



## TEACH Grant Information Guide for Students

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## Service Obligations

1 The Higher Education Act (HEA) requires that TEACH Grant recipients agree to serve as a full-time teacher for a total of not less than four academic years within eight years of completing the courses of study for which the TEACH Grant was received.

2 This must be fulfilled in a low-income school.

**Web site:** <https://www.tcli.ed.gov/CBSWebApp/tcli/TCLIPubSchoolSearch.jsp>

3. The teacher must be declared a highly-qualified teacher teaching the majority of classes in a high-need field.

**Web site:** <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/pol/tsa.pdf>

1 The HEA further requires that the grant recipient document each year of their teaching service in the form of a certification by the chief administrative officer of the school in which the recipient is teaching.

2 The HEA requires that the recipient enter into an agreement in which he or she commits to teach in mathematics, science, foreign language, bilingual education, special education, as a reading specialist, or in any other high-need field documented by the Federal government or State or local government and approved by the Secretary in exchange for the grant.

3 Elementary teachers can also satisfy the requirement to teach in a high-need field if the State in which he or she teaches designates elementary teachers a “high-need field.” Elementary teachers can also satisfy requirements if they are full-time teachers of math, science, foreign language, bilingual education, special education, or a reading specialist.

4 The HEA provides that if the recipient fails or refuses to carry out the service obligation, any TEACH Grants received are treated as a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan with interest accruing from the date that each TEACH Grant was disbursed.

## Eligibility Requirements for TEACH Grant

Each TEACH Grant recipient must complete and submit an approved and signed application form as designated by the Secretary prior to the published deadline. Currently, the FAFSA is the designated application form. In order to be eligible, a recipient must submit the designated application, sign a TEACH Grant Agreement To Serve (ATS), and enroll in a TEACH Grant-eligible institution.

Recipients must also score above the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile on at least one of the battery of nationally normed standardized tests, maintain a 3.25 GPA, or qualify as a current or retired teacher obtaining a master’s degree in a TEACH Grant-eligible program.

### **Eligibility Requirements for TEACH Grant According to Federal TEACH Grant Regulations:**

1. An undergraduate student can receive TEACH Grant for the first baccalaureate degree.
2. Students can receive TEACH Grant for only one post-baccalaureate degree.
3. Teacher Certification Only Students must be enrolled in a post-baccalaureate program of study or a master’s degree program assuming the student has a baccalaureate degree. If the student is only taking courses needed for certification and not enrolled in a TEACH Grant-eligible program, then the student is not eligible for TEACH Grant.

4. The HEA requires that an institution determine whether the student displayed high academic aptitude by scoring above the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile of scores on at least one of the batteries from a nationally normed standardized admissions test. Only nationally normed admissions test are eligible to qualify students. These tests are the SAT and ACT. If the student uses the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile admission test score, then the student does not have to maintain a 3.25 GPA.

5. If the student does not meet scores based upon a nationally normed standardized admissions test, GPA can determine if a student qualifies. The HEA requires a 3.25 GPA. The HEA requires that students who use the GPA instead of testing must maintain a cumulative 3.25 GPA on a 4.0 GPA scale to be eligible. To make sure that the student continues to meet the eligibility requirement, the institution must check the student's GPA for the most recently completed payment period by the institution prior to disbursement. The requirement of GPA applies to transfer students as well.

- If a student does not qualify based upon test scores or GPA, the student does not qualify for TEACH Grant.

### **Eligibility Requirements for TEACH Grant According to Shorter University Regulations:**

In order to receive the TEACH Grant at Shorter University, a student must have completed the Criteria for Admission to the Teacher Preparation Program (Transition Point 1) as determined by the Shorter University Department of Education. The following criteria must be met.

