



To: Teacher Education Council
Enrollment Management Council

From: Ashleigh Thompson, University Dean for Education
Elaine Pimentel, University Executive Director of Financial Aid

RE: TEACH Grants

Date: November 6, 2019

TEACH Grants provide federal funding support to certain education students. This memo describes an update to CUNY's practice regarding TEACH Grants for AY 2019-2020, which expands eligibility to certain undergraduate students. This expansion aims to increase financial support for undergraduate teacher candidates, especially those who are student teaching and taking certification exams.

Eligibility

The United States Department of Education outlines the criteria for TEACH Grants.

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/grants-scholarships/teach>

U.S. ED provides up to \$4,000 per year to education students with a 3.25 cum GPA who will teach in a high-need field in a low-income school. Recipients must complete four years of teaching within eight years of completion of their degree. Students sign an *Agreement to Serve* and if conditions are not met, grants revert to direct unsubsidized loans, with interest as of the date of first disbursement. Recipients have 120 days from graduation to document that they are either:

- employed as a full-time teacher in accordance with the terms and conditions described in the *Agreement to Serve*; or
- not yet employed as a full-time teacher but intend to meet the TEACH Grant service obligation.

High-need fields change by year and location, and are presently defined as:

- bilingual education and English language acquisition
- foreign language
- mathematics
- reading specialist
- science, and
- special education, as well as
- any other field that has been identified as high-need by the federal government, a state government, or a local education agency, and that is included in the annual [Teacher Shortage Area Nationwide Listing \(Nationwide List\)](#) and <https://tsa.ed.gov/#/home/>

Historically, CUNY has limited eligibility for TEACH Grants to graduate students. As of fall 2019, CUNY teacher candidates pursuing a bachelor's degree that leads to initial certification, who have more than 90 credits and a 3.25 cum GPA are also eligible to apply for TEACH grants. Participating colleges are Brooklyn, City, College of Staten Island, Hunter, Lehman, Medgar Evers, NYC College of Technology, Queens and York.

Financial Benefits for Teacher Certification Exams

Students who are fully packaged by financial aid can still receive a TEACH grant award as long as it does not exceed the students' cost of attendance. In the case where a student has received awards to the cost of attendance maximum and has remaining eligibility for a TEACH grant, additional consideration may be provided if taking, applying, and obtaining mandatory licensing/certification within the period of enrollment, on an individual basis. Please consult with the Financial Aid Office.

Recruitment and Enrollment

TEACH Grants are featured on CUNY's website, which college websites can link to:

<http://www2.cuny.edu/financial-aid/federal-and-state-grants/federal-grants/#1569353108619-1c5b0bf4-3b3b>

Schools of Education, education departments, and faculty advisors are recommended to provide information to applicants and perform screening for students who meet eligibility criteria by establishing an intake application. These departments would review students to confirm eligibility criteria is met. Students who have not met the eligible criteria of filing a FAFSA, completing the TEACH application, Agreement to Serve and Entrance Counseling, as well as meeting the requisite GPA/percentile criteria as outlined in the process memorandum, should not be directed to Financial Aid. Students can access the agreement to serve and Entrance Counseling module online at <https://studentloans.gov/myDirectLoan/launchTeach.action> Finalized eligible applicants should be directed to Financial Aid for processing.

CUNY Central Financial Aid has developed a process guide for the colleges to be shared through the FA-Systems Listserv. We are also exploring the possibility of a mechanism in CUNYfirst which will replace manual entry by the Financial Aid offices.

Student Communication

Recipients are advised to print and screen shot their content area as it appears on the shortage area listing at the time they apply, and save these as records.

Based on previous years' data, slightly more than a quarter of participating students had grants convert to loans. Advisement of students is important for ensuring that students can take maximum advantage of federal funds without incurring unnecessary loans.

Becoming certified and hired in the months after graduation is an important responsibility for recipients. CUNY Central intends to support college efforts. Recipients can be actively case managed for progress towards these benchmarks, and identified through a CUNYfirst query on item type.

- TEACH Grant -Fall 981000000090
- TEACH Grant -Spring 981000000095
- TEACH Grant –Summer Back End 981000000098
- TEACH Grant – Front End Summer 981000000096

We look forward to understanding with you the successes and challenges of this expansion as it rolls out. Please do not hesitate to contact us, and thank you for your efforts.