California Student Aid Commission

Cal Grant GPA Calculation Instructions

To apply for a Cal Grant award, the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) requires the receipt of two separate documents. Applicants must submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and have their Grade Point Average (GPA) calculated and submitted in accordance with Cal Grant GPA submission requirements.

The submission deadlines are March 2 for students attending any type of college, with a second deadline of September 2 for students attending community colleges. For paper GPA submissions, these are postmark deadlines. Persons sending application materials by mail are encouraged to obtain a $1.15 US Postal Service Certificate of Mailing to retain as proof of submission. More expensive proofs are not required. Applicants should make a photocopy of the completed Cal Grant GPA Verification Form before mailing. Online application submissions must be completed by the deadline. Students are encouraged to make a screen print of the confirmation message received upon completion of submission of the FAFSA. Schools should do the same if submitting the student's GPA online.

Students are strongly encouraged to submit the FAFSA online at *www.fafsa.ed.gov*. If the student's school submits GPAs electronically, it is not necessary for the student to mail the paper GPA form. If the student both submits the 2010-11 FAFSA and has their GPA sent by the appropriate filing deadline, full consideration will be given for the Cal Grant awards available for that deadline. Applicants can follow the processing of their Cal Grant by logging in to the CSAC Web site at *www.csac.ca.gov* and clicking on the link "WebGrants for Students."

Awards for the March 2 Entitlement Cal Grant Program for recent high school graduates will be made starting on March 3. The March 2 deadline Competitive Cal Grant awards will be made in April, and the September 2 deadline awards will be made in October.

Renewing a Cal Grant Award?

Students who are already participating in the Cal Grant program, or those who have a Community College Reserve Grant, and want to renew their award, do not need to complete a GPA Verification Form. The college of attendance will certify to the student's continuing Cal Grant eligibility.

Mail completed Cal Grant GPA Verification Form to:

California Student Aid Commission
Cal Grant Operations
P.O. Box 419077
Rancho Cordova CA 95741-9077

Cal Grant GPA Information

Who can verify a Cal Grant GPA?

Only an authorized high school or college official may complete the "For School Use Only" section of the GPA Verification form. The signature of the high school or college official is required by law and certifies that, under penalty of perjury, the reported GPA is true and accurate.

IMPORTANT: Cal Grant GPAs verified by a high school can be accepted only from high schools with full accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), or another regional accrediting agency if not in the WASC region, or those schools that have a University of California-approved course list. Students attending non-accredited high schools, participating in a home schooling program, or who otherwise do not have a high school GPA may only apply if they provide either a GED, SAT or ACT test score attached to their Cal Grant GPA Verification Form. DO NOT SEND ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPTS!

There are four categories of GPAs used for Cal Grant award selection - High School, College, Regular Community College and Reestablished Community College.

High School GPA

A high school GPA is calculated on a 4.00 scale to two decimal places (between 0.00 and 4.00). Do not use a weighted scale. Convert any grades with extra weighting for honors and advanced placement classes to a 4.00 scale before calculating the GPA. GPAs calculated beyond a 4.00 scale will not be accepted.

For students who have not yet graduated from high school, calculate the GPA using all academic course work for the sophomore year, the summer following the sophomore year, the junior year, and the summer following the junior year. The high school GPA excludes physical education (PE), Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), and remedial courses. Remedial work is defined as any course that is not counted toward high school graduation. Failing grades must be included in the GPA calculation unless the course has been retaken.

GPAs for "accelerated" high school juniors graduating in spring 2010 should be calculated using academic course work earned during the student's sophomore year and the summer following the sophomore year, as well as all course work completed in the junior year by the time of certification.

For students who are out of high school but have not earned sufficient college level units to allow calculation of either a college GPA or reestablished GPA or as explained below, the GPA must be calculated from high school course work earned from the student's sophomore year onward, regardless of whether the student graduated. Competitive Cal Grant awards can be made to students who have not graduated high school.

College GPA

A college GPA means a grade point average calculated on the basis of all college work completed, except for nontransferable units and courses not counted in the computation for admission to a California public institution of higher education that grants a baccalaureate degree. The definition of the phrases "all college work completed" and "nontransferable units" and "courses not counted in the computation for admission to a California public institution of higher education that grants a baccalaureate degree" are described below. A college grade point average or a community college grade point average must be computed for a minimum of 24 semester units or its equivalent regardless of the grades received. The phrase "all college work completed" includes all coursework for which grades are known to the official reporting the GPA and that are accepted for credit at the school reporting the grade point average. Failing grades must be included.

