Background

The Academic Competitiveness Grant program is a Federal Title IV Grant program and as such it operates under the Federal Title IV Student Financial Assistance regulations as does the Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), Federal Work Study and Federal Stafford Student Loan programs. ACG is limited to students who have graduated from high school after January 1, 2005 and while in high school completed a rigorous academic program of study as defined by federal regulations. You must be a U.S. citizen or an eligible non-citizen to qualify for an ACG. The ACG is awarded to eligible students through their first and second year of college.

Basic Eligibility

To be eligible for an ACG, a student must be a Federal Pell Grant recipient and at least half-time (6 credit hours each semester) for the same period of enrollment in which they receive an ACG. Therefore, filing the FAFSA annually, maintaining half time enrollment and maintaining Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress are required. A student may not owe a repayment to a Federal Title IV Grant or may not be in default on any Federal Student Loans. First year students may not have been previously enrolled in an undergraduate program as a regularly admitted student seeking a degree in an eligible academic program. Students enrolled and admitted to the College while concurrent high school students are eligible for ACG (if otherwise eligible) once they graduate and are a half time, degree seeking college student. Second year students must also have a 3.0 Grade Point Average in a degree program to receive an ACG. The maximum award for first year students is $750 for the year. Second year student maximums are $1,300 per year.

Rigorous Academic Program

The ACG was established as a Federal Title IV grant for recent high school graduates who have financial need (Pell Grant eligible) and who have demonstrated academic success by completing a rigorous academic program of study, prescribed coursework, or successfully completing two Advanced Placement (AP) courses with passing test scores of 3 or two International Baccalaureate (IB) courses with passing test scores of 4.
In Oklahoma, students who meet one of the following criteria may be eligible for ACG. Homeschooled students are eligible if documentation is submitted showing eligibility criteria are met.

- OHLAP Eligible
- AP or IB scores
- Graduated with Distinction
- Completed Prescribed Courses Below*

4 years of English
3 years of Math (Algebra I and above): must be from: Algebra II, Geometry, Math Analysis, Statistics, Calculus
3 years of Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics): at least two years must be from two of the subjects listed here
3 years of Social Studies
1 year of a language other than English: sign language may be counted

* Students may submit their final high school transcript to Financial Aid for review if you believe you are eligible for ACG.

**Procedures**

The U.S. Department of Education identifies potential ACG applicants from data on the student’s Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and notifies students to access a specified website and/or toll free number to confirm potential eligibility. All colleges and universities the student has listed on the FAFSA are notified. College or university staff determines final eligibility and awards ACG consistent with Title IV regulations. The amount of the award may vary depending on other financial resource awards the student has. ACG funds run through the student’s account with the Bursar Office to pay outstanding charges to the College. Refunds are disbursed to students through the OCCC HigherOne Program. Eligibility is checked each semester before disbursements to the account are authorized.

**Federal Smart Grant**

Students who have completed two years of college with OCCC, were ACG eligible, and transferring to a four year college or university may be eligible for a SMART Grant. This grant has additional criteria related to specific academic programs in science, mathematics, and languages. Students should check with the financial aid office at their new school to see if they are eligible for a SMART Grant.

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