Institutional & Program Eligibility Regulations for Participation in the Federal Student Financial Aid Programs

May 2003 (Modified December 2004)

Council of Continuing Education Deans & Directors
Introductions

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Agenda

• Scope of the Student Financial Aid Program in the Connecticut Community College System
• Higher Education Act of 1965 (as amended) – Title IV, Parts A & B
• Institutional, Program, and Student Eligibility
• Limitations of the SCT Banner System
• Questions
Program Scope

For the 2003-2004 Award Year:

• 16,538 financial aid recipients
• $40.3 million in program expenditures
• 88% of awards are grants/scholarships
• 64% of awards from federal sources, including $20.7 million in Pell Grants
• 48% of students enrolled half-time or more receive financial aid
• 85% of students apply for financial aid over the Internet
Higher Education Act

- HEA of 1965 (amended 1998)
- Reauthorization currently underway
- Title IV authorizes most federal student financial aid programs
- Regulations set in U.S. Code; Chapter 34 for Education
Institutional Eligibility

To be eligible, all institutions must adhere to the following requirements:

• Legal Authorization
• Accreditation
• Admission of “regular students”

(34 CFR 600.4, 600.5, 600.6)
Institutional Eligibility

Connecticut Community Colleges qualify as “institutions of higher education”…..

- A public educational institution located in a state;
- Offers the Associates degree….
- Offers at least a one-year certificate training program….
An institution’s eligibility does not extend to all its programs…….

- Institution must ensure program is eligible
- Program must be authorized by appropriate state agency
- Program must be recognized by accrediting agency
- Nondegree programs must be specifically named on the approval notice (Eligibility and Certification Approval Report) with the Department of Education
- Institution must ensure that a program is eligible before awarding FSA funds to students in that program

34CFR 668.8
Program Eligibility

3 Types of nondegree eligible programs.....

- All of these programs must have a specified number of weeks of instruction AND must provide training that prepares a student for gainful employment in a recognized occupation*
- A recognized occupation* is listed in the “occupational division” of the most recent edition of the Dictionary of Occupational Titles
Program Eligibility

1. Program must be offered during a minimum of 15 weeks of instruction AND must provide at least 600 clock hours or 16 semester hours of undergraduate instruction;

2. Program must be offered during a minimum of 10 weeks of instruction AND provide at least 300 clock hours or 8 semester hours of instruction AND the program must be a graduate or professional program or admit as regular students only persons who have an associates degree;
3. **Short-term Program.** Qualifies for the FFELP (loan) programs only. Must provide at least 300 but less than 600 clock hours of instruction offered during a minimum of 10 weeks of instruction. Also the program must:

- Have verified completion & placement rates of at least 70%
- Not be more than 50% longer than the minimum training program required by any state or federal agency;
- Have been in existence for at least 1 year
Program Eligibility

Other issues include:

• Academic Year definition requirements
• Standard term, Non-standard term, Non-term requirements
• Payment Period rules
• Clock Hour/Credit Hour conversions
• Additional eligibility requirements for special programs (correspondence, study abroad, ESL)
Student Eligibility

- Be a citizen or eligible noncitizen of the United States;
- Have a high school diploma or a General Education Development (GED) certificate;
- Enroll in an eligible program as a regular student seeking a degree or certificate;
- Register for Selective Service;
- Have a result of Eligible or Partially Eligible on the Drug Conviction question;
- To receive a Pell Grant a student must NOT have a bachelor’s degree
SCT Banner System

- Multiple Institution Functionality (MIF)
- Seamless integration between Student/FinAid/Finance modules
- Automated links with 3rd party vendor systems
- Student self-service focus
- Term-based administrative system
- Credit-based relative to financial aid processes
- No mechanism for clock hour programs; customization would be required
Questions