH Grant-eligible institution, or any other written agreement between the institutions.

An institution that offers a baccalaureate degree that will prepare a student to teach in a high-need field (see 2(b), above) can demonstrate that it has a required agreement with another institution by means of a formal articulation or consortium agreement between the institutions or any other written agreement between the institutions.

An institution that offers a post-baccalaureate program that will prepare a student to teach (see 2(c), above) can use that program to establish its eligibility as long as the institution does not also offer an undergraduate teacher preparation program.

An institution must retain documentation to demonstrate that it is a TEACH Grant-eligible institution. An institution wishing to participate in the TEACH Grant Program must describe to the Department how it meets the definition of a TEACH Grant-eligible institution, using the process described in the attachment to this letter. An institution that is required to have an agreement with another institution in order to be considered a TEACH Grant-eligible institution must submit the name of at least one, but not more than three, institutions with which it has such agreements.

If an institution seeking to participate in the TEACH Grant Program offers a TEACH Grant-eligible post-baccalaureate program that is not currently listed on its Eligibility and Certification Approval Report (ECAR) as a Title IV eligible program, the institution must, prior to the time it begins participating in the TEACH Grant Program, update its record using the E-App website (eligcert.ed.gov) to reflect the post-baccalaureate program.

An institution that chooses to participate in the TEACH Grant Program and has a teacher preparation program must maintain documentation that it provides supervision and support services to teachers, or that it assists in the provision of such services. Supervision and support services to teachers may include providing information on effective teaching skills and strategies, effective practices for novice teachers, and mentoring either through the institution's Web site, through printed materials, or through workshops.

An institution that offers a teacher preparation program that is not accredited by either NCATE or TEAC may be required to provide the Department with documentation showing that the program provides extensive pre-service clinical experience, as discussed above, depending on the state where the program is located.

Request to Participate


Because the TEACH Grant Program is new and because we are re-engineering our institutional eligibility and updating processes, we have developed an interim process for an institution requesting to participate in the TEACH Grant Program beginning with the 2008-2009 award year. Please see the two-page attachment to this letter for specific instructions for requesting approval to participate in the TEACH Grant Program.

Additional Resources

- Dear Colleague Letter GEN-08-01, posted to IFAP on January 8, 2008.
- Notice of Proposed Rulemaking dated March 21, 2008 and posted to IFAP on March 21, 2008. <http://www.ifap.ed.gov/fregisters/FR05212008TEACH.html>
- Electronic Announcement on TEACH Grant Operational Implementation posted to IFAP on April 9, 2008.
<http://www.ifap.ed.gov/eannouncements/040908CCRAATEACHOverviewEA.html>
- Department's TEACH Grant Webinar posted to IFAP on May 1, 2008.
<http://ifap.ed.gov/dpcletters/050108ANN0805.html>
- Final rules expected to be published on or about June 1, 2008.

We hope that institutions find this information useful. If you have questions about the issues discussed in this letter, please contact Gail McLarnon at gail.mclarnon@ed.gov or 202-219-7048. If you have questions regarding the participation request process, please contact the School Participation Team for your state. Contact phone numbers are on the E-App homepage.

Sincerely,


Diane Auer Jones
Assistant Secretary
for Postsecondary Education

TEACH Grant Program
Institutional Participation Request Process
May 29, 2008

This attachment to DCL GEN-08-07 provides step-by-step instructions for institutions requesting approval to participate in the TEACH Grant Program beginning with the 2008-2009 award year. Before beginning the participation request process, an institution should carefully review the information in DCL GEN-08-07 (and the additional resources listed at the end of that letter) paying particular attention to the definitions of “TEACH Grant-eligible institution,” “TEACH Grant-eligible program,” and “post-baccalaureate program” in section 686.2, and to section 686.4, titled “Institutional Participation.”

- Step 1 - Using the Department’s E-App website (eligcert.ed.gov), in Question 1, check “Update Information” as the reason you are submitting the application.
- Step 2 - From the “Update Information” pick-list choose “Add TEACH Grant”.
- Step 3 - Scroll to the bottom of the page and select “Go to Section,” enter “K” in the box, then click OK/Save Data.
- Step 4 – Scroll down to Question 69 and type in the appropriate text as described below in footnote 1, and click OK/Save Data. This will take you to Section L
- Step 5 – In Section L, check the box indicating that “the President/CEO/Chancellor in Question 10” will sign the signature page and then print the required signature page.
- Step 6 - Scroll to the bottom of the page and select “Submit the Application” then click “OK/Save Data”.
- Step 7 – The system will tell you if all required entries have been made on your application, if it does click on “Submit Application”. If not, make any necessary corrections and then submit the application.
- Step 8 – The system will advise you that your application has been received by the Department of Education and it will provide you with the address to send the signed signature page.
- Step 9 - Obtain the required institutional signature.
- Step 10 - Mail the signed and dated signature page to the Department per the instructions on the page.

1. Because Question 69 of Section K is free form and is used for many purposes, an institution requesting to participate in the TEACH Grant Program must type into Question 69, the information that applies to its request using the format and words as written below.

[Name of Institution] requests approval to participate in the TEACH Grant Program beginning with the 2008-2009 award year. Based upon the information provided in Dear Colleague Letter GEN-08-07, we seek approval because we:

[Include all of the following that apply]

Institutional Participation Request Process
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Offer a high-quality teacher preparation program at either the baccalaureate or masters level that is accredited by TEAC or NCATE, and the program provides or assists in providing supervision and support services to teachers.

Offer a high-quality teacher preparation program at either the baccalaureate or masters level that is approved by a state and provides extensive pre-service clinical experience, and the program provides or assists in providing supervision and support services to teachers.

Provide a two-year program of study that is acceptable for full credit to a baccalaureate teacher preparation program at [include the name and OPEID of at least one and no more than three other institutions]

Provide a two-year program of study that is acceptable for full credit to a baccalaureate degree program in a high-need field at [include the name and OPEID of at least one and no more than three other institutions].

Offer a baccalaureate degree that will prepare a student to teach in a high-need field and have an agreement with another institution that offers a teacher preparation program or a post-baccalaureate program [include the name and OPEID of at least one and no more than three other institutions].

Offer a post-baccalaureate program that will prepare a student to teach and we do not offer a baccalaureate teacher preparation program.

When the Department receives both the E-App and the signature page, we will review the application and other information concerning the institution and make a determination as to the eligibility of the institution to participate in the TEACH Grant Program beginning with the 2008-2009 award year. If the institution is approved, it will receive a notice to print the approval letter and updated Eligibility and Certification Approval Report (ECAR) from the E-App website. If not approved, you will receive a letter explaining why you were not approved.

If you have questions regarding the participation request process, please contact the School Participation Team for your state. Contact phone numbers are on the E-App homepage (eligcert.ed.gov).