

# sagu

**Financial Aid Office**

**POLICIES &  
PROCEDURES  
MANUAL**

**Southwestern Assemblies of God University**

Revised: April 8, 2020

# SAGU FINANCIAL AID OFFICE POLICIES & PROCEDURES MANUAL

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### **SECTION 1: MANUAL INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Introduction to the Financial Aid Office
- 1.2 Purpose & Philosophy of the Financial Aid Office
- 1.3 Policies & Procedures Development Responsibilities
  - 1.3.1 Responsible Personnel

### **SECTION 2: ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION & OFFICE MANAGEMENT**

- 2.1 Frequent Contact Information
  - 2.1.1 Third-Party Servicers
- 2.2 General Financial Aid Office Administration
  - 2.2.1 Appointments with Staff
  - 2.2.2 Treatment of Correspondence/Forms
  - 2.2.3 Confidentiality of Student Records
- 2.3 Records Management & Retention
- 2.4 Information Sharing & the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
  - 2.4.1 Authorization Consent Form

### **SECTION 3: FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS**

- 3.1 Institutional Eligibility Requirements
  - 3.1.1 Program Eligibility
    - 3.1.1.1 Ineligible Programs
  - 3.1.2 Administrative Capability
    - 3.1.2.1 Administration
    - 3.1.2.2 Separation of Duties
    - 3.1.2.3 Records
    - 3.1.2.4 Electronic Processes
    - 3.1.2.5 Information Discrepancies
  - 3.1.3 Reporting & Reconciliation
    - 3.1.3.1 National Student Loan Data System
- 3.2 General Title IV Student Eligibility Requirements
- 3.3 Federal Aid Programs in Which Institution Participates
  - 3.3.1 Federal Work-Study Program
    - 3.3.1.1 General Employment Conditions & Limitations
    - 3.3.1.1 General Employment Conditions & Award Limitations
    - 3.3.1.2 FWS Awarding and Selection Policy
    - 3.3.1.3 FWS Community Service
    - 3.3.1.4 FWS Disbursement Method & Policies
    - 3.3.1.5 FWS Matching Policy & ACA Policy
  - 3.3.2 Pell Grant
  - 3.3.3 FSEOG
    - 3.3.3.1 FSEOG Awarding & Selection Policy
    - 3.3.3.2 FSEOG Matching & ACA Policy
  - 3.3.4 Direct Student Loans
  - 3.3.5 Perkins Loan

- 3.3.5.1 Perkins Matching & ACA Policy
    - 3.3.5.2 Perkins Promissory Notes
  - 3.3.6 Direct PLUS Loans
- 3.4 State Aid Programs in Which Institution Participates
  - 3.4.1 Tuition Equalization Grant (TEG)
  - 3.4.2 Texas Work Study
  - 3.4.3 Texas Be On Time (BOT) Loan Program
  - 3.4.4 College Access Loan (CAL)
- 3.5 Institutional Aid Scholarships
  - 3.5.1 Academic Scholarship—First Time Freshmen
  - 3.5.2 Academic Scholarship—Transfer Students
  - 3.5.3 Academic Scholarship—Graduate Students
  - 3.5.4 AG Ministries Scholarship (Bible Quiz, McGrath AIM Trip, Royal Rangers and Girls Ministries)
  - 3.5.5 Annual Fund Scholarship
  - 3.5.6 Athletic Scholarships
  - 3.5.7 Departmental Scholarships (Various)
  - 3.5.8 Donor Scholarships (Various)
  - 3.5.9 Fine Arts Scholarship
  - 3.5.10 Leadership Scholarship
  - 3.5.11 Momentum Scholarships
  - 3.5.12 Resident Assistant (RA) Scholarship
  - 3.5.13 Southwestern Missions Association (SMA) Scholarship
  - 3.5.14 Student Congress Scholarship
  - 3.5.15 Traveling Ministry Groups Scholarship
- 3.6 Institutional Aid Tuition Grants
  - 3.6.1 Achieve Grant
  - 3.6.2 Assemblies of God Ministers and Dependents Grant
  - 3.6.3 Assemblies of God Missionaries and Dependents Grant
  - 3.6.4 Christ for the Nations Institute (CFNI) Grant
  - 3.6.5 Church Of God Of Prophecy (COGOP) Minister Grant
  - 3.6.6 Executive Institutional Tuition Grants (Various)
  - 3.6.7 Family Grant (Sibling, Spouse, Parent/Child)
  - 3.6.8 Latin American Bible Institute (LABI) Grant
  - 3.6.9 Life School Faculty/Administration Grant
  - 3.6.10 Students from AG Children’s Homes Grant
  - 3.6.11 Teacher Enhancement Grant
- 3.7 Institutional Aid General Polices & Requirements

**SECTION 4: INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO EDUCATION LOANS**

- 4.1 Private Education Loan Disclosures
- 4.2 Direct Loan Disclosures

**SECTION 5: STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS**

- 5.1 Federal Student Consumer Information Requirements
  - 5.1.1 Financial Aid Information
  - 5.1.2 Institutional Information
  - 5.1.3 Completion or Graduation Rate
  - 5.1.4 Annual Security Report

- 5.1.4.1 Timely Warnings and Emergency Notifications
      - 5.1.4.2 Campus Crime Log
    - 5.1.5 Student-Athlete Completion or Graduation Rate
    - 5.1.6 Annual Fire Safety Report
      - 5.1.6.1 Fire Log
  - 5.2 Title IV Loan Counseling
    - 5.2.1 Entrance Counseling and MPN
    - 5.2.2 Exit Counseling
- SECTION 6: APPLICATIONS & FORMS**
- 6.1 Application Process
  - 6.2 Forms
  - 6.3 Deadlines
  - 6.4 Document Assignment, Collection, & Tracking
- SECTION 7: FILE REVIEW**
- 7.1 Verification
    - 7.1.1 Selection of Applicants to be Verified
    - 7.1.2 Acceptable Documentation & Forms
    - 7.1.3 Data Elements to be Verified
    - 7.1.4 Conflicting & Inaccurate Information
    - 7.1.5 Student Notification of Verification Changes
    - 7.1.6 Awarding & Disbursement of Funds During Verification
  - 7.2 Database Matches, Reject Codes, & C-Codes Clearance
  - 7.3 Review of Subsequent ISIR Transactions – Postscreening
  - 7.4 Verification of Enrollment Status
- SECTION 8: STUDENT BUDGETS**
- 8.1 Various Student Populations
  - 8.2 How Budgets are Derived & Updated
  - 8.3 Additional Costs
- SECTION 9: AWARDING & PACKAGING FINANCIAL AID**
- 9.1 Automatic Vs. Manual Awarding/Packaging
  - 9.2 Awarding & Packaging Philosophies
    - 9.2.1 Federal Financial Aid
    - 9.2.2 State Financial Aid
    - 9.2.3 Other Outside Financial Aid
    - 9.2.4 Institutional Financial Aid
  - 9.3 Available Funds & Number of Eligible Students
  - 9.4 Determining Award Amounts
  - 9.5 Package Construction
  - 9.6 Packaging Other Educational Resources
  - 9.7 Award Package Notification
    - 9.6.1 Award Package Revisions & Recalculations Policy
  - 9.8 Overawards & Overpayments
- SECTION 10: PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT (PJ)**
- 10.1 PJ Authority and Individuals Who May Exercise It

**SECTION 11: DISBURSEMENTS**

- 11.1 Definition of Disbursements
- 11.2 Responsibility for Disbursement of Funds and Disbursement Methods
- 11.3 Disbursement Procedures
- 11.4 Disbursement Schedule
- 11.5 Disbursement Notification

**SECTION 12: SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

- 12.1 Process Overview & Responsibilities
- 12.2 Appeals

**SECTION 13: RETURN OF TITLE IV FUNDS**

- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Estimate of Aid Earned or Aid That May Need to be Returned
- 13.3 Unofficial Withdrawals and Earning All Non-Passing Grades
- 13.4 Post-Withdrawal Disbursement
- 13.5 Returning Title IV Funds
- 13.6 Overpayments
- 13.7 Non-Attendance
- 13.8 Last Date of Attendance Determination for Programs That Take Attendance
- 13.9 Last Date of Attendance Determination for Programs That Do Not Take Attendance
- 13.10 Federal vs. Institutional Refund Policy
- 13.11 Withdrawal Requirements and Procedures
- 13.12 Requirements and Deadlines for R2T4 Calculations and Return of Title IV Aid
- 13.13 Additional Questions

**SECTION 14: TITLE IV FRAUD**

- 14.1 Student Fraud

**SECTION 15: AUDITS**

- 15.1 Audit Process

## **SECTION 1: MANUAL INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction to the Financial Aid Office**

This publication is designed to familiarize you with the programs and services offered and to assist you in planning your education. It explains the SAGU financial aid program outlining both what you can expect and what is expected of you. Financial aid programs include institutional grants, federal and state grants, low-interest federal loans and the federal work study and other outside scholarships and loans. You will find information regarding financial aid eligibility criteria, educational expenses, budgeting, and available sources of institutional, federal, and other outside financial assistance.

The SAGU Financial Aid office is committed to working with you as you plan the financing of your Christian higher education. We know that a college education is a serious financial commitment, and our office should be used as a resource to assist you with your financing options.

