Information

Certificate Program Criteria for Financial Aid Eligibility

Effective

July 1, 2020

Applicability

This policy applies to the University of Louisville, its academic units and programs, employees, and students.

Administrative Authority

Executive Vice President and University Provost

Responsible Unit

Student Financial Aid Office

University of Louisville

Louisville, KY 40292

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History

Policy approved by Beth A. Boehm, Executive Vice President and University Provost effective July 1, 2020.

Revision Date(s): July 1, 2024 (Policy updated to align with regulatory updates to the Gainful Employment Rule)

Reviewed Date(s): June 13, 2024

Categories

Reason for Policy:

The purpose of this policy is to comply with regulations regarding the Gainful Employment Rule.

All non-degree programs at public higher education institutions that are determined by the institution to be eligible to participate in Title IV financial aid must comply with the Gainful Employment (GE) program eligibility and accountability framework. As a statutory condition of eligibility to participate in Title IV federal financial aid, these GE programs must "prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation" and provide training and education to program recipients of federal financial aid that "lead to earnings beyond those of high school graduates and [are] sufficient to allow students to repay their student loans."

Statement:

Effective July 1, 2020, University of Louisville (UofL) students enrolled (half-time or more) in stand-alone certificate programs designated as federal Title IV aid eligible can be evaluated for such funds. For a request to be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education to consider a standalone UofL certificate program to be eligible for Title IV federal aid, the certificate program must:

- Be one academic year in duration;
- Be at least 24 credit hours for undergraduate certificates; be at least 9 credit hours for graduate certificates; and
- Prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation.

In order to be designated as a certificate program that prepares students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation, the Academic Unit offering the certificate program must provide certification the following criteria is met:

- The program prepares students for employment in a specific recognized occupation as identified by a Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code established by the Office of Management and Budget or an Occupational Information Network O*NET-SOC code established by the Department of Labor. The list of SOC codes is available here: https://www.onetonline.org/.
- Provide a statement and/or documentation which demonstrates a reasonable relationship between the length of the program and entry level requirements for the recognized occupation for which the program prepares the student, in addition to establishing the need for the training for the student to obtain employment in the recognized occupation for which the program prepares the student.
- If the program already has completers, provide certification from the Office of Academic Planning & Accountability the following metrics were met. If a new program (no prior completers of the program), provide certification the following are expected to be met.
    - The annual amount a typical graduate needs to devote to his/her student loans is equal to or less-than 8% of annual earnings, or equal to or less-than 20% of their discretionary earnings (their annual earnings above 150% of the federal poverty guideline for a single individual).
    - At least half of program graduates have higher earnings than a typical high school graduate in their state's labor force who never enrolled in postsecondary education.
- A majority of program completers are employed in a job or career related to this field within a year after graduation.
- The annual salaries of graduates are equal to or greater than the average BLS salary estimates for the same or similar occupations [or, alternatively, the annual salaries of graduates fall within the average BLS salary ranges].
- The following information is made readily available to students:
    - The total cost of the program with reference to the cost of attendance data utilized for federal Title IV aid processing compiled by the Student Financial Aid Office.
    - The percentage of graduates who pass any required licensure exams.
    - The percentage of program completers who are employed in a job or career related to this field within a year after graduation.
    - The types of occupations in which graduates are employed and the average salaries.

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- The percentage of graduates who pass any required licensure exams.
- The percentage of program completers who are employed in a job or career related to this field within a year after graduation.
- The types of occupations in which graduates are employed and the average salaries.

Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy could result in UofL certificate programs not being eligible to receive Title IV federal aid.

Related Information:

For more information visit the UofL Student Financial Aid Office website at https://louisville.edu/financialaid/.

Procedures:

Annually, the Office of Financial Aid will work with the Office of Academic Planning and Accountability to ask that academic units offering financial-aid eligible certificate programs certify these credentials as Title IV eligible programs. The eligible programs will be reported to the Student Financial Aid Office for approval and action with the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE). Any programs deemed not eligible will be removed from the university's authorization with USDOE.

Responsibilities:

The Student Financial Aid Office is responsible for oversight and interpretation of this policy.

Academic units are responsible for determining if the certificate programs offered in their units meet the criteria to receive Title IV financial aid.