UC San Diego

Tracking the Commencement of Academic Activity

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Overview

• Recent federal audit findings at several of our sister UC campuses have led to UCOP asking UC San Diego to track the commencement of academic activity for our students

• Additionally, if the commencement of academic activity is not verified, the student’s financial aid package will be adjusted, leading to a partial or complete loss of funds and the student being billed

• Starting in summer 2022, UC San Diego instructors will be required to certify whether students have commenced academic activity to satisfy the requirement
Enforcement of this regulation is increasing

- If we do not comply with this federal requirement, we are exposing UC San Diego to significant financial risk
- Noncompliance could also put our ability to award Title IV aid at risk
- In 2019 UC San Diego awarded $163.5 million in Federal Title IV aid
What is Academic Activity?

• Academic activity includes*:
  • Attending a class where there is the opportunity for direct interaction between the instructor and the students
  • Submitting an academic assignment
  • Taking an exam, an interactive tutorial, or computer-assisted instruction
  • Discussion board participation
  • One-on-one conversation with faculty about the class

• The instructor must document if a student has participated in class, as opposed to not showing up at all

• Students cannot self-certify – only an instructor can certify that academic activity has occurred

*2021-2022 Federal Student Aid Handbook, Volume 5, Chapter 2, page 5-76
34 CFR 668.22(l)(7) and 600.2
Tracking Academic Activity

• Commencement of academic activity must be documented during each academic term, for each student, in each class
  • Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer Sessions
  • We will begin Summer Session I 2022

• All students who receive Federal Title IV funds are subject to the requirements of the Department of Education (Ed), therefore the solution needs to encompass undergraduate students, graduate students, and professional school students

• If the commencement of academic activity cannot be verified, the student’s financial aid package must be adjusted and could lead to a loss of funds. Students who are deficient will be billed
Overview of Implementation

1. Instructors can log into the *Academic Activity Tracking System (AATS)* and indicate the commencement of academic activity for students in their classes

   OR

2. Instructors can assign a prebuilt assignment in Canvas

   THEN

3. Financial Aid will follow up with students and instructors, as necessary
1. Academic Activity Tracking System (AATS)

- Instructors can log into the **Academic Activity Tracking System (AATS)** and indicate the commencement of academic activity for students in their classes
  - [https://aats.ucsd.edu](https://aats.ucsd.edu)
- Instructors can also look up individual students in their classes or view lists of uncertified students
- FAS staff will be able to update the tool
2. Canvas Prebuilt Activities

- Developed in partnership with Teaching+ Learning Commons and Educational Technology Services
- There will be several assignments from which to choose
- After the student completes the assignment, the commencement of academic activity for that class is confirmed

Activity Overview

A short ice breaker activity for students. You can add your own responses to the questions to help students get to know you better as well.

For instructors who want:
- A short, informal activity to break the ice before the start of the class
- Want a brief activity with little to no follow up required

Sample

Happy Week 1!

Tell me about yourself by answering this brief survey. Your responses are private and this survey will not impact your course grade.

1. What’s your hometown?
2. What do you enjoy doing for fun?
3. What’s the best class you’ve taken, and why?
4. Is there anything you’re looking forward to about this class?
3. Financial Aid Follow-up

• The Financial Aid and Scholarships (FAS) Office will follow-up as needed with students and instructors
• FAS will adjust aid packages for students who have not been certified in enough units to earn their federal financial aid
• Students not certified in enough eligible units will be billed
• If academic activity can be later certified, federal aid may be reinstated within regulatory timelines
Sample Term Timeline – Fall Quarter 2022

- **September 16, 2022**
  - Campus CAA notice at start of term

- **September 22**
  - Start of instruction

- **October 6**
  - 10th day of instruction
  - **To students:**
    - Due to no CAA you are being billed

- **October 10**
  - FAS first follow-up with deficient students, and instructors who have not taken any action for a class

- **October 24**
  - FAS second follow-up to students, and instructors who have not taken any action for a class
  - **To instructors:**
    - Due to classes that are not certified, students are being billed

- **October 25**
  - Aid packages adjusted, students billed

**Note:**

In Summer Sessions, FAS tracking begins after week 1
Resources for Instructors/Questions?

- Training and help will be available:
  - Live training sessions during Summer and Fall
  - Help website and PDF document
  - One-on-one help as needed

- Questions?