

Micro-Credential Financial Aid Guidance

Prepared by the Office of Student Financial Aid Services, SUNY System
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State and Federal Financial Aid

Eligibility requirements for State and federally administered financial aid programs are statutory and regulatory and governed by the New York State Education Department (some programs rules are governed by HESC) and the US Department of Education respectively. Both State and federal financial aid programs require students to be matriculated in an approved program of study.

Enrollment Status

- *State financial aid programs:* full-time study requirement - a student must be enrolled in credit-bearing courses applicable to their approved program of study, for at least 12 semester hours for a semester not less than 15 weeks or 100 days, inclusive of examination periods. Part-time awards require the student to be enrolled in credit-bearing courses applicable to the student program of study for the same timeframe.
- *Federal financial aid programs:* require a student to be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an eligible institution for the purpose of obtaining a degree or certificate offered by the school. FSA's minimum standards for full-time enrollment require an undergraduate to enroll in 12 semester hours in a (approved) program per semester. A student must be enrolled at least half time to be eligible for Direct student loans. Enrollment status affects the amount of Pell a student receives. If a student is enrolled in courses that do not count toward his degree, certificate, or other recognized credential, they cannot be used to determine enrollment status unless they are eligible remedial courses. Regular (matriculated) students may receive FSA funds for Continuing Education if the courses apply to their degree or certificate program.

Non-credit bearing micro-credentials

- Noncredit-bearing micro-credentials (MC) do not meet the requirements to be aid eligible (State and Federal) and cannot be used to meet the full-time requirement for financial aid. Any noncredit MC coursework must be taken above the 12 credit minimum requirement for full-time.
- As with full-time awards, noncredit-bearing MC are not eligible for State or federal part-time aid awards.

Credit bearing micro-credentials included in the approved program of study

- Credit bearing MC that are part of the approved program, are eligible for both State and federal financial aid administered programs.
- Credit-bearing MC that are not part of an approved program, are generally not aid eligible; however if the student has available electives, credit-bearing MC can be slotted in and are eligible for aid. If the student has satisfied all electives, MC cannot be used in the 12 credit minimum requirement for full-time, and will not be eligible for aid and must be taken above the 12 credit minimum.