#### **Financial Aid Office Contact Information**

Location.....First Wing Davis Building  
Hours.....Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.–12 p.m. & 1 p.m.–5 p.m.  
Front Desk.....972.825.4730  
Email .....financialaid@sagu.edu  
Fax Number .....972.923.8143  
Web Address.....www.sagu.edu/financialaid

#### **Office Staff**

Jeff Francis.....Senior Director of Financial Aid  
Lorraine Ast.....Assistant Director  
Christina Ewing.....Financial Aid Counselor (Last names A-K)  
Barbie Humphrey.....Financial Aid Counselor (Last names L-Z)  
Vashti Pitterson.....Scholarship & Work Study Coordinator  
Gina Mayes.....Front Desk Service Specialist

### **1.2 Purpose & Philosophy of the Financial Aid Office**

The SAGU Financial Aid Office exists to assist students financially in their journey through college. We are committed to care for each student individually, devoted to attend to each need as promptly as possible, and determined to be a beacon of hope to those whose need is great. We will challenge students to seek the best in themselves, while we expect the best of ourselves. We are here to serve the students so that they may go serve others. We are the staff of the Financial Aid Office; where students come first.

The Financial Aid Office's daily operations include the processing of financial aid paperwork, response to emails, phone calls, and faxes, as well as face-to-face communications with students, parents, co-workers, and other individuals that visit our office. We constantly strive to uphold SAGU's mission statement in all that we do to ensure that each and every student is treated equally and helped in a timely and caring manner. As a Christian university serving students from all different backgrounds, we understand that we must set a Christian example for all of the individuals that we come in contact with to ensure that we are upholding our Christian values.

## **1.3 Policies & Procedures Development Responsibilities**

### **1.3.1 Responsible Personnel**

Jeff Francis, Senior Director of Financial Aid

Lorraine Ast, Assistant Director of Financial Aid, Withdrawals

Christina Ewing, Financial Aid Counselor (Last names A-G)

Sue Myers, Financial Aid Counselor (Last names H-O), FWS, Perkins

Barbie Humphrey, Financial Aid Counselor (Last names P-Z)

Cindy Palmer, Scholarship Coordinator

Cynthia Bell, Service Specialist, Front Desk Receptionist



## **SECTION 2: ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION & OFFICE MANAGEMENT**

### **2.1 Frequent Contact Information**

#### **Financial Aid Office Contact Information**

Location.....First Wing Davis Building  
Hours.....Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.–12 p.m. & 1 p.m.–5 p.m.  
Front Desk.....972.825.4730  
Email .....financialaid@sagu.edu  
Fax Number .....972.923.8143  
Web Address.....www.sagu.edu/financialaid

#### **2.1.1 Third-Party Servicers**

SAGU works with different third-party services (UAS, EOS-CCA, and Williams & Fudge). UAS handles issues related to servicing and collecting payments for Perkins loans. EOS-CCA is a collection agency that UAS refers student accounts to when needing assistance with collection of Perkins loans payments. Williams & Fudge is a collection agency SAGU uses when needing assistance with collection of payments towards a student's outstanding school bill. All third-party servicers are approved by the President's Cabinet.

## **2.2 General Financial Aid Office Administration**

### **2.2.1 Appointments with Staff**

Students and parents can visit with a staff member without having to schedule an appointment. If a student or parent requests an appointment with a staff member, an appointment is arranged. We also make every effort to address any concerns and answer any questions via email, phone or fax.

### **2.2.2 Treatment of Correspondence/Forms**

We correspond with students, parents, co-workers and other individuals via phone, email, fax, and face-to-face communication. Our main phone number is 972-825-4730, our fax number is 972-923-8143, our email address is [financialaid@sagu.edu](mailto:financialaid@sagu.edu), and our office is located in the first wing of the Davis building.

The Service Specialist receives paperwork from students, parents, and other departments. All incoming paperwork is date-stamped and passed on to the appropriate financial aid staff member. Once the paperwork is complete it is then scanned and saved electronically in CAMS and the paperwork is placed in the student's file.

### **2.2.3 Confidentiality of Student Records**

To protect the privacy of students and families, federal law sets conditions on the disclosure of personal information from records kept by schools that participate in the financial aid programs. The relevant law is the Family Educational Rights Act of 1974. FERPA restrictions on disclosure of records that are created and maintained by campus law enforcement units.

Department regulations set limits on the disclosure of personally identifiable information from school records, define the responsibilities of the school, and identify the rights of the student to review the records and request a change to the records.

Except under one of the conditions described below, a student must provide a signed and dated written consent before an education agency or school may disclose personally identifiable information from the student's records.

The written consent must: 1) State the purpose of the disclosure, 2) Specify the records that may be disclosed, 3) Identify the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made, 4) Be signed and dated.

## **2.3 Records Management & Retention**

The school must keep comprehensive, accurate program and fiscal records related to its use of financial aid program funds. The importance of maintaining complete, accurate records cannot be overemphasized. Program and fiscal records must demonstrate the

school is capable of meeting the administrative and fiscal requirements for participating in the financial aid programs. In addition, records must demonstrate proper administration of financial aid program funds and must show a clear audit trail for financial aid program expenditures. For example, records for each financial aid recipient must clearly show that the funds were disbursed in accordance with program regulations

A school must maintain all required records in a systematically organized manner. Unless a specific format is required, a school may keep required records in:

- Hard Copy
- Computer file
- Scanned file
- Records on CDs, discs, tapes, or other media

All record information, regardless of the format used, must be retrievable in a coherent hard copy format or in a media format acceptable to the Department.

Any documentation that contains a signature, seal, certification, or any other image or mark required to validate the authenticity of its information must be obtained in its original hard copy or in an imaged media format.

## **2.4 Information Sharing & the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, as amended (FERPA), allows students at an institution of Higher Education to control outside access to their education records, including requests for information from their parents and other family members. Without a student's written consent, SAGU may not disclose information from a student's education records to outside third parties except as provided under FERPA. You can provide a standing release allowing SAGU to disclose information to other persons.

The FERPA form must be complete and submitted to the Registrar's Office.

If you wish that your directory information not be made public, you must contact the Registrar's Office before the last day of late registration to request that your information be withheld.

### **2.4.1 Authorization Consent Form**

The written consent must:

- State the purpose of the disclosure;
- Specify the records that may be disclosed;
- Identify the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made; and
- Be signed and dated.
- Identify and authenticate a particular person as the source of the consent; and
- Indicate that person's approval of the information contained in the consent

An authorization form must be in the student's file prior to disclosing information.

## **SECTION 3: FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS**

### **3.1 Institutional Eligibility Requirements**

To participate in the Title IV programs, schools must meet one of the following definitions of an eligible institution:

- ◆ Institution of higher education;
- ◆ Proprietary institution of higher education; or
- ◆ Postsecondary vocational institution.

As an institutional of higher education, SAGU meets these criteria. The Financial Aid Office maintains documentation that substantiates the school's institutional eligibility. Such documents might include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Program Participation Agreement (PPA)
- ◆ Eligibility and Certification Approval Report (ECAR)

#### **3.1.1 Program Eligibility**

##### ***Policies***

To qualify as an eligible institution, the school must offer at least one eligible program and it is the school's responsibility to ensure a student is enrolled in an eligible program before disbursing Title IV aid. All programs offered by SAGU lead to a degree and are eligible for federal aid. SAGU does not offer any programs that do not lead to a degree.

##### **3.1.1.1 Ineligible Programs**

SAGU does not offer any ineligible programs.

#### **3.1.2 Administrative Capability**

##### **3.1.2.1 Administration**

##### ***Policies***

In order to effectively and capably administer all financial aid programs, the Financial Aid Office does the following:

- Designates a capable individual (Senior Director of Financial Aid) to be responsible for administering and coordinating the institution's financial aid programs
- Uses an adequate number of qualified persons to administer the Title IV programs.
- Communicates to the individual designated as responsible for administering Title IV programs all the information received by any institutional office that impacts a student's Title IV eligibility.
- Notifies the Department of Education in a timely manner (typically within 10 days) of any changes in the institution's status or operations.

### **3.1.2.2 Separation of Duties**

A school must ensure that its administrative procedures for the financial aid programs include an adequate system of internal checks and balances. This system, at a minimum, must separate the functions of authorizing payment and disbursing or delivering funds so that no one person or office exercises both functions for any student receiving financial aid funds. Small schools are not exempt from this requirement even though they may have limited staff. Individuals working in either authorization or disbursement may perform other functions as well, but not both authorization and disbursement. SAGU complies with this policy as the Financial Aid Office awards funds, but the Student Billing Office applies the funds to student accounts.

### **3.1.2.3 Records**

A school must keep comprehensive, accurate program and fiscal records related to its use of financial aid program funds. The importance of maintaining complete, accurate records cannot be overemphasized. Program and fiscal records must demonstrate that the school is capable of meeting the administrative and fiscal requirements for participating in the financial aid programs. In addition, records must demonstrate proper administration of financial aid program expenditures. For example, records for each financial aid recipient must clearly show that the student was eligible for the funds received, and that the funds were disbursed in accordance with program regulations.

