



Conrad Festa  
Executive Director

## MEMORANDUM

To: Directors of Financial Aid  
Eligible LIFE Scholarship Institutions

From: Dr. Karen Woodfaulk  
Director of Student Services

Re: LIFE Scholarship GPA Update

Date: June 16, 2005

During the 2005 Legislative Session the General Assembly approved H.3906 (Attachment 1). According to H. 3906, students must earn a minimum cumulative 3.0 grade point average (GPA) based on grades earned at all eligible public or independent institutions attended for the purposes of determining LIFE Scholarship eligibility.

### Calculating LIFE GPA

For students who would like to have their GPA calculated according to H.3906 for the 2005-06 academic year, the student must contact the financial aid office and make an official written request for this year only. The student will have the responsibility of submitting his or her transcripts from all institutions to determine eligibility for the LIFE Scholarship. LIFE Scholarship eligibility for 2006-07 will be automatically calculated according to H. 3906 for all students. Students will not be required to self-identify or submit a request. All institutions must establish a system for calculating a new LIFE GPA that will be in operation by this time.

### Definition of Eligible Institution:

An "eligible institution" shall be defined as a regionally accredited public or independent institution located in-state or out-of-state, or an institution from which transfer credit is accepted. The LIFE GPA must include all grades earned at any eligible institution, including courses that do not transfer based on the institution's policy and college courses taken while in high school. The LIFE GPA must not include continuing education courses, non-degree credit courses for an associate's degree or higher and remedial/developmental courses. The recognized regional accrediting bodies are the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, New England Association of Schools and Colleges, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, and Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

### Steps for calculating a LIFE GPA:

- 1) Convert all grades earned at an eligible institution to a 4.0 scale based on each institution's grading policy where the grades were earned = grade points
- 2) Multiply the Grade Points by Attempted Credit Hours = Quality Points (QP)
- 3) Divide the total quality points by the total number of attempted credit hours = LIFE GPA
- 4) LIFE GPA Formula: 
$$\frac{(\text{Grade Points X Attempted Credited Hours} = \text{QP})}{\text{Total Attempted Credit Hours}} = \text{LIFE GPA}$$

Again, the LIFE GPA must include all grades earned at any eligible institution, including courses that do not transfer based on the institution's policy and college courses taken while in high school. The "LIFE GPA" must not include continuing education courses, non-degree credit courses for an associate degree or higher and remedial/developmental courses.

For this year, there is a budget Proviso 5A.25 in effect that allows for a one year implementation of the modification in the LIFE GPA calculation. The Proviso allows students to use either the cumulative GPA or the new LIFE GPA, whichever is more advantageous for them for 2005-06.

### **Calculating Credit Hours**

Students must earn an average of thirty credit hours for graduation purposes by the end of each academic year based on initial college enrollment:

- (a) earn a minimum of 30 (or the equivalent) credit hours if a rising sophomore; or
- (b) earn a minimum of 60 (or the equivalent) credit hours if a rising junior; or
- (c) earn a minimum of 90 (or the equivalent) credit hours if a rising senior; or
- (d) earn a minimum of 120 (or its equivalent) credit hours if entering the fifth year of an approved five-year baccalaureate degree program.

Students may use credit hours earned when they were dually-enrolled in high school and college, AP courses, and exempted courses towards the LIFE Scholarship.

### **Transfer Students**

For determining initial eligibility of a transfer student at the new institution, a student must have a minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale at all prior institutions and an average of 30 credit hours per academic year. For continued eligibility at the new institution, transfer students may only use credit hours that transfer to the new institution for the graduation purposes toward the requirement of an average of 30 credit hours per academic year for the LIFE Scholarship.

### **Notification**

The institutions must immediately notify every student of the new LIFE GPA calculation and how it will affect his or her eligibility. Although the legislation is effective immediately and for this year only applies to students who may be advantaged, it is our understanding that full implementation will occur by the end of the 2005-06 academic year, when all students must qualify for the scholarship using the new LIFE GPA calculation. Only students who request to have their GPA calculated according to H. 3906 will be eligible to use the LIFE GPA for the 2005-06 academic year. Suggested language to use when informing students is attached. Please submit a copy of your institution's letter or e-mail to Sandra Rhyne by Thursday, June 30, 2005.

Detailed LIFE Scholarship regulations will be submitted to the General Assembly during the 2006 Legislative Session for approval. These regulations will provide guidance for 2006-07 and beyond.

Thank you very much for your cooperation and patience. If you have any questions, please contact me at 803-737-2244 or Sandra Rhyne, LIFE Scholarship Coordinator, at (803) 737-2280.

Enclosure

cc: Directors of Admissions  
Registrars  
Directors of Enrollment Management