LOUISIANA OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Accessibility Notice

Archived Document — Alternative Format Available Upon Request

Filename: TOPSOPHERR2526Combined.pdf

About This Document

This document is part of an archived public record library. We are committed to making all information accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities. Some archived documents may not fully conform to current Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1 Level AA) or applicable ADA Title II requirements.

We are actively reviewing and remediating our document library. If you encounter any barriers accessing this content, please contact us using the information below and we will provide the information in an alternative accessible format as promptly as possible.

Request an Accessible Format

Contact:	Louisiana Board of Regents Communications
Email:	communications@laregents.edu
Phone:	(225) 342-4253
Mailing Address:	P.O. Box 3677, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3677
Online Request:	https://www.laregents.edu/web-accessibility-statement/
TTY / TDD:	Please use your preferred relay service

This accessibility notice was added automatically. The original archived document begins on the following page.

YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS)

Read Carefully! These are your rights and responsibilities for receipt and retention of a TOPS Opportunity, Performance, Honors, OR Excellence Award. This is accurate as of the date it was produced; however, you are responsible for complying with all governing statutes and rules applicable to this program, which may change from time to time, whether disclosed or not. Notices of statutory or regulatory changes are available through the website of the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) at https://mylosfa.la.gov/. When you have questions about TOPS, you should reference Your Rights and Responsibilities on the Student Hub, visit our website at https://mylosfa.la.gov/, or email custserv@la.gov.

STAY ON TOP OF YOUR TOPS AWARD! Maintain your current email address and cell phone number on the Student Hub so that we may provide you with critical updates about your award! We no longer mail award notifications.

TOPS awards are dependent upon an annual appropriation of funds for TOPS by the state legislature. Eligibility for a TOPS award does not guarantee that your award will be fully funded.

You have established your eligibility for a TOPS award. To receive the award:

- You must enroll for the first time as a full-time student at an eligible institution NO LATER THAN the first regular semester or quarter that is one year after your high school graduation. (If you graduated in May 2025, you must enroll no later than the fall semester or quarter of 2026). If you choose to first enroll in an eligible out-of-state institution and do so by the first semester following the first anniversary of your high school graduation, you may transfer to an eligible Louisiana school and reinstate your award PROVIDED that you have met all requirements for renewal of the award. You will lose one semester (quarter) of eligibility for each semester (quarter) you were enrolled in an out-of-state institution. You must apply for a TOPS award by submitting an *Application to Return from an Out-of-State College* no later than July 1 immediately following the fall, winter, or spring semester (quarter) that you transfer to an eligible Louisiana school or within 120 days after that July 1 for a reduced award. The supporting documentation must be received no later than January 15 of the following year. You can download the application at https://mylosfa.la.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/ROOS-Application.pdf.
- If your application or the required documentation is not received by the applicable deadline, it will **NOT** be considered, and you will **NOT** be eligible to receive a TOPS award.
- If you enlisted and began serving on active duty in the United States Armed Services within one year of the date you graduated from high school and before you enrolled in college as a full-time student, you are allowed to defer your enrollment at an eligible institution for the period of time you are continuously on active duty, including reenlistments, and until the first regular semester following the one-year anniversary of your separation from active duty. You must provide a copy of your DD Form 214 "Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty" before you will be eligible for your TOPS award.

To retain your TOPS eligibility, you must be registered **each semester or quarter as a full-time student** as of the 15th class day at a semester institution or the 10th class day at a quarter institution and remain continuously enrolled. Correspondence courses do not count toward full-time enrollment.

Your TOPS award may be combined with other financial aid (scholarships, grants, or loans), but if your total financial aid package exceeds the cost of attendance established by your institution, your TOPS award amount may be reduced. If other aid exceeds your cost of attendance and your TOPS payment is zero, that semester will **not** be counted toward your 8 semesters (or 12 quarters) of TOPS eligibility. Contact the financial aid office at the institution you are attending for an explanation of how your award may be affected by other aid.

AWARD DURATION:

- You may receive a TOPS award for a maximum of 8 semesters or 12 quarters. (Note: Summer sessions in academic programs will be paid only under specific conditions and only if funding is sufficient. Intersessions will not be paid. Check with the financial aid office at your school to learn whether your award can be paid for a summer session. If you use your TOPS award to pay for a summer session, it will count as one of your 8 semesters or 12 quarters of eligibility.)
- Out-of-state transfer students' eligibility will be reduced by the number of semesters or quarters attended at the eligible out-of-state institution.
- If you have semesters (quarters) of eligibility remaining once you complete your first undergraduate degree, you may use any remaining semesters (quarters) for **postgraduate study**, provided you enroll in a graduate or professional school no later than the fall semester (quarter) following the one-year anniversary of completion of your undergraduate degree. You **CANNOT** use remaining semesters (quarters) of eligibility to pursue a second undergraduate degree.
- If you complete a non-academic (technical) program of study, you may use remaining semesters (quarters) of eligibility to enroll in another technical program or to enroll in an academic program.

PROPRIETARY AND COSMETOLOGY SCHOOLS

- To be eligible to receive your TOPS award, you must be enrolled full time according to your school on one or more of the following dates: September 1, December 1, or March 1. (Note: If the 1st falls on a weekend or holiday, you must be enrolled and attending classes prior to that weekend or holiday for your award to be paid for that term.)
- To maintain your award, you must meet federal grant aid requirements for steady academic progress at your school.