A school must establish and maintain on a current basis any application the school submitted for financial aid program funds. A school must also maintain on a current basis program records that document:

- The school's eligibility to participate in the financial aid programs,
- The financial aid eligibility of the school's programs of education,
- The school's administration of the financial aid programs,
- The school's financial responsibility,
- Information included in any application for financial aid program funds, and
- The school's disbursement of financial aid program funds.

#### **3.1.2.4 Electronic Processes**

In order for a school to exchange data with the DOE, it must have internet access through its network or through an Internet Service Provider.

We use software called EDConnect to transmit the info to the DOE. This is how we transmit and receive Pell and ISIR correction records (Origination & Payment). We are also electronically refunding loan money when a student withdraws/graduates.

#### **3.1.2.5 Information Discrepancies**

If SAGU has conflicting information concerning a student's eligibility or has any reason to believe a student's application information is incorrect, we must resolve the discrepancies before disbursing financial aid funds. If we discover discrepancies after disbursing financial aid funds, we must still reconcile the conflicting information and take appropriate action under the specific program requirements.

If the information is wrong on the ISIR, then corrections are necessary. A determination must be made if the ISIR is incorrect or if the submitted documentation is incorrect. If a correction needs to be made, the corrections would be made to the student's ISIR in FAA.

### **3.1.3 Reporting & Reconciliation**

SAGU complies with all required reporting and reconciliation of funds. The Accounting Office completes a monthly reconciliation of direct loans. All program funds are balanced at the end of the fiscal year. SAGU does not drawdown Title IV funds until disbursement has been made to COD and the funds have been applied to the student's billing ledger. Because of this conservative process, every time the Accounting Office draws down funds they are able to insure that the amount of funds in G5 is available to them and that we are meeting all required timelines for reporting disbursements.

#### **3.1.3.1 National Student Loan Data System**

NSLDS stores the history of a student's Federal financial aid. To access the website, you must have an ID and a password. Once you login, you can look up to see if they are in default, have a Pell overpayment, or see how much of their current FA award they have left to use.

When looking up a student on NSLDS, you see at the top of the screen a message that will tell you if the student is not on your transfer and monitor list. By clicking on that

link, it will automatically take you to the “Add a Student” screen. You will need to enter the student name, SSN, date of birth, enrollment begin date (date student is starting school), and the date you wish to begin monitoring (usually the day you are adding the student to the list). NSLDS will stop the monitoring process on the 91<sup>st</sup> day after their enrollment begin date. Any changes to the student’s record will be emailed on Thursday to the school. We must report overpayments or changes to previously submitted information to NSLDS within 30 days of the date we learn of the overpayment or change. If the grant overpayment is the result of the student’s withdrawal and a return to Title IV calculation, you must contact the student within 30 days of determining that the student withdrew.

We only report unresolved overpayments if they’re due to student error, don’t report overpayments that are a result of school error. Instead, as discussed previously, you must use school funds to repay the overpayment. We must use the on-line NSLDS screens to report overpayment.

Once the overpayment is reported to NSLDS, the student’s future output documents will show that the student has an overpayment. The Financial Aid History section of the SAR and ISIR will have information on the overpayment, including whether the student has made satisfactory repayment arrangements



### **3.2 General Title IV Student Eligibility Requirements**

A student must meet certain requirements to be eligible for financial aid. Those requirements include but are not limited to:

- Must be enrolled in a program of study and pursuing a degree/certificate/other credential
- Must meet Ability to Benefit requirements which means having a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent
- Must be a US citizen or eligible non-citizen
- Must be registered with Selective Service (if not exempt)
- Must not have had eligibility suspended or terminated due to a drug-related conviction.
- Must have a valid Social Security Number
- May not be in Default on a federal loan or have an overpayment on a federal grant.
- Must meet the requirements for SAP

The student must be enrolled at least half time to receive assistance from the Stafford and PLUS loan programs. The Pell grant program is awarded according to the Pell chart for that academic year and is based on a student's Cost of Attendance (COA), enrollment status and Expected Family Contribution (EFC).

The Financial Aid Office verifies student aid history and aggregate loan amounts via NSLDS. Students receiving Title IV aid are required to file a FAFSA. No aid may be awarded until an accepted ISIR is on file and all required resolution and/or verification has been completed.

### **3.3 Federal Aid Programs in Which Institution Participates**

The University will evaluate eligibility for the Pell, FSEOG, FWS, and state grants, as well as Stafford and alternative loans.

Upon receipt of ISIR, the university can move forward in determining the student's awards. Pell is determined by the student's EFC. FSEOG is determined by the EFC as well as the date the student is awarded (depending on if FSEOG funding is still available). State grants are determined based on the student's financial information listed on the ISIR and the state of residency.

Subsidized loan eligibility is determined by COA – EFC – Financial Aid that Affects Need. Unsubsidized loan eligibility is calculated by COA – Financial Aid, taking into consideration the subsidized loan, within the loan limits. PLUS loan eligibility is calculated as COA – Financial Aid.

#### **3.3.1 Federal Work-Study Program**

The Federal Work-Study (FWS) Program provides part-time employment to students attending institutions of higher education who need the earnings to help meet their costs of postsecondary education and encourages students receiving FWS assistance to participate in community service activities.

FWS awards are based on need. Positions are limited and there are more eligible applicants than positions. The financial aid office does not place students in jobs. Students must be interviewed and compete for positions. FWS jobs are usually found on the university campus, but others are in community service positions. A complete FWS manual is available in the Financial Aid Office.

##### **3.3.1.1 General Employment Conditions & Award Limitations**

A student is only eligible to receive work study up to the awarded amount. FWS is awarded initially for \$2,318 for the year (\$1,159 per fall/spring semester). This amount is based upon working at minimum wage for 30 weeks for the year between 10-11 hours each week. However, students are not guaranteed to receive this amount. They must be hired by a FWS supervisor and will only be paid for the hours in which they actually work. Students may not work during a time in which a course they are enrolled meets.

##### **3.3.1.2 FWS Awarding and Selection Policy**

Students enrolled at least half-time that can demonstrate financial need are eligible for FWS. Many students will be eligible for and awarded FWS as a part of their financial aid package. However, actual open jobs are based on the annual federal allocation and required institutional match. Many eligible students will not be able to work or receive funds because of the limited amount of available positions.

Because jobs must require a student to work on campus or in the nearby community, initial awards are only made to students classified as on campus students. However, a local distance education student could be hired for a FWS position if otherwise eligible.

### **3.3.1.3 FWS Community Service**

SAGU uses a minimum of 7% of its FWS allocation to employ students in community service jobs with at least one FWS student employed as a reading tutor for children in a reading tutoring project or performing family literacy activities in a family literacy project.

### **3.3.1.4 FWS Disbursement Method & Policies**

FWS funds are not automatically disbursed directly to student accounts. Instead, students receive a regular pay check for actual hours worked. This means that a student cannot use their full FWS award as a part of their payment at the time of registration because the amount of the student's award is not guaranteed if the student does not actually work the hours throughout the course of the semester. Students are encouraged to use funds received through working a FWS job to make payments towards any outstanding school bill and can make arrangements with the Human Resources and Student Billing Offices to do this.

### **3.3.1.5 FWS Matching Policy & ACA Policy**

SAGU receives an allocation of FWS from the federal government each academic year and is required to do a 25% match from institutional funds. For each FWS disbursement, 75% of the disbursement comes from federal funds and 25% comes from the required institutional match. Once federal funds are exhausted for the academic year, all future disbursements come 100% from institutional funds.

In addition, SAGU claims a 5% administrative cost allowance (ACA) off of the original federal allocation. The required matching formula is described below. NOTE: In the matching formula below, a federal allocation of \$100,000 is used for example purposes only.

1. Federal Allocation = \$100,000.00 (Example only: Actual allocation varies)
2.  $\$100,000.00 \div 0.80 = \$125,000.00$
3.  $\$125,000.00 \times 0.75 = \$93,750.00$  (Federal Share)
4.  $\$125,000.00 \times 0.25 = \$31,250.00$  (Institutional Match)
5.  $\$125,000.00 \times 0.05 = \$6,250.00$  (Administrative Cost Allowance – This is the difference between the original Federal Allocation in #1 and the Federal Share in #3.)

### **3.3.2 Pell Grant**

The Federal Pell Grant Program provides need-based grants to low-income undergraduate students and certain post-baccalaureate students to promote access to postsecondary education. Pell grants are awarded based on an annual Pell chart/table released by the Department of Education. Generally, Pell grants are based on a student's EFC, enrollment status and the COA of the school at which they are attending. Amounts are determined by the annual Pell chart/table. SAGU uses Pell grant formula 1 in awarding.

### **3.3.3 FSEOG**

#### **3.3.3.1 FSEOG Awarding & Selection Policy**

The Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) is awarded to undergraduate Pell eligible students that are enrolled at least half-time and demonstrate exceptional financial need. Exceptional need is determined by the student's EFC. Students with a \$0 EFC are awarded first. If funds are available after all eligible \$0 EFC students are awarded, then Pell eligible students with a higher EFC could be considered. FSEOG is awarded at \$1,000 for the year (\$500 per fall/spring semester). Because FSEOG is limited by the annual federal allocation and required institutional match, funds are very limited and many eligible students will not be able to receive funds. A minimum of 5% of annual FSEOG funds will be held and awarded to students that enroll in the spring semester.