### **Criteria for Admission to the Teacher Preparation Program:**

#### **Transition Point 1:**

1. The candidate must have a 2.50 GPA on a 4.00 scale as determined by the Registrar of the University BEFORE applying for admission to the Teacher Preparation Program.
2. The candidate must demonstrate proficiency in all core courses taken prior to acceptance into the Teacher Preparation Program. If deficiency is detected, the candidate may be required to remediate. A minimum grade of C must be earned in all required English, math, computer, and communications courses and in courses in the major field.
3. The candidate must have earned 30 or more semester hours of credit. The candidate must have a passing score on the GACE Basic Skills Assessment tests BEFORE applying for admission to the Teacher Preparation Program. The candidate may exempt the GACE Basis Skills Assessment with scores on the SAT or ACT, as determined by the Professional Standards Commission.
5. The candidate must be recommended by three professors (a faculty member outside the Department of Education, the candidate's major advisor, and the Director of the Teacher Preparation Program).
6. The candidate must provide proof of liability insurance by joining the SGAE or SPAGE.
7. The candidate must provide documentation of an acceptable criminal background check.
8. The candidate must accept, via personal signature, the *Code of Ethics for Educators* by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.
9. The candidate must provide an acceptable writing sample. After writing to the specific prompt given to the candidate, the writing sample is evaluated by two education faculty using The Junior English Scoring Rubric, minus the Format and Documentation section.
10. The candidate must complete the Application for Admission to the Teacher Preparation Program.

**A Shorter University TEACH Grant Counseling Application Worksheet must be completed and approved by the Shorter University Department of Education prior to the awarding of funds.**

## **Qualifying High-Need Fields Under the TEACH Grant**

1. **Bilingual Education**

- An educational program in which two languages are used to provide content matter instruction.

**English Language Acquisition**

- The process of acquiring English as a second language.

1 **Foreign Language**

2 **Mathematics**

3 **Reading Specialist**

4 **Science**

5 **Special Education**

6 Another field documented as high-need by the Federal Government, a State government or an LEA, and approved by the Secretary and listed in the Department's annual Teacher Shortage Area Nationwide Listing (Nationwide List). This is determined by the Higher Education Act (HEA) and the Local Educational Agency (LEA), and it is approved by the Secretary of Education.

### **Can other fields be considered TEACH Grant-eligible?**

Early Childhood Education and other fields such as Librarians can be considered TEACH Grant-eligible if the following criteria are met.

1 Early Childhood Education would need to be considered a component of the State's elementary school education system and have designated Early Childhood Education as well as other areas as a high-need field. (Currently, Early Childhood Education is considered a high-need field in the state of Georgia.)

2 Early Childhood Education can qualify if the teacher is teaching the majority of courses in a high-need field (math, science, or foreign language), teaching in a foreign language immersion program, serving as a reading specialist, special education teacher, bilingual education teacher, teaching English language acquisition, or teaching in a low-income school in a State that has designated elementary education as a high-need field.

- Special education teachers and reading specialists are considered eligible by definition of teacher as long as they spend the majority of time in the classroom or classroom-like setting. These teachers are considered eligible if they give service to other teachers by being literacy coaches, etc.

### **Listing of High-Need Fields:**

High-need fields are listed in the Department of Education's annual Teacher Shortage Area Nationwide Listing. This is available on the Department of Education's Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/pol/tsa.pdf>.

# Teachers and Institutions Must Be Highly Qualified

Teachers must be highly-qualified and have attended a highly-qualified institution.

## What is a highly-qualified teacher?

A teacher is considered highly-qualified if he or she...

1. Has obtained full State certification as a teacher or passed the State teacher licensing examination, holds license to teach in the State, and has not had certification or licensure requirements waived on an emergency, temporary, or provisional basis.
  - Special education teachers must be certified in special education.
- 1 Holds a minimum of a bachelor's degree.
- 2 Has demonstrated subject-matter competency in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches, in a manner determined by the State and in compliance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
  - Subject area content knowledge and certification are both components of the definition of a highly-qualified teacher.

## What is a highly-qualified Teacher Preparation Program?

A teacher preparation program is considered highly-qualified if the institution has the following components...

1. Approval by a cognizant authority.
  - Either accreditation by a specialized accrediting agency or State approval
- 1 Extensive pre-service clinical experience. Ten weeks of student teaching is required.
- 2 Direct provision of pedagogical coursework or assistance in providing such coursework.
- 3 Provision of supervision and support services to teachers, or assistance in such provision.

Shorter University qualifies under provisions 2-4 and has been approved by the Department of Education to participate in the TEACH Grant.

## Counseling Requirements

All students must go through a counseling process. There will be initial, subsequent, and exit counseling. Students must complete the initial or subsequent counseling requirements each year in order to be eligible.

1. **Initial Counseling:** There is initial counseling that must take place prior to the first disbursement of the student's first TEACH Grant. The initial counseling will provide students with information about the rights and responsibilities that are attached to a TEACH Grant award, information about the Agreement to Serve (ATS), information on how to identify low-income schools and documented high-need fields, information on the

possibility of a suspension of the eight-year period for completion of the service obligation, and the conditions under which a suspension must be granted.

