

**SC National Guard College Assistance Program (SCNG CAP)
Review/Evaluation Committee Meeting
Main Conference Room
October 21, 2015
10:00 a.m.**

SC Air National Guard

SMSgt. Ceomara Timmons

SC Army National Guard

CW2 Deborah Glenn

Institutional Representatives

Mr. Jeff Dennis, Greenville Technical College

Ms. Michelle Upchurch, Limestone College

Guests

Ms. Julie Frick, USC Columbia

Ms. Jane Snowden, Francis Marion University

CHE Staff

Ms. Lorinda Copeland

Dr. Karen Woodfaulk

1. Introductions and Approval of Minutes

Introductions were made by everyone in attendance. Dr. Karen Woodfaulk asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 13, 2015, meeting. The motion was made (Glenn) and seconded (Upchurch) to accept the minutes as written. The minutes were accepted as written.

2. SCNG CAP Application Window 2016-2017 – Update

- Awards Process

- Notification to Member Regarding Eligibility – Contingency Language

Dr. Woodfaulk reported that the number of CAP eligible students for the current year had caused concern due to limited funding. CHE made the commitment to fund the eligible students, however funding will be monitored. CW2 Deborah Glenn reported modifications had been made to the number of eligible Army members. Some members communicated they would not be using CAP for the current year, some members did not complete the required training, and some members received their eligibility late. As a result of these modifications, the Army Guard has approximately 960 CAP eligible members. CW2 Glenn stated the June 1 through August 1 application window presents challenges. When the application is submitted during the application window, some members have not completed the required training. Members who had not completed the required training were coded eligible and are attending training during the fall. It is anticipated a higher number of Army members will use CAP during the spring. SMSgt. Ceomara Timmons reported the Air Guard has 94 CAP eligible members. Required training was completed prior to receiving eligibility.

Dr. Woodfaulk provided an overview of the awards process and the responsibilities of the Guard, Institutions, and CHE. CHE is monitoring deadlines and is trying to get the institutions to adhere to these deadlines. Funding was available in previous years for prior year adjustments. Dr. Woodfaulk stated it is important that deadlines are monitored so CHE can receive invoices and process them for payment. If adjustments need to be made, these adjustments need to be made within the current awarding year. When the current awarding year is closed, the year is closed. It may have been acceptable in the past to request funds for a prior year. However, requesting funds for a prior year will not be acceptable this year and

moving forward. Dr. Woodfaulk stated she understands adjustments will be discovered. Dr. Woodfaulk suggested institutions conduct a review to ensure all students have been awarded correctly prior to the end of the awarding year.

Dr. Woodfaulk asked if there were questions regarding the awards process. Mr. Jeff Dennis asked how institutions are to monitor students who are eligible in the CAP database but have not completed the required training. Dr. Woodfaulk responded the issue was discovered this awarding year due to concern regarding the amount of funding and the number of eligible members. Some members of the Army Guard had not completed the required training prior to receiving eligibility. Dr. Woodfaulk stated the Army Guard has been encouraged to only code members eligible who have completed the required training. Members who have not completed the required training are not eligible. Dr. Woodfaulk stated there might be students who currently are not eligible but will be eligible in the spring. CHE is working with the Army Guard so that only members who have completed the required training will receive CAP eligibility which is in the legislation.

CW2 Glenn responded the Army Guard wants to provide a fair chance to all members because it is not feasible to have two application windows. CW2 Glenn stated institutions still have to confirm that a student is enrolled. Although a student may be coded eligible, if they are in training they will not be enrolled. Mr. Dennis asked if the member could be enrolled and in training simultaneously. CW2 Glenn responded she did not think that would be possible because most BCT/AIT training is very intense and members would not have access to computers. Dr. Woodfaulk stated the language in the regulations and legislation states students can be awarded as long as funds are available. The problem is that there are members who are eligible and have met all requirements, and there are members who have not met all requirements. The member who has not met all requirements may bump a student who has met all requirements due to timing. Dr. Woodfaulk stated the goal is to have all eligible members enrolled in CAP. If a member has not completed the required training, the member can apply for CAP during the next application window. CW2 Glenn stated a waiting list status was being considered for those members who exercise due diligence but have not completed the required training. As members complete the required training satisfactorily, the member will be coded eligible in the database. CW2 Glenn stated it has not been decided how a waiting list will be developed but it should be implemented next year.