#### **3.3.3.2 FSEOG Matching & ACA Policy**

SAGU receives an allocation of FSEOG from the federal government each academic year and is required to do a 25% match from institutional funds. For each FSEOG disbursement, 75% of the disbursement comes from federal funds and 25% comes from the required institutional match.

In addition, SAGU claims a 5% administrative cost allowance (ACA) off of the original federal allocation. The required matching formula is described below. NOTE: In the matching formula below, a federal allocation of \$100,000 is used for example purposes only.

1. Federal Allocation = \$100,000.00 (Example only: Actual allocation varies)
2.  $\$100,000.00 \div 0.80 = \$125,000.00$
3.  $\$125,000.00 \times 0.75 = \$93,750.00$  (Federal Share)
4.  $\$125,000.00 \times 0.25 = \$31,250.00$  (Institutional Match)
5.  $\$125,000.00 \times 0.05 = \$6,250.00$  (Administrative Cost Allowance – This is the difference between the original Federal Allocation in #1 and the Federal Share in #3.)

### **3.3.4 Direct Student Loans**

### **3.3.5 Perkins Loan**

The Federal Perkins Loan Program provides low interest loans to help needy students finance the costs of postsecondary education. SAGU's revolving Perkins loan fund is replenished by ongoing activities, such as collections by the school on outstanding Perkins loans made by SAGU and reimbursements from the Department for the cost of certain statutory loan cancellations provisions. Because funds are limited each year, many otherwise eligible students will not receive Perkins loan awards. Students must demonstrate financial need in order to be eligible for Perkins loan funds. Priority in awarding is initially given to students that received a Perkins loan in a previous academic year.

#### **3.3.5.1 Perkins Matching & ACA Policy**

Congress has not authorized any new federal capital contribution for Perkins. Therefore, because there is not a federal allocation of Perkins funds, there is not a calculated percentage institutional match as with other campus based awards.

SAGU claims a 5% administrative cost allowance (ACA) off of the total amount of Perkins loan disbursed each year. The required formula is described below. NOTE: In the formula below, a Perkins disbursed amount of \$100,000 is used for example purposes only.

1. Perkins Loan Disbursed = \$100,000.00 (Example only: Actual annual disbursed amount varies)
2.  $\$100,000.00 \times 0.05 = \$5,000.00$  (Administrative Cost Allowance – This number is not final until all Perkins loan have been disbursed for the year.)

#### **3.3.5.2 Perkins Promissory Notes**

SAGU stores its Perkins promissory notes in a fireproof container.

### **3.3.6 Direct PLUS Loans**

**3.4 State Aid Programs in Which Institution Participates**

**3.4.1 Tuition Equalization Grant (TEG)**

**3.4.2 Texas Work Study**

**3.4.3 Texas Be On Time (BOT) Loan Program**

**3.4.4 College Access Loan (CAL)**

### **3.5 Institutional Aid Scholarships**

- 3.5.1 Academic Scholarship—First Time Freshmen**
- 3.5.2 Academic Scholarship—Transfer Students**
- 3.5.3 Academic Scholarship—Graduate Students**
- 3.5.4 AG Ministries Scholarship (Bible Quiz, McGrath AIM Trip, Royal Rangers and Girls Ministries)**
- 3.5.5 Annual Fund Scholarship**
- 3.5.6 Athletic Scholarships**
- 3.5.7 Departmental Scholarships (Various)**
- 3.5.8 Donor Scholarships (Various)**
- 3.5.9 Fine Arts Scholarship**
- 3.5.10 Leadership Scholarship**
- 3.5.11 Momentum Scholarships**
- 3.5.12 Resident Assistant (RA) Scholarship**
- 3.5.13 Southwestern Missions Association (SMA) Scholarship**
- 3.5.14 Student Congress Scholarship**
- 3.5.15 Traveling Ministry Groups Scholarship**

### **3.6 Institutional Aid Tuition Grants**

**3.6.1 Achieve Grant**

**3.6.2 Assemblies of God Ministers and Dependents Grant**

**3.6.3 Assemblies of God Missionaries and Dependents Grant**

**3.6.4 Christ for the Nations Institute (CFNI) Grant**

**3.6.5 Church Of God Of Prophecy (COGOP) Minister Grant**

**3.6.6 Executive Institutional Tuition Grants (Various)**

**3.6.7 Family Grant (Sibling, Spouse, Parent/Child)**

**3.6.8 Latin American Bible Institute (LABI) Grant**

**3.6.9 Life School Faculty/Administration Grant**

**3.6.10 Students from AG Children's Homes Grant**

**3.6.11 Teacher Enhancement Grant**



### **3.7 Institutional Aid General Policies & Requirements**

SAGU provides many institutional scholarships and grants. The following is important information regarding policies and requirements to receive institutional aid at SAGU.

- Applications are available on each individual scholarship and grant web page.
- Students are required to apply for institutional aid prior to the end of late registration each semester. After the end of late registration, students cannot be awarded any additional institutional financial aid even if otherwise eligible.
- All institutional scholarships and grants are subject to available funding. It is possible for a student to not receive a scholarship/grant that they would have otherwise been eligible to receive simply because there is no more funding available. Students are encouraged to apply as soon as possible.
- Students must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress in order to receive institutional aid.
- Students can generally receive more than one institutional scholarship at a time, though some scholarships cannot be combined. Please see each individual scholarship page for details.
- Students may only receive one institutional grant at a time.
- Institutional aid is capped at 100% off tuition for students living on campus in SAGU housing.
- Institutional aid is capped at 50% off tuition for students living off campus.
- Special program students (School of Ministry, Engage in Missions and Dual Credit) are not eligible to receive any institutional aid other than their program discount.
- The maximum discount for doctoral students is 25% off tuition.
- Athletes first enrolled at SAGU beginning in Fall 2014 or later cannot receive both an athletic scholarship and other institutional financial aid at the same time.
- Students receiving a RA, SMA, Student Congress or Traveling Ministry Group scholarship cannot receive more than 150% off tuition in total institutional aid.

## **SECTION 4: INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO EDUCATION LOANS**

### **4.1 Private Education Loan Disclosures**

Many students use private loans to help pay their tuition costs. These loans are credit-based and we strongly recommend that students apply with a cosigner to ensure that they are receiving the best interest rate possible.

Private loans are applied for directly from the lender by a student or parent. Borrowers must be credit worthy. A list of lenders that offer a private education loans is available through the financial aid website.

## 4.2 Direct Loan Disclosures

Loan for undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at least half-time (typically 6 credit hours for most programs although there are a few graduate programs and doctoral program where half time is considered 3 hours). Students can get a loan regardless of income, but the federal government pays interest only on need-based subsidized loans while a student is enrolled at least half time. The interest accrues on unsubsidized loans while the student is in school. Interest rates can vary depending on the type of loan and academic year. Students must sign a Master Promissory Note (MPN) with the Department of Education, and new borrowers must complete entrance counseling online at [www.studentloans.gov](http://www.studentloans.gov).

## **SECTION 5: STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **5.1 Federal Student Consumer Information Requirements**

Each year a school must provide to enrolled students a notice containing a list of the consumer information it must disseminate, and the procedures for obtaining this consumer information. Schools must also provide a notice of student rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

#### **5.1.1 Financial Aid Information**

Students must file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to determine financial need and to receive federal aid.

All applicants for financial aid must be United States Citizens or eligible noncitizens. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) must be maintained while attending SAGU in order to receive federal or institutional aid. Students can submit an appeal of financial aid suspension.

#### **5.1.2 Institutional Information**

SAGU makes certain information about itself readily available upon request to enrolled and prospective students. The information is often maintained by offices other than financial aid.

#### **5.1.3 Completion or Graduation Rate**

Graduation rates are available through the Registrar's Office and in the academic catalog. These statistics are published in the annual IPED's report and are disclosed to all students after submitting a FAFSA.

#### **5.1.4 Annual Security Report**

An annual campus security report is made available by the Security department. These statistics are published in a report covering the previous three calendar years. The Security department submits a statistical report the US Department of Education on an annual basis.

##### **5.1.4.1 Timely Warnings and Emergency Notifications**

SAGU makes timely warnings to the campus community about certain crimes reported to campus security authorities or local police agencies and considered threats to students and employees. SAGU also follows emergency notification as well as emergency response and evacuation procedures if there is an immediate threat to the health or safety of students or employees occurring on campus.

#### **5.1.4.2 Campus Crime Log**

The campus security department maintains and makes available a campus crime log.

#### **5.1.5 Student-Athlete Completion or Graduation Rate**

As an institution that provides athletically-related aid, SAGU prepares an annual report concerning the completion or graduation rate and transfer-out rate, if applicable, along with related statistics of our athletic aid recipients. The Athletic Department is responsible for completing the report and making it available.

#### **5.1.6 Annual Fire Safety Report**

As an institution that maintains on-campus student housing facilities, SAGU distributes an annual fire safety report to enrolled students and current employees. The statistics portion of the report is also submitted to the ED, as required. The Security department is responsible for the annual fire safety report.

##### **5.1.6.1 Fire Log**

###### ***Policies***

As an institution that maintains on-campus student housing facilities, SAGU maintains and makes available a fire log. The Security department is responsible for maintaining the fire log.

