Distance Education

Summary/Purpose: Distance Education programs and financial aid

The University of Mississippi offers many opportunities for students to participate in programs off campus. These include study abroad as well as special workshops, camps and other experiences not offered on our traditional schedule.

Some of these programs are administered directly by the University of Mississippi and earn University of Mississippi credits. Others are administered by a "host" institution and credits earned in the programs appear on a student’s transcript as transfer hours. These latter programs require a Consortium Contract between the University of Mississippi and the "host" institution. The difference in program administration affects how we process financial aid for various programs.

In general, a student may not receive institutional and state aid unless they are participating in a program that receives Ole Miss resident credit. (For example, students participating in non-Ole Miss programs are not eligible for State Aid such as MTAG, MESG, or William Winter, etc. They are also not eligible for institutional or foundation Scholarships such as Academic Excellence, Luckyday, Non-Resident Alumni, etc.)

In the case of a Consortium Contract, students may request federal student financial aid (such as Pell Grant, Direct Loans, or Direct PLUS Loans) or a private (alternative) loan to help defray the expenses of off-campus programs.

In order to receive most forms of federal student aid for any term, students must enroll at least half-time. Half-time enrollment is 5 hours for graduate and law students, or 6 hours for undergraduate and pharmacy students.

The Office of Financial Aid is responsible for calculating awards, disbursing aid, monitoring satisfactory progress and other student eligibility requirements, keeping records, approving disbursement of FSA funds and returning funds if the student withdraws from the program.

Study Abroad

Students should determine whether the program will earn University of Mississippi credits or whether credits earned will be transfer credits. The Study Abroad Office can be contacted for this information at http://www.olemiss.edu/abroad. Then a Financial Aid Advisor should be consulted to determine what funding will be available.

For programs offered during the summer, financial aid will be packaged according to students’ remaining eligibility for the current academic year since the summer terms are considered the end of an award year. (Federal Pell eligibility may be an exception.)

Students must be able to cover advance expenses (air fare, deposits, etc.) on their own until financial aid awards are available. Most aid cannot be disbursed in advance of the program.
All Programs Offered Through Other Institutions

- Students whose programs are administered by another institution must complete a Consortium Contract with the host institution. Please contact the Office of Financial Aid to initiate this agreement at least six weeks prior to the beginning of the program.
- Student must provide the Office of Financial Aid a brochure, printed material or web site containing the details of the program in which the student wishes to participate.
- Student must submit a completed Transfer Credit Course Approval Form to the Study Abroad Office for "out of country" programs or a Permission to Transfer Form to their department or dean confirming that the credits earned in the program will transfer back and be counted toward their degree requirements.
- Complete a Direct Deposit Form with the Office of the Bursar to ensure timely delivery of funds. http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/bursar/UMFinancialAid--DirectDepositInformation.htm
- Student must expect to be billed by the other institution and not the University of Mississippi. The University of Mississippi Office of the Bursar will deliver financial aid proceeds and the student must arrange to handle the bill directly with the other institution.
- Student must contact the Office of Financial Aid in writing if they withdraw from the classes covered by the Consortium Contract. Aid already disbursed may need to be repaid. Pending aid will be withdrawn from the student's award package.

Correspondence Courses (offered by the Office of Independent Study)

When the student enrolls for a correspondence course, his/her bursar account will be charged with the appropriate tuition and fees. The correspondence course tuition fee is a separate/additional charge, on top of any fees owed for classes taken on the main campus or at the satellite centers. (Therefore, if the student is enrolled as a full-time student with 12 or more hours, the correspondence course tuition charge will still be assessed as well as a full-time campus tuition charge.)

Most institutional scholarships (such as Academic Excellence and University Foundation Scholarships), will not accept correspondence courses as part of their enrollment requirements. No state aid including MESG and MTAG will allow correspondence courses to be used to fulfill the enrollment requirement. Faculty/Staff and Child of Faculty/Staff scholarships can be used to pay for Correspondence Courses.

A student may receive some types of federal financial aid when enrolled in correspondence courses. However, there are requirements that must be met before any aid will be released to the student's bursar account. The student meet with a financial aid advisor to determine eligibility and aid amounts at least two weeks before the beginning of the semester or term of enrollment. If a student does not meet with a financial aid advisor, the student will not be able to have the course considered for purposes of federal aid. In general, the student must complete the mid-course exam before the hours can be counted.