

NJASFAA 2009 Fall Conference



IT'S NOT UNUSUAL

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Developing Alternative/Unusual Calendars

To maximize State grant eligibility, an aid administrator should examine three fundamental concepts:

- Definition of an academic year
- Full-time enrollment determination
- “Crossover” terms

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Academic Year

An academic year, for a credit hour program, must be defined as at least 30 weeks of instructional time

and

for an undergraduate program, a minimum of 24 semester credit hours.

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TAG Payments

- A student may receive only one annual (two payments) TAG award.
- Students may receive a maximum of two TAG payments between July 1 and June 30.
- An annual TAG award is based upon nine consecutive months of enrollment.
- Consider number of payments vs. acceleration.

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Academic Calendar

Traditional Calendar

Academic Calendar	Credits Per Term	Total Credits
Fall Semester	12 per Semester	12
Spring Semester	12 per Semester	12

Students attending institutions operating on a traditional calendar will receive one semester of TAG payment for each semester of full-time enrollment.

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Academic Calendars

Trimester/Quarter Calendars

Academic Calendar	Credits Per Term	Total AY Credits
Three Trimesters	8 per Trimester	24
Three Quarters	12 per Quarter	36

Students attending institutions operating on a trimester or quarter calendar will only receive a semester of payment if they are in full-time attendance for two consecutive trimesters or two consecutive quarters.

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Academic Calendars

Trimester/Quarter Calendars

Depending on the trimester or quarter a student began attendance, she/he becomes eligible for the second half of the annual award by enrolling full-time during the third trimester or the third quarter of that academic year.

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Trimester Payment Schedule

Fall 2009 Trimester

Classes Begin: Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2009

Classes End: Monday, Nov. 23, 2009

Winter 2009 – 2010 Trimester

Classes Begin: Monday, Nov. 30, 2009

Classes End: Friday, Feb. 26, 2010

← Student becomes eligible for first TAG payment

Spring 2010 Trimester

Classes Begin: Monday, Mar. 1, 2010

Classes End: Friday, May 14, 2010

← Student becomes eligible for second TAG payment

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Quarter Payment Schedule

Student begins enrollment in:

Summer Quarter - July, August, September

Fall Quarter - **October**, November, December

Winter Quarter - **January**, February, March

Spring Quarter - April, May, June

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Quarter Payment Schedule

Student begins enrollment in:

Winter Quarter - January, February, March

Spring Quarter - April, May, June

"Crossover"

Summer Quarter - July, August, September

Fall Quarter - October, November, December

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Combined Academic Calendars

Students enrolled in a combination of semester and trimester classes during an academic year must meet one of the following requirements in order to receive a TAG payment.

- School must determine which program the student is enrolled in (semester or trimester)
 - Semester students must enroll full-time for at least 12 credits in a semester
 - ▲ May combine trimester and semester classes
 - Trimester students must enroll full-time for at least 8 credits in each of two consecutive trimesters
 - ▲ May combine trimester and semester classes

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Institutions with Interim or Intersessions

Some institutions regularly schedule a short intersession between the fall and spring semesters of the academic year. HESAA does not make separate disbursements for such enrollment periods since they are not terms of full-time study.

A maximum of three credits earned during an intersession may be combined with either the student's fall or spring enrollment (but not both) to meet HESAA's definition of full-time enrollment.

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Institutions with Interim or Intersessions cont'd

Enrollment during an intersession is not a requirement.

If a student enrolls in only nine credits during a semester with the intent of enrolling in three additional credits during an intersession, the institution may not credit the student's account or disburse the award until the student actually begins class for the additional three credits during the intersession. Once the total number of credits constitutes full-time enrollment the institution can certify TAG eligibility.

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Institutions with Interim or Intersessions cont'd

- The fall 2009 disbursement roster must be certified no later than November 25, 2009
- Rosters will be processed and SENs issued on December 3, 2009
- You will have 30 days from December 3, 2009 to reinstate awards for students enrolled in intersessions

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Work-Study/Co-Op/Internship

Some programs require or permit students to participate in an internship assignment, a non-classroom experience, a practicum, an industry related assignment or in alternate “co-op” terms in a four or five-year cooperative work-study program.

An institution may certify State award eligibility and credit the student's account only when the student is concurrently enrolled full-time in credit bearing courses or when the internship, practicum, or co-op itself carries credit value that allows the student to retain full-time status.

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Varying Start Dates Within A Semester

Some institutions offer courses of varying lengths within a semester.

For example, a student is enrolled in four 3 credit courses:

- Courses A, B and C meet for 150 minutes for 15 weeks
- Course D begins 5 weeks later and meets for 225 minutes for 10 weeks.

Full-time enrollment for TAG cannot be determined until Course D begins.

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Multiple Sessions Within A Semester

- Some institutions divide a traditional semester into two sessions.
- For example a student is enrolled for two 3 credit courses that meet for 8 weeks (Session A). The student then enrolls in two additional 3 credit courses in weeks 9 – 16 (Session B).
- Full-time enrollment for TAG cannot be determined until Session B begins.
- It is important to note that if a student repeats a “Session A” course in “Session B”, these credits do not count toward full-time enrollment for TAG.

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Consecutive Cohorts

- Some institutions offer limited programs of study that permit a “cohort” of students to complete three credit courses in a specific sequence.
- Three credit courses are delivered in a compressed time frame so that students are only enrolled for one three credit course at a time.
- Full-time enrollment for TAG is determined after the student has enrolled for twelve consecutive credits.

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Conclusion

Before finalizing an unusual calendar:

- Carefully consider start dates to maximize TAG eligibility
- Determine the impact of “crossover” terms on a student’s TAG eligibility
- Submit a written request to HESAA to review a proposed unusual calendar
- Coordinate with the delivery of federal student aid

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Questions?