- Shorter University will provide the initial counseling on September 4, 2008.

The Financial Aid Office and Department of Education will conduct the session.

1 **Subsequent Counseling:** Subsequent counseling is conducted prior to making any subsequent TEACH Grant disbursements. Subsequent counseling sessions will be a review of the information previously discussed in the initial counseling session.

2 **Exit Counseling:** Exit counseling will take place upon graduation or the withdrawal from school. The exit counseling must be completed before each TEACH Grant-eligible recipient ceases to attend the institution. Written exit counseling materials may be provided within 30 days after completing a study abroad program or after a student withdraws without notifying the institution.

## Completing the Agreement to Serve (ATS)

Students must complete an electronic ATS via the ATS Web site **each year** that he or she is scheduled to receive a TEACH Grant award. If the student does not complete the ATS, the student will not be eligible for the TEACH Grant. The Online Counseling Session or the counseling session provided by the institution must be completed **before a student can complete the ATS**. Students can complete the ATS at <https://teachats.ed.gov/ats/index.action>. In order to complete the ATS, a student will be required to use his or her U.S. Department of Education issued PIN. (This is the same PIN that is used to fill out the FAFSA.) The signing of the ATS each year prevents the TEACH Grant from becoming a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan.

## Calculation of Funds

1. The Scheduled Award for a TEACH Grant-eligible student is **\$4,000.00**.
2. Students may receive the equivalent of up to **four Scheduled Awards** during the period required for the completion of the **first undergraduate baccalaureate** program of study and the **first post-baccalaureate** program of study combined. The total amount that a student may receive in TEACH Grants for undergraduate or post-baccalaureate study may not exceed **\$16,000.00**.
3. A graduate student is eligible to receive the equivalent of up to **two Scheduled Awards** during the period required for the completion of a TEACH Grant-eligible **master's degree** program of study. The total amount that a student may receive in TEACH Grants for a master's degree may not exceed **\$8,000.00**.
4. The amount of funding that a student receives depends on the amount of credit hours that the student is taking. The HEA requires that TEACH Grant be reduced if students are not attending full-time.

5. For an undergraduate student, students are required to enroll in at least 12 credit hours in each term in the award year to qualify as a full-time student. For a graduate student, each term in the award year meets the minimum full-time enrollment status established by the institution for a semester, trimester, or quarter.

- The annual award for a **full-time** student is **\$4,000.00**.
- The annual award for a **three-quarter-time** student is **\$3,000.00**.
- The annual award for a **half-time** student is **\$2,000.00**.
- The annual award for a **less than half-time** student is **\$1,000.00**.

## **Disbursement of Funds**

1 Shorter University will disburse one-half of the TEACH Grant Award in the Fall semester and one-half in the Spring semester for Traditional Students.

2 Professional Studies awards will be disbursed initially and then after the successful completion of 12 credit hours.

## **Requesting or Receiving a Suspension of the TEACH Grant**

TEACH Grant recipients must request a suspension to the Federal Department of Education Secretary in writing within 120 days of ceasing enrollment in a TEACH Grant program declaring that he or she is employed or intends to be employed based upon the guidelines of the TEACH Grant. If the recipient has failed to notify the Secretary within 120 days that he or she intends to be employed full-time in accordance with the terms and conditions of the student's ATS, the TEACH Grant will become a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan.

1. Recipients can receive suspensions or discharges for approved reasons.

- Recipients can receive a suspension from the Secretary based upon a condition that is qualifying under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).
- Recipients can receive a suspension if they are called into active duty status for more than 30 days as a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces, service as a member of the National Guard on full-time National Guard Duty, or under call to active service in connection with a war, military operation, or a national emergency.
- A TEACH Grant recipient's service obligation will be discharged if the recipient dies, or if the recipient becomes totally and permanently disabled.

## **Canceling the TEACH Grant**

A cancellation request must be made to the Shorter University Office of Financial Aid by the student after the 1<sup>st</sup> day of a payment period or 14 days after the institution notifies the student of his or her right to cancel all or a portion of the TEACH Grant.

## **TEACH Grant Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan Grace Period**

A six-month grace period will be provided for the recipients whose TEACH Grant has become a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan. Recipients are eligible of all of the benefits of the Direct Loan Program. This includes an in-school deferment.