Timing Considerations
Federal Financial Aid Eligibility for U.S. Students
Submitter: Mike Macon
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1. What is the process or action?
   New programs that prepare students for gainful employment. Gainful employment programs must:
   1) be at least one academic year in duration
   2) lead to a certificate or non-degree recognized credential and
   3) prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation) or add new locations where 50% or more of a Middle States approved program is offered must first be reported to the U.S. Department of Education for approval. In return, Approval must be received by the Student Financial Aid Office (Linda Anderson) from the US Department of Education before CMU students participating in said program are eligible to receive Title IV federal aid (for undergraduate students: Pell Grants, SEOG, Perkins Loans, Federal Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans, PLUS Loans; for graduate students: Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans, Graduate PLUS Loans). In some cases, students will rely on the receipt of federal financial aid to pay for the program and will not be able to pay for the program without eligibility for such aid – following the program approval.

2. What office/staff member oversees this process?
   Linda Anderson, the Director of Student Financial Aid.

3. When does this process or action usually occur within the CURRENT New Academic Program process?
   This process usually occurs towards the end of the New Academic Program approval process and after the academic department has reviewed the program. In the current process, the Director of Student Financial Aid is one of the final signoffs on the Transmittal Form and the Program Code is already assigned.

4. What needs to happen before The Office of Student Financial Aid can act?
   The program should first be approved by the College Council, academic department head, academic dean and Provost. In some instances it is necessary to gain approval from the University’s accrediting agency.

5. What process occurs after the Office of Student Financial Aid takes action?
   The information is reported to the US Department of Education on the electronic application and the college receives electronic notification and approval. The process can take from 6 months to 1 year to complete.

6. What are the consequences if program materials are late for this process or action?
   The university cannot disburse Title IV funds to students enrolled in the programs or at the new locations prior to US Department of Education approval. Example: A graduate student qualifies
for $10,000 Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan and the funds will not be awarded and disbursed if the program is not approved for Title IV eligibility.

7. Are there any other issues that the CMU academic department should be aware of in regards to the timeline for new academic program approval process? New programs that are defined as Gainful Employment or new programs that offer approved programs at new or additional locations can add significant time to the approval process for Title IV eligibility.