

R. Wes Hayes, Jr.
Chairman

Agenda Items 6.03.B
CHE Meeting

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To: Chair Wes Hayes and Members, SC Commission on Higher Education

From: Chair Paul Batson and Members, Committee on Access & Equity and Student Services

SC Need-based Grant & College Transition Program: 2020-2021 Academic Year

SC Need-based Grant Background

The South Carolina General Assembly established the South Carolina Need-based Grant Program in 1996, to provide additional financial assistance to South Carolina's neediest students. The SC Commission on Higher Education was appropriated \$32,000,000 (\$20,000,000 from Lottery Funds and \$12,000,000 from the Children's Education Endowment) for the 2020-21 academic year. The program is administered by the financial aid offices at the public institutions and the SC Tuition Grants Commission for the independent institutions. The financial aid office on each eligible SC public college administers the SC Need-based Grant program, determines the students' eligibility to receive grant funding, and the exact amount based on the regulations approved by the General Assembly. Eligible students may receive awards for a maximum of eight full-term equivalent terms with full-time students able to receive up to \$2,500 per year and part-time students up to \$1,250 per year. The annual data and invoices for the FY2021-22 academic year will not be final until end of 2022 summer term.

<u>Academic Year</u>	<u>Need-based Grant Recipients</u>	<u>Disbursements</u>
2007-2008	26,750	\$23,178,813
2008-2009	28,051	\$26,989,583
2009-2010	29,723	\$26,775,963
2010-2011	30,626	\$26,331,253
2011-2012	28,952	\$23,448,406
2012-2013	31,232	\$27,922,664
2013-2014	29,734	\$24,990,722
2014-2015	30,652	\$27,083,705
2015-2016	29,964	\$28,218,382
2016-2017	30,399	\$29,103,230
2017-2018	29,964	\$28,729,043
2018-2019	31,028	\$31,120,795
2019-2020	29,641	\$30,956,213
2020-2021	29,053	\$31,153,171



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In 2021-22, the SC Need-based Grant Program was appropriated \$72,000,000 (\$60,000,000 Lottery Funds, \$12,000,000 General Funds/Children's Endowment).

Initial Eligibility for the SC Need-based Grant

To apply, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). All gift aid and scholarships must be applied to the student account first before awarding the grant. The grant must be applied directly towards the cost-of-attendance. Students must be enrolled in a degree-seeking program in their first one-year program, first associate degree, first two-year program leading to a baccalaureate degree, first baccalaureate degree, or first pre-professional undergraduate degree, to include those pre-professional degree programs that may not require a baccalaureate degree at an eligible SC public institution.

Additional Eligibility Requirements

- Demonstrate "need" using Title IV methodology;
- US citizen/SC resident;
- Enrolled at the time of grant disbursement;
- Not convicted of any felonies or second or subsequent alcohol or drug related offenses within the past academic year by signing an affidavit;
- Does not owe a refund or repayment on a state grant, PELL grant, or a Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant and not be in default on a loan under the Federal Perkins Loan or Federal Stafford Loan program;
- Has not exceeded eligible need-based terms; and
- Complete any other documentation required by the financial aid office at the institution at which the student is enrolled.

Public Senior Institutions

The Citadel
Clemson University
Coastal Carolina University
College of Charleston
Francis Marion University
Lander University
Medical University of SC
South Carolina State University
USC – Columbia
USC – Aiken
USC – Beaufort
USC – Upstate
Winthrop University

USC Regional Campuses

USC – Lancaster
USC – Salkehatchie
USC – Sumter
USC – Union

Technical Colleges

Aiken Technical College
Central Carolina Technical College
Denmark Technical College
Florence-Darlington Technical College
Greenville Technical College
Horry-Georgetown Technical College
Midlands Technical College
Northeastern Technical College
Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College
Piedmont Technical College
Spartanburg Technical College
Technical College of the Lowcountry
Tri-County Technical College
Trident Technical College
Williamsburg Technical College
York Technical College

SC Need-based Grant Data

Attachments show trending data over a 10-year period regarding recipients and award disbursements by institution, demographics showing race and ethnicity and recipients with award disbursements and

demographics by institutions.

- 10 Year Recipients and award disbursement by institution (Attachment 1)
- 10 Year Demographics (Attachment 2)
- 10 Year Recipients, award disbursements, demographics by institution (Attachment 3)

College Transition Program

Background

The SC General Assembly included Proviso 11.19 in the FY 2013-14 Appropriations Act to enable funds appropriated to the College Transition Connection (CTC) be redirected through the need-based grant program to be available as need-based grants for students enrolled in recognized College Transition Programs (CTP) at South Carolina institutions. In Fall 2020, these institutions include: Clemson University, Coastal Carolina University, College of Charleston, University of South Carolina, and Winthrop University.

