



# INTRODUCTION TO FEDERAL COURSE PROGRAM OF STUDY

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

Office of Financial Aid

Office of the University Registrar

Degree Audit Systems & Support

## WHAT IS IT?

Course Program of Study is a federal regulation that mandates universities to award financial aid to students **ONLY for classes that are officially part of students' documented degree plans.** Any classes students take that deviate from what is prescribed on the degree plan are generally ineligible for financial aid.

Failure to comply with this regulation jeopardizes UTRGV's eligibility for Title IV funding, and subjects us to audit findings that may in turn jeopardize our regional accreditation.

**All students are  
subject to CPOS!**

# WHERE CAN RELATED REGS BE FOUND?

## **34 CFR 600.2**

- *Regular student:* A person who is enrolled or accepted for enrollment at an institution for the purpose of obtaining a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential offered by that institution.

## **34 CFR 668.32**

- A student is eligible to receive Title IV, HEA program assistance if the student either meets all of the requirements in paragraphs (a) through (m) of this section or meets the requirement in paragraph (n) of this section as follows: (a)(1) (i) Is a regular student enrolled, or accepted for enrollment, in an eligible program at an eligible institution;

## **2017–18 FSA Handbook, Vol. I - Student Eligibility, Chapter I - School-Determined Requirements (pp. 1-20)**

- If a student is enrolled in courses that do not count toward his degree, certificate, or other recognized credential, they cannot be used to determine enrollment status unless they are eligible remedial courses. This means you cannot award the student aid for classes that do not count toward his degree, certificate, or other recognized credential.

# WHICH AID TYPES ARE IMPACTED?

- **State/Insti'tl Aid:**

- TX Grant
- \* UTRGV Advantage

\* Institutional discretion for  
exception allowed



- **Federal Aid:**

- Direct Loans (Subsidized and Unsubsidized)
- PLUS Loans (Parent PLUS and Grad PLUS)
- Perkin's Loans
- Pell Grant/IASG
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
- Federal Work Study
- Federal Veterans Benefits

## WHO'S INVOLVED?

- Academic Advising
- Academic Affairs
- Degree Audit Systems & Support
- Health Affairs
- Office of the University Registrar
- Office of Financial Aid
- Student Service Centers (U Central and Call Central)

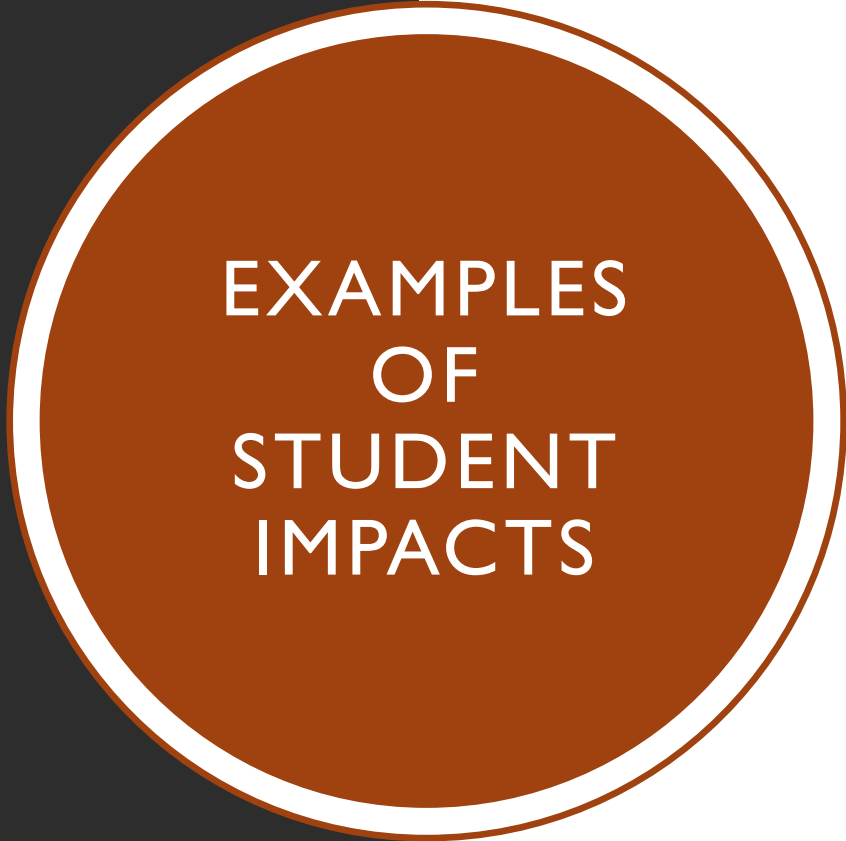
## WHEN WILL IT HAPPEN?



CPoS will be in place for Fall 2021. A communication campaign is being carried out to inform student through multiple outlets.