### **5.2 Title IV Loan Counseling**

Prior to receiving the first disbursement of a Direct Subsidized Loan or Direct Unsubsidized Loan, the student must undergo entrance counseling unless the student has received a prior Direct Subsidized Loan, Direct Unsubsidized Loan. All graduate PLUS borrowers must undergo entrance counseling before receiving the first disbursement of a graduate PLUS.

In addition, *all student borrowers* of a loan made under the Federal Perkins Loan, Direct Loan programs must undergo exit counseling after the borrower ceases at least half-time enrollment at the institution.

#### **5.2.1 Entrance Counseling and MPN**

First-time Federal Direct Stafford Loan borrowers must complete a Stafford Loan Master Promissory Note (MPN) and Entrance counseling session.

Entrance Counseling and the Loan Master Promissory Note (MPN) should both be completed online at [www.studentloans.gov](http://www.studentloans.gov). Both must be on file before funds can be approved and sent to SAGU. This insures that the student fully understands their rights and obligations as a student loan borrower. Returning borrowers (students who have borrowed a Federal Stafford Loan within the past 12 months) do not need to complete another MPN or Entrance Counseling Session. Entrance counseling informs students of their various loan repayment responsibilities, including repayment options, interest accrual and aggregate loan limits.

### **5.2.2 Exit Counseling**

Once a student has graduated, dropped below a half-time enrollment status, or has withdrawn from school, the Financial Aid Office will send the student notification to complete Exit Counseling.

The letter informs the student that the must visit [www.studentloans.gov](http://www.studentloans.gov) and complete Exit Counseling. Exit counseling informs students of their various loan repayment responsibilities, including repayment options, interest accrual and aggregate loan limits.

## **SECTION 6: APPLICATIONS & FORMS**

### **6.1 Application Process**

Students wishing to use financial aid must have a clear NSLDS record and complete the FAFSA for the appropriate award year.

Once the results from the FAFSA are received, the financial aid office can determine what types and how much aid the student will qualify to receive.

## **6.2 Forms**

All forms must be complete before a student can receive financial aid.

Students will be asked to complete forms, depending on the status of their ISIR and the aid in which they receive.



### **6.3 Deadlines**

The financial aid office must have a completed FAFSA on file before any federal aid can be awarded to the student. If applying for institutional scholarships/grants, the application must be complete and submitted to the financial aid office by the published deadline. Students cannot receive any institutional aid until the application is submitted prior to the end of late registration.

**Priority Consideration Deadline:** Many student aid funds are limited and demand is usually greater than funds available. Priority status is given to students who apply and have a complete file by the following dates. You must apply by March 1. You must have a complete and accurate file by April 15. It is still possible for certain award funds to be exhausted prior to April 15. Therefore, students are encouraged to complete their FAFSA and submit any required documents as soon as possible.

Late applications are processed on a rolling basis as time and volume permit.

## **6.4 Document Assignment, Collection, & Tracking**

SAGU is required to collect and retain certain documents for each student file.

The document tracking section of CAMS is required to be accurate and up to date to list all the financial aid documents that we have on file for a student. Documents are loaded into CAMS as needed based upon a student's ISIR or other information made available to the Financial Aid Office. Documents are collected from students and can usually be submitted electronically, but most documents related to federal/state financial aid require a physical signature. (Note: The original Statement of Educational Purpose must be submitted.) Documents are stored in student files and many documents are scanned electronically.

## **SECTION 7: FILE REVIEW**

There are numerous reasons why a student's file needs to be reviewed. This most often occurs when a student is selected for verification or when the ISIR contains C-Codes that required resolution. However, files can be reviewed for any number of reasons, including when a student asks questions about their account. Anytime the Financial Aid Office is made aware of conflicting information or information that needs further review, the office resolves the situation by working with the student. This often means collecting additional documentation.

## **7.1 Verification**

### **7.1.1 Selection of Applicants to be Verified**

Roughly 30% of the students that attend SAGU will be selected by the Department of Education for the verification process. Some students that submit for a change of dependency or professional judgment or have unusual circumstances or conflicting information could be manually selected for verification by the school.

SAGU verifies any ISIR that is selected by the Department of Education. The only exception to this is when a student's ISIR is selected for verification after they are no longer enrolled for the current academic year and aid received when they were enrolled has already been disbursed. Any professional judgment requests or change of dependency requests must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office.

### **7.1.2 Acceptable Documentation & Forms**

Collection of documents must be uniform and consistent, across the student population.

Students selected for verification will be will be required to submit specific forms to the financial aid office. Forms that could be required include but are not limited to:

- Verification Worksheet
- Parent/Student Tax Return Transcript
- Parent/Student W-2s
- No W-2 Form
- Low Income/Non-Tax Filer form
- SNAP/Food Stamps Document
- Child Support Paid Document
- Untaxed Income Document
- Statement of Educational Purpose
- Unaccompanied Youth Form
- Ineligible PLUS Borrower Form
- Statement for Previous Loan Discharge
- Special Circumstances Form
- Dependency Change Request Form
- Texas Residency Form
- Financial Aid Suspension Appeal Form

### **7.1.3 Data Elements to be Verified**

The Department of ED has long stated that financial aid administrators must judge when a given circumstance might reasonable constitute conflicting information and that FAAs do not have to be tax experts when dealing with information reported by students and parents.

Adjusted gross income, US Income tax paid, household size, number enrolled in

college and certain untaxed income and benefits, along with other data elements must be verified and selected and verified for each student.

FAAs are required to know whether or not an individual was required to file a tax return; what an individual's correct filing status should be; and that an individual cannot be claimed as an exemption by more than one person.

Information from the Verification Worksheet is used to compare what is submitted on the FAFSA. Corrections will be made from the worksheet to the ISIR by the FAA. Tax documents must be reviewed line by line to ensure the information on the FAFSA matches the taxes. W2's will be reviewed to ensure everything matches the FAFSA, including any contributions to a tax deferred pension or savings plan.

#### **7.1.4 Conflicting & Inaccurate Information**

Upon learning of a discrepancy between the FAFSA and verification documents, the school is required to correct the information.

The university is required to update the correct information on the ISIR. The school may do so by submitting corrections through FAA Access to CPS, online. All conflicting information must be resolved before the student can be packaged and have aid disbursed.

#### **7.1.5 Student Notification of Verification Changes**

When an error is found during verification, the school will send the corrections via FAA Access.

If the error changes the student's award that were initially packaged, then the system will generate a revised award letter to notify the student of their change in eligibility.

#### **7.1.6 Awarding & Disbursement of Funds During Verification**

SAGU chooses not to award students until required verification or any other required resolution has been completed. This also means that students will not have any FAFSA based awards disbursed prior to required verification being complete. It is important for students to submit any required documents as soon as possible so that their award and disbursement is not delayed any longer than necessary.

## **7.2 Database Matches, Reject Codes, & C-Codes Clearance**

There are a variety of issues that can appear on a student's ISIR that must be resolved prior to awarding financial aid. These can include database matches, reject codes and comment codes (C-Codes). When importing a new ISIR into CAMS, the system loads required documents based on any issues that require resolution. These documents are set up each academic year based on any changes from the prior year. Students are informed of the documents they need to submit or steps to complete the required resolution. Financial Aid Office staff members (typically counselors) process all documents until the required resolution is complete. Once completed, all documents are signed off on in CAMS and the student is then awarded the aid that they are eligible to receive.

### **7.3 Review of Subsequent ISIR Transactions – Postscreening**

The university is required to review all subsequent transactions for a student, even if you already have verified an earlier transaction.

First determine if the EFC or any of the “C” flags have changed or if there are new comments or NSLDS information. If the EFC has not changed and there are no changes in the “C” flags or NSLDS information, generally no action is required. If the EFC does change but it either doesn’t affect the amount or type of aid received or the data elements that changed were already verified, no action is required. But if the EFC changes and the pertinent data elements were not verified, then you must investigate. Of course, anytime a “C” flag changes or NSLDS data has been modified, you must resolve any conflicts.

## 7.4 Verification of Enrollment Status

Enrollment status refers to the level at which a student is enrolled each semester. SAGU uses the enrollment statuses of full time, three quarter time, half time and less than half time for the awarding of financial aid. (Not all programs use all enrollment statuses.) Enrollment statuses are defined in the undergraduate and graduate academic catalogs.

Undergraduate students are typically awarded initially based on full time enrollment so that students can see the maximum amount of financial aid that they would be eligible to receive. Because the vast majority of SAGU graduate students that receive federal financial aid enroll half time, graduate students are typically awarded based on half time enrollment.

Students are informed in their award letter of the enrollment status that their financial aid package is based on, and they are instructed to contact the Financial Aid Office if they know that the enrollment status on the award letter is incorrect. In addition, when students finalize their registration (approve their bill) in the student portal, they are informed of the enrollment status that their pending aid is based off of and instructed to contact the Financial Aid Office if they are registering for a different number of hours than indicated there.

As of the financial aid census date (the end of that semester's 100% tuition refund withdrawal period), the Financial Aid Office locks in all financial aid awards based on the student's enrollment status as of that date. Students that added hours after approving their bill are repackaged and awards are adjusted/increased as needed based on their new enrollment status. Students that dropped hours after approving their bill are repackaged and awards are adjusted/decreased as needed based on their new enrollment status.