The US Department of Education offers financial aid to those students enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a comprehensive transition and postsecondary program for students with intellectual disabilities at a post-secondary institution that participates in the federal student aid program. According to the US Department of Education, Institutions must participate in a federal approval process in order to provide federal funds to students enrolled in these programs. As of April 1, 2022, there were 145 approved programs with South Carolina being home to five of those programs.

Initial efforts to assist intellectually disabled students were directed by CTC. During FY 2013-14, CTC worked with select colleges and universities in South Carolina to design, create, and fund transition and post-secondary opportunities for young adults with intellectual disabilities. The CTC worked with the South Carolina General Assembly and the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE) to redirect funds for the purposes of creating a state-based program to provide additional financial assistance to students who enroll in these programs in South Carolina.

The CTP serves students with intellectual disabilities who demonstrate financial need. These programs allow for students to attend a four-year institution and engage in academics, independent living environments, employment/career opportunities, and socialization. These programs are non-degree seeking and successful completion allows for student to receive a non-degree certificate of post-secondary education.

CTP Institutional Data

Proviso 11.12 in the FY 2020-2021 Appropriations Act went into effect July 1, 2020.

11.12 (CHE: College Transition Need-based Grants) Of the currently appropriated need-based grants funding, no more than \$350,000 shall be used to provide need-based grants to South Carolina resident students enrolled at a public institution of higher education in an established college transition program that serves students with intellectual disabilities. The Commission on Higher Education shall allocate the available funds to eligible institutions on the basis of student need and enrollment in the established college transition programs. All other grants and gift aid for which these students are eligible must be applied first to the cost of attendance prior to using the need-based grant funding. If the cost of attendance for an eligible student is met with all other grants and gift aid, the need-based grant shall not be used. The participating institutions, in cooperation with the Commission on Higher Education, shall track the number of grant recipients and other information determined necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of these grants in assisting students with intellectual disabilities in college transition programs.

The Proviso transfers and dedicates recurring funds provided to CTP for the purpose of need-based student grants. The guidelines provide for eligibility consistent with eligibility for the financial assistance programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Participants of this program are required to complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and demonstrate financial need, as well as meet the established South Carolina residency requirements in order to receive funding. In order to meet the anticipated growth of eligible South Carolina students with financial need, additional funding for FY 2016-17 was approved by the General Assembly in the amount of \$350,000 which reflects an increase of \$170,822 from FY 2015-16. This award amount continued funding of the \$350,000 for FY 2020-2021.

In 2021-22, the SC Commission on Higher Education was appropriated an additional \$750,000, through a temporary one-year budget proviso for the creation of a CTP Scholarship.

Because the CTP is directed by a temporary one-year budget proviso, considerations for the program in subsequent years will be subject to any statutory or regulatory changes that may occur during the upcoming 2022 Session of the General Assembly or renewal of the budget proviso for FY 2022-23.

South Carolina CTP Program Descriptions

ClemsonLIFE

Cost of program: \$44,008 per year (program costs decrease to \$39,508 for years 3 and 4).

2020-21 total participants: 39 with 5 eligible CTP.

Fall 2021: 6 eligible CTP participants

The ClemsonLIFE Program offers a two-year Basic Program that incorporates functional academics, independent living, employment, social/leisure skills, and health/wellness skills in a public university setting with the goal of producing self-sufficient young adults. Additionally, the ClemsonLIFE Program offers a two-year Advanced Program for students who have demonstrated the ability to safely live independently, sustain employment, and socially integrate during the Basic Program. According to Clemson, the Advanced Program progresses with an emphasis on workplace experience, community integration, and independent living with transitionally reduced supports. Students who successfully complete the Basic or Advanced Program will receive a corresponding certificate of post-secondary education.

Coastal Carolina University LIFE Program

Cost of program: On-campus ranges from \$28,040-\$31,180. Off-campus ranges from \$18,000-\$21,850. Program costs depend on housing and meal plan choice.

2020-21 total participants: 36 with 17 CTP eligible.

Fall 2021: 12 eligible CTP participants

The Coastal Carolina University LIFE program is a four-year, tuition-based, post-secondary education and transition program for young adults who have mild to moderate intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. According to Coastal Carolina, the program is a cohort-structured program enrolling eight to ten students each academic year. The LIFE program prepares students with the life skills needed to complete their post-secondary education, gain, and maintain meaningful employment, and live independent and productive adult lives. Alumni can utilize the LIFE Alumni Career Service program for employment workshops, assistance with job searches and resumes as well as utilizing the support of job coaches.

College of Charleston REACH Program

Cost of program: On-campus ranges from \$33,800-\$34,800. Off-campus is \$19,600. Out-of-state on-campus ranges from \$41,280-\$442,280. Out-of-state off campus is \$28,600. Program cost depends on

housing choice.

