

University of Wisconsin-Green Bay CARES Act: Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund – Student Aid Overview and Data

In response to the national state of emergency declared on March 13, 2020, on March 27, 2020, the president signed into law the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, or CARES Act, in order to address urgent financial needs created by the coronavirus pandemic.

On April 9, 2020, the Department of Education released information directing institutions of higher education to apply for CARES Act funds allocated to Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations.

The application portal opened on April 10, 2020, and the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay was eligible for \$1,752,466 in emergency funds for student aid. The institution applied for these funds on April 10, 2020, by signing and returning to the Department a Certification and Agreement including an assurance that the institution intends to use the entirety of this amount to provide emergency financial aid grants to students. The funding was received on April 23, 2020, and was processed while the institution was finalizing distribution mechanisms and details.

On May 6, 2020, UW-Green Bay's website (uwgb.edu/coronavirus/emergency-grant) provided instructions, guidance, and an application form for students to request emergency funds. Students have been informed of the available funds and application process through multiple methods including email, video and Chancellor's newsletter, as well as announcement on the University's COVID 19 website

The application process to confirm eligibility and determine funds awarded proceeds in two steps: confirmation of student eligibility and confirmation of expense eligibility. Any student eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 ("title IV eligible") is also eligible for a CARES Act emergency grant. A review of students enrolled for the spring 2020 semester that met Title IV eligibility requirements was done and a list of eligible students compiled. UW-Green Bay enrolled an estimated 4,625 students eligible to receive Emergency Financial Aid Grants to students under Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act.

Eligibility of expenses is determined via the application process, in which students have provided documentation of expenses incurred on or after March 13, 2020, and related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus. These applications and expenses are reviewed in relation to Cost of Attendance (COA) items to determine how much each student receives. Applications that indicate financial need but do not meet these eligibility criteria are declined CARES Act funds but are then reviewed for funding through other internal sources of emergency assistance.

The first University of Wisconsin-Green Bay CARES Act awards to students were approved on May 7, 2020. As of May 22, 2020, UW-Green Bay has received 695 applications and approved 472 students for a total of \$521,551.