PRIVACY INFORMATION: If you are either 18 years old or are actually attending college, the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) does not allow disclosure of your personal information to anyone, including your parents or court-ordered custodian, unless you grant them access to your records. You may grant your parents access to your records through the LOSFA Student Hub. Have your parents sign up for a parent account in the Student Hub, and they will have the option to request permission to see your records. You would then grant that permission through your account.

TO RENEW YOUR AWARD

You must annually apply for federal grant aid by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) or Renewal FAFSA® in its entirety by July 1 each year, unless you determine yourself ineligible for federal grant aid using the software provided for that purpose at https://finaid.org/calculators/. If you used the TOPS Online Application for your initial TOPS application, you are not required to apply for renewal.

The information in the following two sections does **NOT** pertain to proprietary and cosmetology schools. Refer to the PROPRIETARY AND COSMETOLOGY SCHOOLS SECTION on page 1 for continuation requirements for these schools.

ENROLLMENT AND CREDIT HOUR REQUIREMENTS:

- You must enroll full time each semester or quarter, remain continuously enrolled (except for summer sessions), and **earn (PASS with at least a "D")** at least 24 credit hours during each Academic Year.
- The Academic Year begins with the fall semester/quarter/term of the award year and concludes immediately before the next fall semester/quarter/term commences. It includes all intersessions and summer sessions.
- If you enrolled as a first-time, full-time student in the middle of the Academic Year (spring semester or winter/spring quarter), you will not be required to meet the 24-hour requirement that year.
- **Credits from Advanced Placement, CLEP, and Credit by Exam are not included in Academic Year Earned Hours.** Correspondence courses are only included in hours earned if completed and credit is given during the Academic Year.
- You must meet the requirement to earn 24 hours even if you drop courses, change majors, or transfer to another school. If you do not earn at least 24 hours, your TOPS award will be canceled at the end of the Academic Year unless you are granted an exception for cause. See "Requesting an Exception" at the bottom of this page.
- The grade for courses reported as "**Incomplete**" will be counted as an "**F**" unless a subsequent report from your school shows otherwise.
- If you resign from all classes, your award will be canceled unless you submit a Request for Exception and are granted an exception.
- If you must resign from all classes during the semester or quarter (or if you transfer to another college after the semester or quarter has begun), you should officially resign with the Registrar's Office so that you do not receive failing grades in all of the courses in which you were enrolled. If you do not, your TOPS award may be suspended or canceled.

STEADY ACADEMIC PROGRESS and CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT AVERAGE REQUIREMENTS:

- You must make Steady Academic Progress (SAP) (earn a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.00 on a 4.00 scale) at the end of **every** semester/quarter/term for which grades are reported. If you do not earn at least a 2.00, your award will be suspended since you did not make SAP.
- In addition, you must meet the minimum required TOPS cumulative grade point average for your award at the end of each summer semester or quarter to maintain your award. Depending on the hours completed, you must maintain the following TOPS cumulative grade point average:

TOPS OPPORTUNITY AWARD in Academic Programs	2.30	with 24 or more total earned hours
	2.50	with 48 or more total earned hours
TOPS OPPORTUNITY AWARD in Technical Programs	2.50	with 24 or more total earned hours
TOPS PERFORMANCE, HONORS, or EXCELLENCE AWARD	3.00	with 24 or more total earned hours

NOTE: Your TOPS cumulative grade point average is calculated on all college coursework you attempted at all schools, including dual enrollment and repeated courses. It is based on hours, grades, and quality points reported by **all** schools you have attended, so it may be different from the grade point average calculated by the school you currently attend. Repeat-delete and +/- grades do not apply for calculation of your TOPS cumulative grade point average.

- If you have been awarded the TOPS Performance, Honors or Excellence Award and you have earned at least 24 hours with a TOPS cumulative grade point average of less than a 3.00 TOPS cumulative grade point average at the end of any **summer semester or quarter**, your award will be permanently changed to the TOPS Opportunity Award for the remaining period of eligibility. For Performance and Honors Award recipients you will not receive the stipend that goes with the award. **Once a stipend is lost, it cannot be regained. There are no exceptions.**
- To continue to receive any TOPS award, you must earn at least the TOPS cumulative grade point average required for the Opportunity Award at the end of the **summer semester or quarter**, or your TOPS award will be suspended until you have achieved the required TOPS cumulative grade point average.
- If you have been awarded the TOPS Opportunity, Performance, Honors. or Excellence Award and you are enrolled in an academic or technical program, if you do not achieve the required TOPS cumulative grade point average within **two** years of suspension, your award will be permanently canceled. **There are no exceptions.**

REQUESTING AN EXCEPTION

An exception for cause to the requirement to enroll for the first time as a full-time student by the deadline, to enroll full time each semester/quarter/term thereafter, to remain continuously enrolled, and/or to earn 24 hours may be granted if, by the deadline specified in the notice advising you of the cancelation of your award, you submit a Request for Exception form with the required supporting documentation sufficient to justify a failure to comply with these requirements. You can download the Request for Exception form with instructions and a list of the required documentation at https://mylosfa.la.gov/wp-content/uploads/Exception-Request-Form.pdf. Email your completed form to TOPS.exceptions@la.gov. If your Request for Exception form is not received by the deadline, it will **NOT** be considered. When your form is received, the date of receipt will be posted in the Student Hub. You will be contacted if additional information is needed. You will be notified in your account on the Student Hub and by mail whether an exception is granted.

Exceptions cannot be granted for failure to make Steady Academic Progress or failure to earn the minimum TOPS Cumulative Grade Point Average.