2020-21 total participants: 33 with 5 CTP eligible.

Fall 2021: 5 eligible CTP participants

The REACH Program at the College of Charleston is a four-year, fully inclusive certificate program for students with mild intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. According to the College of Charleston, the REACH Program promotes the advancement of knowledge and skill in areas of academics, socialization, independent living, and career development, and has been nationally recognized for its commitment to full-inclusion and self-determination. Students in the REACH Program are able to participate in all activities offered by the College of Charleston, with individualized support for success. These include attending traditional classes (with modifications and support); living in traditional on-campus housing and residence halls; completing internships; participation in campus clubs, activities, and organizations; and peer-mentoring.

The University of South Carolina CarolinaLIFE

Cost of program: On-campus is \$41,746. Off-campus is \$32,556. Out-of-state is \$45,537.

2020-21 total participants: 20 with 9 CTP eligible

Fall 2021: 11 eligible CTP participants

CarolinaLIFE is an individualized, non-degree program for students with identified, diverse learning needs (e.g., intellectual disability). The program curriculum, according to USC, focuses on five core areas: academic instruction, career education and training, independent living, social and community engagement, and personal development. The program's philosophy is founded on inclusion and individualization, based on each student's interests and support needs. CarolinaLIFE students have access to opportunities offered to other USC students such as participation in UofSC courses, on-campus housing, student organizations, sporting events, work-study, and commencement.

Winthrop THINK College Program

Cost of program: On-campus is \$27,510. Off-campus \$15,000.

2020-21 total participants: 12 with 9 CTP eligible

Fall 2021: 5 eligible CTP participants

Winthrop University's THINK College (WTC) Program creates customized schedules for each student using a person-centered planning approach. The schedules include traditional courses, internships, and specialty courses to support student development of specific skill sets. The focus of WTC, according to Winthrop, is to build and strengthen skills in the areas of employment, self-determination, health and nutrition, social networking, and independent living. WTC is a two-year program that provides students with the opportunity to live on campus with a Residential Peer Mentor.

Overview of the South Carolina CTP Programs and Disbursements

Table 1.

Institution	Length of Program (All programs offer on & off campus housing)	Certification Awarded	Total CTP Need-based Participants								
			2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Estimated Fall 2021*
Clemson University	2 Years An optional 3 rd year is available for select students	Certificate of Postsecondary Ed upon completion of 2-year program	1	2	3	5	8	4	5	5	6
Coastal Carolina University	4 Years	University Certificate of Completion	8	9	8	7	7	14	16	17	12
College of Charleston	4 Years	Certificate of Completion	3	0	0	0	2	3	4	5	5
University of South Carolina	Students have the option to enroll in a 2, 3, or 4 Year program	Certificate of Completion	8	7	7	7	8	7	9	9	11
Winthrop University**	2 Years, optional year 3, 4	Letter of Completion	N/A	8	11	11	9	8	9	9	5
Total CTP eligible Participants			20	26	29	30	34	36	43	45	39

*As of 3/1/2022, Fall 2021 data may be incomplete and will not be finalized until Fall 2022.

**Effective Spring 2015, Winthrop University's CTP program received final federal approval required for their program implementation.

Table 2.

Institution	Award Disbursement								
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Projected Award Disbursement Fall 2021 Only
Clemson University	\$7,000	\$19,913	\$13,952	\$42,533	\$60,000	\$30,000	\$37,500	\$37,446	\$22,500
Coastal Carolina University	\$55,736	\$58,465	\$50,550	\$76,195	\$50,751	\$96,876	\$117,406	\$131,250	\$45,000
College of Charleston	\$21,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$15,000	\$22,500	\$30,000	\$37,500	\$18,750
University of South Carolina	\$56,000	\$63,220	\$43,755	\$70,000	\$60,000	\$52,500	\$67,500	\$67,500	\$41,250
Winthrop University *	N/A	\$37,259 <i>*Spring only</i>	\$68,079	\$85,000	\$67,500	\$52,500	\$63,750	\$62,864	\$18,709
Totals	\$139,736	\$178,857	\$176,336	\$273,728	\$253,251	\$254,376	\$316,156	\$336,560	\$146,209

Table 1 illustrates an overall steady growth in CTP students since initiation of the program.

Table 2 illustrates the Award Disbursement at each participating institution. In FY 2013-14 and 2014-15 the maximum award could not exceed \$7,000 per student. As the program participants continued to increase, the funding available to each student decreased. With the rise of tuition & program fees at each institution and the anticipated growth of program participants, CTP was funded an additional \$170,833; total of \$350,000 for FY 2016-17. To help in recruitment efforts, the award amount for the FY 2016-17 could not exceed \$10,000. For the FY 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 the award amount is up to a maximum of \$7,500 per student.