Dr. Woodfaulk asked if there were additional concerns regarding the awards process. Ms. Michelle Upchurch responded the process was smoother than in the past because all applications were entered by August 1. This allowed awards to be processed in a timely manner versus processing awards throughout the semester. Dr. Woodfaulk responded CHE and the Guard will continue to work together for a smooth process. Dr. Woodfaulk asked the institutional representatives to let CHE or the Guard know if there are suggestions.

3. Institutional Feedback Regarding Application Window

- Suggestions for Seamless Process

- Early versus Late Awards – Institutional Award Process

Dr. Woodfaulk stated CHE and the National Guard had previously discussed an early and late awards process. Members submitting their application early would be considered an early award and would be awarded by the institution. Members submitting their application later would be considered in a late award period and may not be awarded prior to the start of classes. Ms. Upchurch asked what the time frame would be for an early and late awards process. Dr.

Woodfaulk responded the current application window of June 1 – August 1 because the Guard stated a different window would not be feasible. Dr. Woodfaulk stated applications received in June would be packaged as early awards. Applications received in July and August would be packaged as late awards. The institutions would not notice a change on their end but CHE would be able to monitor the awarding of funds. Ms. Upchurch responded it would not be much of a change on the Air National Guard side. Dr. Woodfaulk responded it would not. Mr. Dennis asked what would happen to a member who applies on July 25th and all eligibility requirements are met versus a student who applies on June 5th and hasn't completed training. CW2 Glenn responded she envisions the student who has not completed the required training will be placed on a waiting list, not coded as eligible in the SCNG CAP database, and is acknowledged for submitting an application. The member who submits an application later and meets all eligibility requirements will immediately be coded eligible. Dr. Woodfaulk stated the institutions will experience some students receiving eligibility early in June and others receiving eligibility later.

CW2 Glenn asked the institutional point of contacts how they felt about receiving a copy of the approval emails that the member received. CW2 Glenn stated she is considering changing the verbiage. Communicating to the member that they are approved is misleading because the Guard approves eligibility on the Guard side. The member still has to meet eligibility requirements on the institutional side. Instead of communicating the member is approved, the verbiage will be revised to reflect Guard eligibility has been met and that academic eligibility still has to be met. Ms. Frick stated receiving a copy of the approval email was helpful because she reconciled the approval emails with the CAP database. Ms. Upchurch copied the approval emails in a folder due to the volume and used the CAP database to award her students. If a student was not in the CAP database, Ms. Upchurch used the approval emails. Ms. Upchurch stated the emails were not useful to her but she does not mind receiving them if the process is going to continue. CW2 Glenn asked the institutional representatives how they felt about the proposed change to the approval email verbiage. Ms. Upchurch responded it is a positive change because students will state they have been approved. These students have to be told the approval was on the Guard side and that the academic side has to be reviewed which causes confusion.

CW2 Glenn stated the Guard does not have access to SAP or the attempted credit hours. CW2 Glenn asked if there was anything else that would prohibit the Guard Member from receiving CAP. Ms. Upchurch responded mainly SAP and the attempted credit hours. Ms. Upchurch stated Limestone College has had students who were not eligible for federal financial aid which makes them ineligible for other aid. However, there is no verbiage in the CAP regulations prohibiting a student from receiving CAP if they are not eligible for federal financial aid. CW2 Glenn stated she will implement the change in verbiage in the approval email for the next awarding year. CW2 Glenn asked the institutional representatives to let her know if they have additional suggestions to help make the process more seamless. Mr. Dennis asked Ms. Frick how often she found discrepancies between the approval emails and the CAP database. Ms. Frick responded there were not many discrepancies which was a relief since their campus has a large number of CAP students. For the 4 or 5 discrepancies discovered, Ms. Frick contacted the student and advised them to contact the Guard which was very helpful.