College GPA - Baccalaureate Degree Granting Institution

For purposes of computing a college grade point average by an institution that grants a baccalaureate degree, "nontransferable units" and "courses not counted in the computation for admission to a California public institu-

tion of higher education that grants a baccalaureate degree" are those courses which do not earn credit for a baccalaureate degree from the reporting institution.

College GPA - Associate Degree Granting Institution

For purposes of computing a college grade point average by a postsecondary institution that grants an associate degree, "nontransferable units" and "courses not counted in the computation for admission to a California public institution of higher education that grants a baccalaureate degree" are those courses which do not earn credit for an associate degree at the reporting institution.

College GPA - Non-degree Granting Institution

For purposes of computing a college grade point average by a postsecondary institution that does not grant a baccalaureate or an associate degree:

> (A) "nontransferable units" are those units which are not used in satisfying requirements for earning a baccalaureate degree from a California public institution of higher education that grants such a degree.
>
> (B) "courses not counted in the computation for admission to a California public institution of higher education that grants a baccalaureate degree" are any courses for which the earned grade is not used in the computation of a grade point average in determining admission eligibility, whether or not units earned for the course are transferable to such an institution.

Regular California Community College GPA

For purposes of computing a community college grade point average for a Cal Grant award, "nontransferable units" and "courses not counted in the computation for admission to a California public institution of higher education that grants a baccalaureate degree" mean all courses except "Associate Degree Credit Courses" as defined by Title 5, Chapter 6, Article 1, Section 55002(a) of the California Code of Regulations.

Reestablished Community College GPA

A reestablished community college GPA is calculated on at least 16 but less than 24 semester units or the equivalent. For any Cal Grant deadline, a school may submit either a reestablished GPA or a "regular" community college GPA calculated on at least 24 semester units, or the equivalent. A reestablished GPA is used only for Competitive Cal Grant B consideration. Only a California Community College may submit a reestablished GPA.

Test Scores in Lieu of a School Certified GPA

Some students may not have a valid GPA because they attended a non-accredited high school, participated in a home schooling program, or were graded in a manner that cannot be converted to a 4.00 GPA maximum equivalent. To receive Cal Grant award consideration, these students must complete the student section of the GPA Verification form, fill in the bubble in item 9, then attach a photocopy of the official results from the SAT Reasoning Test, the ACT or GED test. Students who have a GPA that is more than 5 years old also have the option to submit a test score in this manner instead of having their GPA certified.

Students who have both a high school GPA and College GPA

Only a high school GPA, or test score as described above, can be used for Entitlement Cal Grant program determination. Students who have graduated from high school and have attended some college may submit both GPAs separately. California law directs the California Student Aid Commission on what GPAs can be used for the various Cal Grant programs. Since only a high school GPA can be used for Entitlement Cal Grant program determination, we strongly encourage students who have graduated from high school in the last two years to submit their high school GPA even if they are also submitting a college level GPA.

Submission Information

It is the responsibility of the student applicant to have his or her high school, college or community college report an on-time and correctly calculated grade point average. Late GPAs may be appealed only with proof of on-time submission or in the manner described in state regulations.

The Cal Grant GPA Verification Form should be completed in black ink only. Color or metallic inks can cause a misread of the information. Please print clearly and write within the boxes. Make sure all requested information is completed in both the student and school sections of the form. Missing information may cause a delay in the processing of the form, or make it impossible for the GPA to be considered.

A student who is not sure of his or her Social Security number (SSN) should verify it before completing the GPA form. Incorrect Social Security numbers are the leading cause of processing errors for otherwise completed forms. Students must not use an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN). If mistakes are made on the form, please complete another GPA form. GPA forms are available on the CSAC web site at *www.csac.ca.gov*. Click on the GPA forms link on the right side.

Some schools submit a list of verified Cal Grant GPAs directly to CSAC. If your school does this, the paper GPA form does not need to be submitted. However, it is strongly recommended that the student confirm that the school will be submitting their GPA online, and if they are not, have their GPA certified on this form.