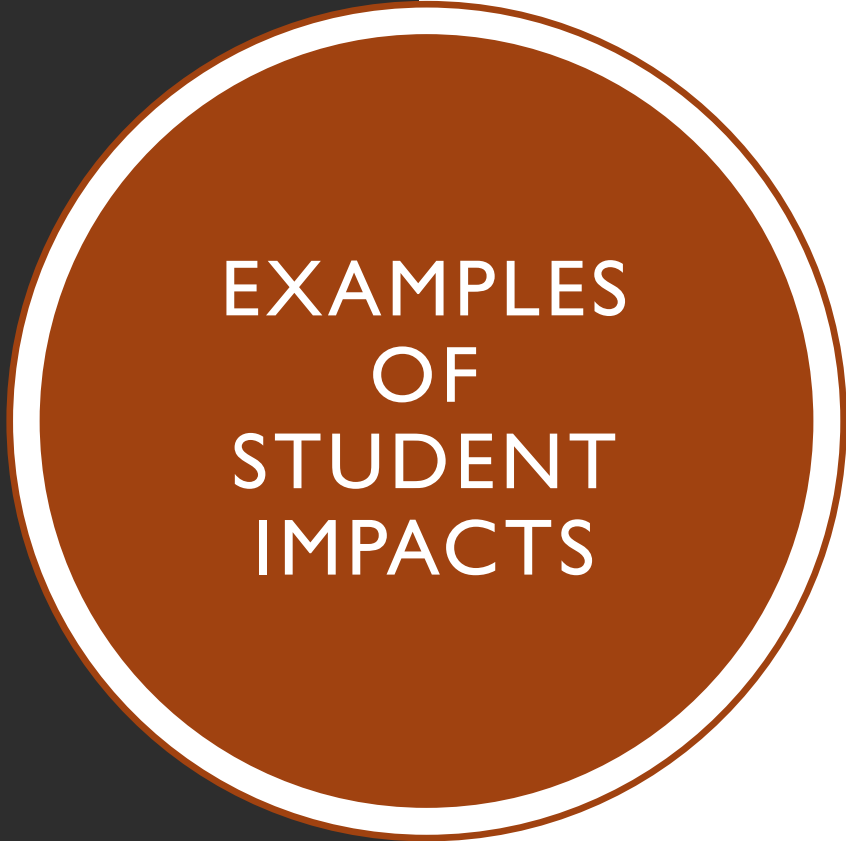


Fall 2021 class schedules and aid will be impacted. It will be the first term for which students could begin seeing decreased financial aid pay out.



## EXAMPLES OF STUDENT IMPACTS

- **Example 1:**
  - Student needs 6 hours to complete a program and wants to take another class that is not an elective and does not count towards degree. Title IV aid cannot be used to pay for these types of classes. Aid pays on 6 hours only.
- **Example 2:**
  - A student has only 1 class (3 hours) left to take to complete a program. There is nothing we can do to make the student eligible for financial aid. The student cannot pick up a class or two to reach Half-Time status to get aid. Note: Pell *can* be awarded at LTHT, and institutional aid *could* pay if the student is in her/his last 3 hrs. (handled ad-hoc).



## EXAMPLES OF STUDENT IMPACTS

- **Example 3:**
  - Student enrolls in 15 hours, but only 12 hours are degree-applicable. Aid pays on 12 hours only – which aligns with UTRGV’s tuition cap.
- **Example 4:**
  - Student declares a major in BIOL. Student is following a minor but has not declared it. Student enrolls in 9 hours for the major and *3 hours for the minor*. Aid pays on 9 hours only because the formal degree plan for that student’s official record does not account for courses in the intended (but undeclared) minor.



## WHAT CAN STUDENTS DO TO AVOID IMPACTS?

Students should **declare all majors, minors and/or concentrations by the start of registration** and well in advance of the first class day.

Students should strictly **adhere to their degree plans**, located online but also mapped out in Degree Works. Appointments with an **advisor** are encouraged as needed to discuss strategic plans for adhering to degree plans.

Course substitutions **MUST** be requested as soon as possible! If a course sub is not in place in Degree Works, the course for which approval for substitution is pending will **not** be eligible for financial aid.

WHAT CAN PROGRAM  
LEADERS, CHAIRS,  
FACULTY AND STAFF  
DO TO HELP?



Faculty and staff can **encourage** students to do the following:



Declare majors, minors and/or concentrations discussed ASAP



Follow their degree plans in Degree Works, and see advisors as needed



Request any course substitutions proactively and before the course to be subbed is taken



For faculty, work with the appropriate curriculum committee to be sure approved degree plans account for all iterations of classes acceptable for completion of the degree, **including PREREQUISITES**



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: *How will post-bacs be affected?*

A: A degree-seeking post-bac will not be affected so long as courses taken are degree-applicable.

Q: *Can a student still double major?*

A: Yes, but both majors must be declared and all courses taken must be degree-applicable.

Q: *Will financial aid pay out for UNIV classes?*

A: Yes, because Financial Aid can make a case to auditors as to how these courses are required for designated students.

Q: *What happens when a student changes a major?*

A: Financial aid is not retroactively adjusted for prior semesters. Students can change majors as needed from term to term without CPOS penalty so long as courses are degree-applicable at that point in time.

## Plans include the following:

- Orchestrating strategic and timely communications by email, via announcements on campus TV screens, social media engagement, webpage, FAQs and posters.
- Developing a triage plan in consultation between OUR, FA, AAC and SSC.
  - Dedicated central email address
  - Dedicated triage team representative of all major offices
- Developing procedures to expedite review of changes to student records intended to address CPoS impacts.
  - Includes efforts to proactively address gaps in changes of major
- Timely processing any major, minor and/or concentrations that may impact financial aid with a dedicated team during CPoS go-live.



WHAT  
WILL STAFF  
DO?



Q&A