4. Federal Financial Aid Ineligibility

- Impact on CAP eligibility

Ms. Upchurch stated she does not understand why a CAP student who is not eligible for federal financial aid would be eligible for CAP, but not eligible for other state aid. The student

has defaulted on a federal student loan or for some reason is not eligible for federal financial aid. Dr. Woodfaulk asked the other institutional representatives if they had experienced this issue. Ms. Frick responded her campus has probably experienced this issue, but she does not recall experiencing this concern within the past year. Ms. Upchurch stated the number of students who are not eligible for federal financial aid has not been large for their campus. Limestone College had one student who was not eligible for federal financial aid a few years ago and have one or two students this year. CW2 Glenn asked Ms. Upchurch what reasons would cause someone to be ineligible for federal financial aid. Ms. Upchurch responded the primary reason is default on a federal student loan. Dr. Woodfaulk provided an overview of section 62-253 C. of the SCNG CAP Regulations. Dr. Woodfaulk stated this section regarding student eligibility does not state a student is not eligible for CAP if they are not eligible for federal financial aid. Dr. Woodfaulk stated the CAP regulations replicated the language in other state scholarship and grant programs. However, the language regarding defaults on federal student loans was not included in CAP. As long as a student meets eligibility requirements with the Guard and the institution, a student can receive CAP. Dr. Woodfaulk stated there is nothing in the regulations stating a student has to meet federal financial aid requirements to receive CAP.

Dr. Woodfaulk asked Ms. Upchurch if her concern was that students are in default of a federal student loan and can still receive CAP funds. Ms. Upchurch responded yes because these students are not eligible for other state aid. Ms. Upchurch stated it can be confusing and wanted to verify that a student could still receive CAP. These students are not eligible for other state aid. These students are able to take classes because they are making SAP and they pay out of pocket for the amount that CAP does not cover. Dr. Woodfaulk stated the intent is to allow a student who is in default of a federal student loan to receive CAP. Dr. Woodfaulk asked Ms. Lorinda Copeland if she remembered why the default language was omitted. Ms. Copeland responded she did not know why the default language was omitted. However, Ms. Copeland stated procedural language stating a student could use CAP if they had defaulted on a federal student loan was added due to conversation with Ms. Upchurch regarding a student who defaulted on a federal student loan. Ms. Copeland was not sure why this procedural language was removed. Dr. Woodfaulk asked Ms. Upchurch if she thought it would be difficult for the institutions to understand that CAP students can receive CAP although they are not eligible for federal financial aid. Dr. Woodfaulk also asked if information should be forwarded to the institutional point of contacts. Ms. Upchurch responded she thinks the regulations should include language that the student is eligible because currently there is no language one way or the other. If the student can receive CAP, that is fine. But there should be something to state this in writing. Dr. Woodfaulk stated it will be two years before the regulations are opened again given the regulatory process. Dr. Woodfaulk stated guidance regarding federal student loan defaults will be forwarded to the institutional point of contacts.

5. Other Business, Comments, or Concerns

Dr. Woodfaulk asked the institutional representatives and the SC National Guard Representatives if there were any other issues. Ms. Upchurch responded she could not think of any issues. Dr. Woodfaulk asked the institutional representatives and the Guard to notify CHE if they have concerns.

Dr. Woodfaulk stated the SCNG CAP evaluation was discussed during the last meeting. The conclusion was that the evaluation should stem from the recruitment perspective versus the student perspective. Dr. Woodfaulk stated the evaluation will continue to be pursued. The idea is to formulate questions for the National Guard and their Recruiters regarding the success of the program. Dr. Woodfaulk stated CAP receives millions of dollars. A legislator may call at

some point and question the success of the program. In addition to success stories, data should be available which measures the benefit of CAP to South Carolina.

Dr. Woodfaulk stated another issue voiced previously is the College Assistance Program as CAP and the confusion it may be causing. Dr. Woodfaulk asked if it would be helpful if the full name was used. Ms. Upchurch responded she has not experienced any issue with referring to the program as CAP but whatever the majority decided. Ms. Jane Snowden responded she had not experienced an issue either. CW2 Glenn stated the full name of the program with CAP in parenthesis is on the application and in the approval email. Dr. Woodfaulk stated there will be no change unless there is another suggestion.

Ms. Copeland will contact the Committee members to schedule a meeting for late January or February.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorinda Copeland
Recording Secretary