Applicants submitting both the 2010-11 FAFSA and a verified Cal Grant GPA by the March 2 or September 2 deadline will receive Cal Grant award consideration. Students can follow the processing of their Cal Grant application by logging in to the CSAC Web site at *www.csac.ca.gov* and clicking on the "WebGrants for Students" link. WebGrants for Students can be accessed only after the student's FAFSA application is processed.

Checklist if Mailing the GPA Verification Form

- ☑ Make sure both the student and school sections of the GPA form are complete before mailing the form.
- ☑ **DO NOT SEND ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPTS** instead of a school verified GPA.
- ☑ When submitting a test score, bubble in item 9 on the form and include a photocopy of the official test score report. The school does not have to complete the *For School Use Only* section.
- ☑ Retain photocopies of the FAFSA and GPA Verification form, and all correspondence regarding the application.
- ☑ Mail the GPA Verification form to CSAC by the March 2 or September 2 deadline.
- ☑ When mailing, the purchase of a $1.15 U.S. Postal Service Certificate of Mailing is suggested. The use of other mailing services is not necessary and may slow the processing of the form.
- ☑ If mailing a paper FAFSA, be sure to mail your form to the *Federal Student Aid Programs address on the FAFSA, not to CSAC.*

Mail completed GPA Verification form to:

California Student Aid Commission
Cal Grant Operations
P.O. Box 419077
Rancho Cordova CA 95741-9077

CALIFORNIA STUDENT AID COMMISSION

The Cal Grant GPA Verification Form can be downloaded from the Commission's Web site. Go to *www.csac.ca.gov* and click on *"Cal Grant GPA Forms*." The applicant should complete the student section of the form and have their school enter and certify the GPA in the school section.

Students are encouraged to make a screen print of the confirmation messages received upon completing the submission of the online FAFSA.

Award notifications will be posted by April 1 for the March 2 deadline applications and starting in October for the September 2 deadline applications.

Internet access - WebGrants for Students

Students can follow the processing of their Cal Grant application by logging into CSAC's Web site at *www.csac.ca.gov* and clicking on the link "WebGrants for Students." WebGrants for Students can be accessed only after the student's FAFSA application is processed.

One of the ways that CSAC will communicate with students is though e-mail notifications. Be sure to set your e-mail SPAM filter to allow studentsupport@csac.ca.gov as a safe e-mail address.

Contact CSAC Student Support Services

By e-mail at:
studentsupport@csac.ca.gov

By calling toll-free at:
888-CA GRANT
(888-224-7268)
Phone hours are 1:00 pm to 4:50 pm
Monday through Friday

By mail at:
California Student Aid Commission
Student Support Services
P.O. Box 419077
Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9077

Visit the CSAC Web sites:
www.csac.ca.gov
www.calgrants.org

To access Cal Grant application information on the Web, click on the *"WebGrants for Students"* link at
www.csac.ca.gov

California Information Privacy Act

State and federal laws protect an individual's right to privacy regarding information pertaining to oneself. The California Information Practices Act of 1977 requires the following information be provided to financial aid applicants who are asked to supply information about themselves. The principal purpose for requesting information on this form is to determine eligibility for financial aid. Commission policy and the policies of the postsecondary institutions to which the student is applying for aid authorize maintenance of this information. Furnishing information that is requested on this form is mandatory. Failure to provide such information will delay and may even prevent receipt of financial assistance. This form's information may be transmitted to other state agencies and the federal government if required by law. Individuals have the right of access to records established from information furnished on this form as it pertains to them. The Education Code of the State of California gives the Commission the authority (in consultation with postsecondary educational institutions) to make this form available.

The officials responsible for maintaining the information contained on this form are the Executive Director of the Commission and the financial aid administrators at the institutions to which you are applying for financial aid. The SSN is used to verify the student's identity under the record keeping systems established prior to January 1, 1975, pursuant to the authority of the Commission, the California State University, and California Community Colleges contained in Title 5, California Administrative Code Section 41201, and the authority of the Regents of the University of California under Article IX, Section 9, of the California Constitution. The Commission and California public postsecondary education institutions, in compliance with federal and state laws, do not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, age, disability, medical condition, sexual orientation, domestic partnership, or any other legally-protected basis. Inquiries regarding these policies may be directed to the Commission and to the financial aid office of the school or college admissions office to which the student is applying.