In addition, faculty members submit signed final roll sheets to the Registrar's Office to confirm that students have begun attendance in an on campus course or have completed the Course Enrollment Verification (CEV) or other coursework in an online course.

Generally, federal financial aid awards are not adjusted if a student drops a course after the census date. There are two specific exceptions to this.

- Students are required to be enrolled at least half time at the time their federal loans disburse. If a student is enrolled half time as of the census date but drops below half time prior to loan disbursement, then they are no longer eligible for student loans.
- When a student withdraws from all courses (including an unofficial withdrawal) or when they are administratively withdrawn, students can lose financial aid based upon several factors. The amount of aid they are allowed to keep and the amount that must be returned is calculated through the R2T4 (Return to Title IV) process.



## **SECTION 8: STUDENT BUDGETS**

### **8.1 Various Student Populations**

A student is assigned a specific budget population, based on the living arrangements, the number of hours they are taking and other associated costs.

## 8.2 How Budgets are Derived & Updated

The Cost of Attendance (COA) for a student is an estimate of that student's educational expenses for the period of enrollment. SAGU uses average expenses for students, rather than actual expenses. If a student is enrolled in a program that has extra fees or costs, such as lab fees, those fees are not added to the student's COA. Instead, a standard cost that is established for all students in a similar program.

A student's cost of attendance generally is the sum of the following:

- Tuition normally assessed for a student carrying an average academic workload
- Fees normally assessed for a student carrying an average academic workload.
- An allowance for loan fees.
- An allowance for books and supplies.
- An allowance for room and board.
- An allowance for transportation expenses.
- An allowance for miscellaneous personal expenses.

Budgets are based on program and housing. SAGU uses the follow COA categories:

- Undergraduate On Campus
- Undergraduate Off Campus
- Undergraduate With Parents
- Graduate Off Campus
- Doctoral Off Campus

Note: Budgets are also adjusted based on the various enrollment levels when a student enrolls less than full time. In most programs, these include three quarter time, half time and less than half time enrollment statuses.

SAGU has the authority to use professional judgment to adjust the cost of attendance on a case-by-case basis to allow for special circumstances.

### **8.3 Additional Costs**

There may be additional fees assessed on a per program basis. Fees are updated on an annual basis.

The university discloses any and all fees assessed to students via the SAGU website.

## **SECTION 9: AWARDING & PACKAGING FINANCIAL AID**

### **9.1 Automatic Vs. Manual Awarding/Packaging**

The primary strategy for awarding and packaging financial aid is to do everything possible via automation (called Prioritized Packaging in CAMS) vs. manual. Automated awarding helps insure that accidental manual mistakes do not occur. Mistakes can happen from time to time, but it is our goal to avoid those and be as accurate as possible while complying with all regulations.

Therefore, in the awarding of federal aid, the SAGU Financial Aid Offices follows an automatic awarding and packaging strategy. Each award type is programmed into the CAMS software to award eligible students based on that year's federal regulations. This also helps insure that students are not awarded until verification is complete and all missing documents are resolved. For example, students are awarded Pell grant based on Pell grant award queries in CAMS and the Pell chart/table which is imported into CAMS. Student loans are typically automatically awarded based on dependency status and lifetime limit data from the student's ISIR as well as grade level information from the student's academic record in CAMS.

Some awards require manual packaging. For example, all institutional scholarships have to be entered manually into CAMS. In addition, when receiving a PLUS loan application, a student's PLUS loan (if approved) or additional unsubsidized loan (if denied) has to be entered manually. But, our standard operating procedure is to allow CAMS to award and package all students based on preprogrammed settings that comply with all federal regulations.

### **9.2 Awarding & Packaging Philosophies**

SAGU's awarding and packaging philosophy is based upon the goal of helping as many students as possible be able to afford the cost of a Christian higher education. We strive to fulfill the mission of SAGU by providing accurate, efficient and courteous service to students, parents and other guests while administering all financial aid programs with integrity and compliance to all federal, state and institutional regulations. When awarding various awards with limited funds available, the primary goal is to help students be able to pay off their bill each semester.

#### **9.2.1 Federal Financial Aid**

As you can imagine, there are numerous regulations required in the administration of federal financial aid. Some have been outlined throughout this manual, but it is impossible to list all of them in this publication. The Financial Aid Office follows the regulations outlined each academic year in the Federal Student Aid Handbook as well as other federal publications. Our primary goal regarding federal student aid is to award students the maximum amount they are eligible to receive, minimize any unnecessary loan debt and comply with all federal regulations.

### **9.2.2 State Financial Aid**

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) authorizes SAGU to award funds from the state of Texas, including Tuition Equalization Grant (TEG), Texas Work Study, College Access Loan (CAL) and Be On Time (BOT) loan. SAGU follows all state guidelines to ensure that only eligible students receive state financial aid awards. All state funds are limited to a certain allocation each academic year. Therefore, the Financial Aid Office takes the philosophy to award funds when possible to students with the greatest amount of financial need and those that need the most help in paying off the remaining balance of their school bill.

### **9.2.3 Other Outside Financial Aid**

Students are encouraged to apply for outside scholarships. In addition, students can take advantage of outside/alternative private loans as needed. SAGU awards and disburses all outside financial aid per the instructions and requirements of the organization funding the award.

### **9.2.4 Institutional Financial Aid**

Though some scholarships are based upon merit, the Financial Aid Office considers financial need whenever possible before awarding any kind of institutional financial aid.

## **9.2 Available Funds & Number of Eligible Students**

The only federal aid programs that are limited to a certain amount, or number of students, as determined by the school are FSEOG and FWS. State programs are limited based on annual allocations. These include TEG, BOT and CAL.

Student eligibility for limited funds will be determined by the submission date of a clear ISIR, as well as their EFC.

### **9.3 Determining Award Amounts**

Award amounts are often determined by federal guidelines. This includes awards like Pell grant, subsidized and unsubsidized loans and FSEOG. Pell grant uses an annual Pell chart released by ED and direct loans are awarded based on a student's grade level, annual loan limits, financial need and lifetime aggregate loan usage based on federal mandated limits. The state of Texas sets a limit on the amount of TEG a student can receive, but students can be offered less. The Financial Aid Office currently awards \$3000 for the year (\$1500 per semester) as the initial award amount of TEG. Those award amounts can be increased or decreased based upon financial need and available funding. FWS award are set at \$2318 for the year (\$1159 per semester) at the time of initial award. This is the amount an average student could earn if they worked all of their available hours over the course of a 15 week semester. The amount is adjusted at the end of each semester to reflect how much the student actually earned.

Institutional awards are based on each award's individual criteria. Some grants are a certain percentage off tuition. Therefore, the award amount changes based on the cost of tuition and the number of hours a student takes. Other awards have standard amounts (academic scholarship, for example). The admissions office also awards new students various scholarships based on financial need and availability of funds.

## **9.4 Package Construction**

When packaging student awards, all grants, or gift aid, and subsidized funds should be awarded prior to any unsubsidized or private loans being awarded.

Once grants, gift aid, and subsidized funds have been awarded, if the student needs additional funding then the unsubsidized loan may be awarded next.

If the parent is denied a PLUS loan, then the student may be awarded additional unsubsidized funds.



## **9.5 Packaging Other Educational Resources**

Student financial aid awards continue to evolve throughout the school year as they receive new awards or there are updates on a student's FAFSA. When a student receives a new outside award after their initial award has been sent to them, the award package is redone based upon the student's financial need. Work study and loans are adjusted before a student's grant would be adjusted.

## **9.6 Award Package Notification**

When a student has been awarded with their financial aid they are mailed an award letter. This letter will list all the aid that the student has qualified for and instructions on how to secure the aid for the school year.

### **9.6.1 Award Package Revisions & Recalculations Policy**

Financial aid awarding is a continually evolving process. Students are often awarded federal aid first after their FAFSA is received and any required verification or resolution is completed. As other awards are received (scholarships, grants, additional loans, etc.) the students financial aid package is reevaluated. New scholarships and grants affect a student's financial need. If a student no longer has enough financial need to receive a need-based award (for example, subsidized loans), their award package will be adjusted accordingly. If a student has already been awarded to their COA and then receives a new award, their package will be adjusted to bring the entire package down to the student's COA.

When a student has already been awarded and a new ISIR is received, the student's award package is reevaluated to determine if any changes need to be made and any conflicting information is resolved.

Anytime there is a change to the student's award(s) a revised award letter is sent and/or emailed. The student can also see and changes to their financial aid in their student portal.

## **9.7 Over awards & Overpayments**

An over award or overpayment must be resolved before the student can receive any further aid. When a student has been over awarded and it is SAGU's fault, SAGU returns all governmental funds which reduces the amount of aid the student receives and increases their outstanding school bill. The student does not have to pay back an over award or overpayment to the government because SAGU returns the funds. The student must pay any new amount owed on their school bill. When a student has an over award or overpayment from another school, the student must resolve the over award or overpayment and provide SAGU with documentation showing that it has been resolved before the Financial Aid Office will award additional financial aid.

