

# Hinds Community College

## Unusual Enrollment History Policy

Beginning with the 2013-2014 award year, the Department of Education added an Unusual Enrollment History (UEH) flag to a student's Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR). This flag indicates whether the student has an unusual enrollment history with regard to receipt of Federal Pell Grant funds and is intended to address possible fraud and abuse. This flag seeks to identify those students who attend an institution long enough to receive Title IV funds and leaves without completing the enrollment period, enrolls at another institution and repeats the same pattern without having earned any academic credit.

The following policy has been established for use in determining whether the documentation obtained from the student supports the student's explanation and demonstrates that the student did not enroll only to receive a Title IV credit balance payment. This policy also establishes how Hinds Community College Financial Aid Dept. determines the approval or denial of continued eligibility for Title IV funds and how a student may regain Aid eligibility.

### **Which students are affected?**

If a student's ISIR is flagged with an "N" for UEH, no action is necessary. Student's enrollment history does not appear to be unusual.

If a student's ISIR is flagged with a "2" for UEH, Hinds Community College (Financial Aid Dept.) must review the student's enrollment and financial aid records to determine if, during the preceding three award year review period, the student received a Pell grant at Hinds Community College. If so, no additional action is required unless the District Director of Financial Aid has reason to believe that the student is one who remains enrolled just long enough to collect student aid funds. In that case, or if the student has not received a Pell grant at Hinds Community College during those three years, then the guidance for a flag of "3" must be followed.

If a student's ISIR is flagged with a "3" for UEH, Hinds Community College (Financial Aid Dept.) must review the student's academic records to determine if the student received academic credit at the institutions the student attended during the preceding three year award period. The Financial Aid Dept. must identify the institutions where the student received Pell Grant funds for the three preceding years. Academic transcripts must be reviewed for each of the previously attended institutions and a determination made for each of those institutions to see if academic credit was earned during the award year in which the student received Pell grant funds.

The Financial Aid Dept. will mail notification to any student who is flagged with a "2" or a "3", and, upon review of available documentation, must supply additional information either in the form of additional transcripts or explanations/supporting documentation or both.

**Determination as to Continued Eligibility:**

If, upon review of transcripts from each of the previously attended institutions, it is determined that the student earned academic credit at each institution, no further action is required unless the District Director of Financial Aid determines that there is reason to believe that the student is one who enrolls just to receive Title IV funds with no credit. If such determination is made, additional information will be requested.

If, upon review of transcripts, it is determined that the student did not earn academic credit at one or more previously attended institutions, the Financial Aid Dept. must obtain documentation from the student explaining why the student failed to earn academic credit. The Financial Aid Dept. must review the documentation to determine whether it supports the reasons given by the student for the failure to earn academic credit and that the student did not enroll just to receive a refund. The Financial Aid Advisor should, to the extent possible, obtain third party documentation to support the student's claim.

The District Director of Financial Aid will make a determination as to whether the circumstances of the failure of the student to earn academic credit support the continuation of Title IV eligibility. The decision is not appealable to the Department of Education.

**Approval of Continued Eligibility:**

If the District Director of Financial Aid approves the student's continued eligibility, she may choose to require the student to establish an academic plan. She may also require the student to be counseled regarding the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy, Pell Lifetime Eligibility Used and the impact of the student's attendance pattern on future eligibility for Title IV funds.

**Denial of Continued Eligibility:**

If the student did not earn academic credit at one or more of the institutions and does not provide an acceptable explanation (and documentation if requested) for each of those failures, the District Director of Financial Aid will deny the student Title IV assistance. The student will receive a letter from the Financial Aid Dept. to this effect and the student may question the Financial Aid Advisor and/or the District Director of Financial Aid about this decision.

**Appeals Process:**

The student may appeal a denial by filing a written Letter of Appeal form through the District Dean of Student's Office. The appeal must contain the following information: An explanation of any period in which the student received Pell Grant funds and did not earn Academic Credit. Supporting documentation for that explanation must be attached. Each appeal will be reviewed and a response sent to the student within 30 working days. Appeals are limited to one per student and are good for that award year alone.

**Regaining Title IV Eligibility:**

If Hinds Community College denies a student Title IV aid for UEH, the student may attend Hinds Community College (without receiving Title IV aid) and earn academic credit for that semester or award year. The student can then be considered for Title IV Eligibility the following semester/year. The student would have to meet all other eligibility requirements. No Title IV aid would be provided for the period of ineligibility.