## **SECTION 10: PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT (PJ)**

### **10.1 PJ Authority and Individuals Who May Exercise It**

The Senior Director or Assistant Director of Financial Aid may use professional judgment (PJ), on a case-by-case basis only, to alter the data elements used to calculate the EFC. The professional judgment alteration is valid only at the school exercising such judgment. You may submit an adjustment without a signature from the parent or student, and the adjustment must be done electronically, via FAA Access.

The reason for the adjustment must be documented in the student's file, and it must relate to the special circumstances that differentiate the student. You can also use a professional judgment to adjust the student's cost of attendance. You must resolve any inconsistent or conflicting information before making any adjustments.

## **SECTION 11: DISBURSEMENTS**

### **11.1 Definition of Disbursements**

Financial aid is considered disbursed when funds are applied to the student's ledger. Each financial aid award has various statuses as the award goes through the process of being disbursed. A status of "OK to Pay 2" signifies that the Financial Aid Office has sent the award to the Student Billing Office to be applied to the student's ledger.

## **11.2 Responsibility for Disbursement of Funds and Disbursement Methods**

The Financial Aid Office assures and maintains the accurate and appropriate awarding of aid funds. The Student Billing Office is responsible for crediting the funds to the student's account. This maintains a separation of duties between the party that awards aid and the party that disburses it.

In most cases, the method of disbursement involves the Financial Aid Office transferring a student's award to the Student Billing Office by creating a batch inside the CAMS software. The funds show on the student's ledger after the Student Billing Office processes and releases that batch. Sometimes a student will receive an outside scholarship check after the start of the semester. When this happens, the Financial Aid Office will enter the award as a part of the student's financial aid package, and the Student Billing Office will manually enter the funds on the student's billing ledger.

### **11.3 Disbursement Procedures**

The type of financial aid determines the disbursement procedure. In general, federal aid like Pell grant and direct loans are originated and disbursed to COD with an assigned disbursement date. Once the disbursement is approved by COD and the disbursement date has arrived, funds are disbursed to student accounts and applied to each student's ledger by the Student Billing Office. Once funds are applied to a student's account, the Accounting Office draws down the funds from G5. This procedure ensures that request for federal cash do not exceed the amount of funds SAGU needs immediately to make aid disbursements to students.

Other outside financial aid is often received through EFT. When this occurs, the Accounting Office lets the Financial Aid Office know that funds have been received through EFT. The Financial Aid Office sends the electronic batch through CAMS and the Student Billing Office applies the funds to the student's billing ledger.

In terms of institutional financial aid, funds are applied to student accounts after the end of late registration each semester, and the Accounting Office transfers funds accordingly. Outside scholarships and other financial aid are applied to student accounts after the end of late registration and as funds are received.

## 11.4 Disbursement Schedule

Funds are generally disbursed each semester according to the example schedule below. Funds are never disbursed to a student's billing ledger until they have finalized their registration by approving their bill in the student portal.

- Pell Grant—For students that have finalized their registration by approving their bill in the student portal, SAGU will begin disbursing Pell grant funds as early as seven days prior to the start of the semester. Generally, all Pell grant funds will be disbursed by the Tuesday after the census date (last day to withdraw with 100% tuition refund). When an enrolled student submits their FAFSA after the start of the semester or completes verification after the start of the semester, then any Pell grant they are eligible to receive will be disbursed after awarding is complete and the Pell award has been originated and disbursed to the COD website. This can be done throughout the semester as students finalize their FAFSA and become eligible for a Pell grant.
- Direct Student Loans and PLUS—Students enrolled at least half time must complete three steps in order to receive direct loans funds. These include accepting the loan in the student portal, completing a Master Promissory Note (MPN) and completing loan entrance counseling. (Some PLUS borrowers do not have to complete loan entrance counseling.) In most cases, students complete all of the required steps prior to the start of the semester. In this scenario, direct loans are disbursed the Tuesday after the census date (last day to withdraw with 100% tuition refund). When a student has not completed all three steps, loans will not be disbursed on that date. Once a student does finalize all steps during the semester, direct loan funds will generally be disbursed within seven to ten days.
- FSEOG—FSEOG funds are generally disbursed on the Tuesday after the census date (last day to withdraw with 100% tuition refund). When FSEOG funds are still available after this date, they will be awarded to eligible students during the semester and disbursed within seven days of funds being awarded.
- Private/Alternative Loans—Private/alternative loans (including CAL and BOT state loans) are disbursed to enrolled students once funds are received from the lender.
- TEG—After the census date (last day to withdrawal with 100% tuition refund), the Financial Aid Office will request TEG funds from the state of Texas for all students eligible for disbursement. Funds usually arrive within ten to fourteen days. Once funds do arrive through EFT, they will be disbursed to student ledgers within three days. TEG funds are requested from the state throughout the semester as TEG is awarded and new students become eligible for disbursement and are applied to students' ledgers within three days once funds are received.
- Institutional Aid and Donor Scholarships—Generally, institutional scholarships and grants and donor scholarships are disbursed within two weeks after the census date (last day to withdraw with 100% tuition refund).
- Outside Scholarships— Outside scholarships are disbursed to student accounts after the census date (last day to withdraw with 100% tuition refund) or as funds are received throughout the semester.
- Other Aid—Any other financial aid is disbursed to student accounts after the census date (last day to withdraw with 100% tuition refund) or as funds are received throughout the semester.



## **11.5 Disbursement Notification**

Students and parents are notified of disbursement in the student portal. Awards are applied to their billing ledger in the student portal. Additionally, the Student Billing Office sends monthly statement notifying students not only of their outstanding balance but also of the aid that has been applied to their account and the rights they have regarding the cancelation of any disbursed loans.

## **SECTION 12: SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

### **12.1 Process Overview & Responsibilities**

Students must make Satisfactory Academic Progress in their course of study to be eligible for financial aid. Federal regulations require schools to develop and apply a consistent and reasonable standard of academic progress. Undergraduate students must successfully complete at least 70% of the courses they attempt and maintain a cumulative GPA of at least a 2.0. Graduate students must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least a 3.0 and complete their degree within 6 years of enrolling in the graduate school. Failure to maintain SAP will place a student on financial aid suspension.

The Financial Aid Office checks each student's academic progress at the end of their enrollment each academic year and notifies them through mail and by emailing LionMail addresses if they are placed on suspension. The notification gives the options available to them including the option to submit an appeal of suspension.

A full explanation of the SAP policy and requirements can be found on our Policies & Disclosures page at <http://www.sagu.edu/financial-aid/policies-and-disclosures>.

## 12.2 Appeal Process

If placed on financial aid suspension, the student may petition for the Financial Aid Department to consider mitigating circumstances that resulted in inability to meet the SAP requirements. The appeal should include an appeal letter with an explanation and any supporting documentation (i.e. medical statements, divorce documents, letters of unemployment, etc.) of the reason(s) the minimum academic standards required by SAP policy are not achieved. Appeals should also include an academic plan. Additionally, students are encouraged to submit a letter of endorsement/recommendation from an SAGU faculty/staff member. The appeal letter and documentation should also demonstrate the adverse circumstances have been resolved.

All appeals will be reviewed within 7 business days of the Financial Aid Office's receipt of a complete appeal. Notification of the review will be sent via SAGU email (LionMail).

The Financial Aid Suspension Appeal Form can be found on our forms page at <http://www.sagu.edu/financial-aid/financial-aid-forms>.

## **SECTION 13: RETURN OF TITLE IV FUNDS**

### **13.1 Introduction**

The law specifies how SAGU must determine the amount of Title IV program assistance that you earn if you withdraw from school. The Title IV programs offered at SAGU that are covered by this law are: Federal Pell Grants, Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans, Direct PLUS Loans, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG), and Federal Perkins Loans.

Though your aid is posted to your account at the start of each semester, you earn the funds as you complete the semester. If you withdraw during the semester, the amount of Title IV program assistance that you have earned up to that point is determined by a specific formula. If you received (or SAGU or your parent received on your behalf) less assistance than the amount that you earned, you may be able to receive those additional funds. If you received more assistance than you earned, the excess funds must be returned by SAGU and/or you.

A Return of Title IV (R2T4) funds calculation is performed when a student who is awarded federal funds withdraws from a semester of study. The Financial Aid Office uses software provided by the U.S. Department of Education to complete this calculation. The student's account statement and financial aid record is used in conjunction with this software.

## 13.2 Estimate of Aid Earned or Aid That May Need to be Returned

The amount of assistance that you have earned is determined on a pro rata basis. For example, if you completed 30% of the semester, you earn 30% of the assistance you were originally scheduled to receive. Once you have completed more than 60% of the semester, you earn all the assistance that you were scheduled to receive for that semester. This means that if a student receiving federal Title IV aid withdraws after completing 60% of the semester, no Title IV funds will be returned. The student is considered to have earned 100% of the Title IV aid for the semester.

Here's an example of how you can estimate the percentage of Title IV aid that you have earned in a semester (enrollment period).

$$\frac{\text{Enrolled Days}}{\text{Days in the Enrollment Period}} = \% \text{ of Title IV Earned By Student}$$

You can also compute a rough estimate of the amount that you may be required to repay prior to withdrawing by using the [U.S. Department of Education's Treatment of Title IV Funds When A Student Withdraws](#) form.

### **13.3 Unofficial Withdrawals and Earning All Non-Passing Grades**

If you fail to earn a passing grade in at least one of your courses (i.e., all F's, NC's, all I's or a combination of non passing grades) during a semester, you are considered to have, for purposes of federal Title IV funds, unofficially withdrawn from the university. As a result, a federal withdrawal calculation must be performed to determine the amount of Title IV funds that you must repay. The only exception is when SAGU can document (within 30 days of the end of the semester) that you should not have been considered unofficially withdrawn. For example, that you were academically engaged after the 60-percent point of the semester or that you did not meet the requirements for administrative withdrawal in an online course.

Once semester grades post, and if you fail to earn a passing grade in at least one of your courses, SAGU will perform the federal withdrawal (Return of Title IV) calculation.

### **13.4 Post-Withdrawal Disbursement**

If you did not receive all of the funds that you earned, you may be due a post-withdrawal disbursement. If your post-withdrawal disbursement includes loan funds, SAGU must get your permission before we can disburse them. We will contact you via LionMail (SAGU email) to offer you a post-withdrawal loan disbursement. Therefore, it is important that you continue to check your LionMail even after withdrawing from a semester. You may choose to decline some or all of the loan funds so that you don't incur additional debt. SAGU may automatically use all or a portion of your post-withdrawal disbursement of grant funds for tuition, fees, and room and board charges (as contracted with the school). SAGU needs your permission to use the post-withdrawal grant disbursement for all other school charges, and this permission is received each semester by each student when you approve your bill and agree to the terms and conditions of registration in your mySAGU student portal.

There are some Title IV funds that you may have been scheduled to receive that cannot be disbursed to you once you withdraw because of other eligibility requirements. For example, a student that was awarded federal loans but has not accepted the loans in the mySAGU student portal or completed the required MPN or loan entrance counseling cannot receive a post-withdrawal disbursement of loan funds.

### **13.5 Returning Title IV Funds**

If you receive (or SAGU or your parent receives on your behalf) excess Title IV program funds that must be returned, SAGU must return a portion of the excess equal to the lesser of:

1. Your institutional charges multiplied by the unearned percentage of your funds, or
2. The entire amount of excess funds.

SAGU must return this amount even if we didn't keep this amount of your Title IV program funds. If SAGU is not required to return all of the excess funds, you must return the remaining amount.

Any loan funds that you must return, you (or your parent for a Direct PLUS Loan) repay in accordance with the terms of the promissory note. That is, you make scheduled payments to the holder of the loan over a period of time.



## **13.6 Overpayments**

Any amount of unearned grant funds that you must return is called an overpayment. The maximum amount of a grant overpayment that you must repay is half of the grant funds you received or were scheduled to receive. You do not have to repay a grant overpayment if the original amount of the overpayment is \$50 or less. You must make arrangements with SAGU or the Department of Education to return any unearned grant funds.

### **13.7 Non-Attendance**

If you are a Pell Grant, Iraq-Afghanistan Service Grant (IASG) or TEACH Grant recipient, federal regulations require you to have begun attending the courses for which you are enrolled and receiving these grants. If on the final roll sheet distributed to instructors to confirm attendance, your instructor indicates that you are not attending a course, you are assumed not to have begun attendance for that course. Your grant will then be adjusted or cancelled based on the courses you have actually begun attending.

If you fail to begin attendance in all of the courses for which you are registered, you will have failed to establish eligibility for financial aid. In this situation, you will be required to repay all of the financial aid that you have received.

### **13.8 Last Date of Attendance Determination for Programs That Take Attendance**

For programs that take attendance (undergraduate on campus courses), the Financial Aid Office uses the student's last date of attendance in calculating whether or not Title IV funds have to be returned to Federal Student Aid. These attendance records are received through Blackboard or instructor records. Additionally, other academic records in Blackboard may be used to help determine the last date of attendance such as when a student submitted an assignment or completed an assessment in Blackboard.

### **13.9 Last Date of Attendance Determination for Programs That Do Not Take Attendance**

For programs that do not take attendance (distance education and graduate on campus courses), the Financial Aid Office uses the withdrawal date in calculating whether or not Title IV funds have to be returned to Federal Student Aid. When a student in a program that does not take attendance is administratively withdrawn or when a student unofficially withdraws, the Financial Aid Office will use the midpoint of the semester in calculating whether or not funds have to be returned to Federal Student Aid, unless SAGU can show documentation of the student's last academically related activity.

### 13.10 Federal vs. Institutional Refund Policy

The requirements for federal Title IV program funds when you withdraw are separate from any refund policy that SAGU has regarding institutional grants and scholarships or other non-federal financial aid. Therefore, **federal funds may not cover all unpaid institutional charges due to a student's withdrawal, and you may still owe funds to SAGU to cover any unpaid institutional charges.** SAGU may also charge you for any Title IV program funds that we were required to return. When you approved your bill for the semester, you were emailed a copy of SAGU's refund policy to your LionMail account. If you do not have access to this or are not familiar with SAGU's refund policy, you should contact the Student Billing Office at [studentbilling@sagu.edu](mailto:studentbilling@sagu.edu) or (972)825-4645 to ask for a copy.

### **13.11 Withdrawal Requirements and Procedures**

You may contact the Registrar's Office at [registrar@sagu.edu](mailto:registrar@sagu.edu) or (972)825-4640 so that they can provide you with the requirements and procedures for officially withdrawing from school.

When considering withdrawing from the university, students are encouraged to contact the Financial Aid Office first to see how the withdrawal could affect their aid. The Financial Aid Office will assist the student in making an informed decision. Students can contact Financial Aid at [financialaid@sagu.edu](mailto:financialaid@sagu.edu) or by calling (972)825-4730.

### **13.12 Requirements and Deadlines for R2T4 Calculations and Return of Title IV Aid**

The following list outlines the requirements and deadlines for the return of Title IV funds.

- Determining withdrawal date: 30 days after the end of earlier of the following...(1) Semester (payment or enrollment period), (2) Academic year in which the student withdraw, or (3) Educational program from which student withdrew.
- Return of unearned Title IV funds: No later than 45 days after the date SAGU determined the student withdrew.
- Post-withdrawal disbursement to student's account: No later than 180 days after the date SAGU determined the student withdrew
- Written notification providing the student (or parent) the opportunity to accept all or part of a post-withdrawal disbursement of Title IV loan funds to the student's account: Within 30 days of SAGU's determination that the student withdrew
- Written notification of student's eligibility for a post-withdrawal disbursement of Title IV loan funds in excess of outstanding current (educationally related) charges: Within 30 days of SAGU's determination that the student withdrew
- Post-withdrawal disbursement to student for earned Title IV funds in excess of outstanding current (educationally related) charges: From the date SAGU determined the student withdrew...(1) No later than 180 days for loans and (2) No later than 45 days for grants
- Notification to student of grant overpayment: Within 30 days of the date SAGU determined that the student withdrew.
- Referral of student to Debt Resolution Services: As soon as possible.
- Student (or parent) deadline to submit response instructing SAGU to make a post-withdrawal disbursement: Deadline is given in writing when SAGU makes the offer of a post-withdrawal disbursement.
- Notification to student (or parent) of outcome of late request for a post-withdrawal disbursement to student: As soon as possible.
- Student's deadline to return any unearned Title IV funds: (1) For loans, according to the terms of the loan and (2) for grants, within 45 days of the date SAGU sent or was required to send notice (whichever is earlier).

### **13.13 Additional Questions**

If you have questions about your Title IV program funds, you can contact the Financial Aid Office at [financialaid@sagu.edu](mailto:financialaid@sagu.edu) or (972)825-4730. You may also call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at (800)4-FEDAID [(800)433-3243]. TTY users may call (800)730-8913. Information is also available on Student Aid on the Web at [www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov).



## **SECTION 14: TITLE IV FRAUD**

### **14.1 Student Fraud**

SAGU refers applicants who are suspected of having engaged in fraud or other criminal misconduct in connection with the Title IV programs to the Department of Education's (ED's) Office of Inspector General (OIG). Though rare, fraud can occur when a student turns in documents that are incomplete, misleading, inaccurate or contain a forged signature.

## **SECTION 15: AUDITS**

### **15.1 Audit Process**

Federal regulations require the Financial Aid Office to have its records and student files audited. SAGU is audited by an outside accounting firm on an annual basis. The Accounting Office schedules the audit and the auditor files the audit with the Department of Education each year. In addition to financial aid records, the Accounting Office and Student Billing Offices are audited each year as a part of the same audit to insure that all financial statements are in compliance and submitted as required and on time.

Auditors review a sample of student aid files to ensure that the Financial Aid Office is in compliance with Federal policies. The auditors submit a preliminary memorandum of findings to the Director of Financial Aid who conducts research and prepares a response addressing resolution of the specific discrepancy and appropriate procedures to correct faulty processing.

The only preparation for the audit is to cooperate with the auditors' requests. Typically, the auditors will randomly select a specific number of students from each of the Title IV programs. The files are pulled and given to the auditors. Any additional assistance requested is responded to promptly.

A complete listing of financial aid audit guidelines is listed in the Audit Guide published by the U.S. Department of Education.

The Director of Financial Aid is the liaison between the Financial Aid Office and the auditors.