

**SC National Guard College Assistance Program (SCNG CAP)
Review/Evaluation Committee Meeting
Main Conference Room
July 13, 2016
10:00 a.m.**

SC Air National Guard

MSgt. Steven David
SMSgt. Michael Morris

Guests

Ms. Julie Frick, USC Columbia
Dr. Jennifer Settlemyer, Commissioner

SC Army National Guard

Lt. Colonel Sean Egnew
SFC Paul Mead

CHE Staff

Ms. Lorinda Copeland
Dr. Karen Woodfaulk

Institutional Representatives

Mr. Hank Fuller, The Citadel
Ms. Kim Ellisor, Francis Marion University
Ms. Michelle Upchurch, Limestone College

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 April 20, 2016, meeting. The motion was made (Fuller) and seconded (Egnew) to accept the minutes as written. The minutes were accepted as written.

**2. SCNG CAP Awards Update
- Fall 2015, Spring 2016, & Summer 2016**

Ms. Lorinda Copeland provided an update on the College Assistance Program (CAP) awards for fall 2015, spring 2016, and summer 2016. The total request for fall 2015 was approximately \$1,714,000, \$1,504,000 for winter/spring 2016, and \$17,531,000 for summer 2016. The total request for academic year 2015-16 to date was approximately \$3,236,000. Ms. Copeland reported an additional \$25,310 for summer 2016 would be requested based on information received from the institutions. Mr. Hank Fuller asked how awards for academic year 2015-16 compared to academic year 2014-15. Ms. Copeland responded that she did not have the numbers for academic year 2014-15. Lt. Colonel Sean Egnew responded the awards were higher this academic year. Ms. Copeland reported as far as she knew, there would be no additional awards for fall 2015 and winter/spring 2016.

3. Update on the SCNG CAP Application Window 2016-2017

Ms. Copeland reported as of July 12, the number of eligible Air Guard members in the CAP database was 75. The number of eligible Army Guard members in the CAP database was 440. SFC Paul Mead responded the Army Guard had a total of 447 eligible members. Seven members were coded eligible prior to the meeting. Dr. Woodfaulk stated there was concern regarding the number of eligible members this year compared to the number of eligible members last year. Ms. Copeland reported that on July 10, 2015, there were 58 eligible Air Guard members and 571 eligible Army Guard members in the CAP database. On July 15, 2015, the CAP database reflected 58 eligible Air Guard members and 663 eligible Army Guard members. MSgt. Steven David stated that the Air Guard would have an additional six to ten eligible members. Dr. Woodfaulk stated in comparison to last year, the number of eligible Army Guard members is lower.

SFC Mead reported 44 CAP applications were denied due to “flagging actions.” Seventy-three CAP applications were received from members who had not completed Advanced Individual Training (AIT). SFC Mead stated that the Army Guard had a proposal that would help maximize the CAP funding and benefit the member. If a member submits a CAP application by the August 1 deadline and completes AIT by the course start date, the Army Guard will code the member eligible. Currently, required training has to be completed prior to submitting an application. The Army Guard will not code a member eligible until the member has completed AIT. If the completion of AIT is after the course start date, the member would be eligible for the next term. Lt. Colonel Egnew stated he did not think the process violates the regulation because the member still has to complete AIT. MSgt. Steven David responded that he wished he had considered the proposal because the Air Guard has members that may be eligible. Mr. Hank Fuller agreed with the proposal provided the application is completed. However, how would the application be disseminated to members who complete AIT after the August 1 deadline so that the member can have the opportunity. SFC Mead responded the application is disseminated through various means to include their recruiters. Lt. Colonel Egnew feels the proposed process is fair. The intent is not to approve any member for CAP until AIT is completed. If the member completes AIT, the member will be coded eligible in the database. Dr. Woodfaulk stated the issue may be whether members currently in training know that they need to submit an application by August 1. Also, these members need to know if they complete AIT prior to their class start date, they could be eligible for CAP. Lt. Colonel Egnew stated the application deadline is to forecast awards. The proposed process still allows the forecasting of awards because the member will not be awarded until AIT completion.

Dr. Jennifer Settlemyer stated her concern is whether or not members understand they are not eligible for CAP when an application is submitted. Previously members were eligible upon submission of the application. As long as members meet the criteria, Dr. Settlemyer does not think the proposal is out of compliance with the regulation. SFC Mead stated the current CAP application for the Army Guard states the member has to complete Basic Training & AIT. SFC Mead will verify that the member has completed AIT prior to the member returning from training. Dr. Settlemyer asked if a member who has not completed training would be coded “not eligible” in the database. SFC Mead responded no. Once the member completes training and SFC Mead verifies that there are no “flagging actions,” the member will be coded eligible in the database. Lt. Colonel Egnew stated entering the member into the database upon AIT completion eliminates the possibility of an erroneous eligibility and invoicing by the institution. Dr. Settlemyer stated her concern is when a process is presented that is not in the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). Lt. Colonel Egnew stated the proposal is an administrative procedure for the Army Guard. The proposal was shared to ensure everyone would be comfortable with the procedure.

SFC Mead stated the only issue that is foreseen is the timing of when the institutions generate their CAP eligibility list for awarding. Ms. Michelle Upchurch responded that this is also her concern. Ms. Upchurch asked how an institution will know when an additional member has been coded eligible in the database. Dr. Woodfaulk asked if there was a process for the Guard to inform the institutions of additions to the database. Ms. Upchurch asked if institutions could receive a list of the additions. SFC Mead responded that he will copy the institution on the approval email the member receives starting August 13. Mr. Fuller suggested institutions could download and sort their eligibility list by the eligibility date. Members with eligibility dates after August 12 would be eligible for the spring 2016 term.

MSgt. David asked about the policy regarding the application deadline of August 1. Dr. Woodfaulk responded the application deadline should remain August 1. Dr. Woodfaulk asked if the August 12 deadline for the Guard to complete entry of applications into the database presents an awarding issue for the institutions. Mr. Fuller responded the date is a concern because this date is after the due date for tuition and fees. However, Mr. Fuller will continue to award members as needed. Dr. Woodfaulk asked if the AIT completion dates would vary. SFC Mead responded yes because the completion date depends on the AIT. MSgt. David asked if it would be possible to establish an AIT completion date for each term. If the member completes training by the established date, the member can apply for CAP for future terms. SFC Mead responded the Army Guard had considered establishing completion dates within the term. However, the Army Guard does not want members to have the impression that they can submit an application year round. Applications have to be submitted within the application window. The application will be processed as the member completes AIT. If applications are submitted after the deadline, the member will receive an email stating they have missed the application deadline.

Dr. Woodfaulk stated the reason there is an application deadline is because there was a funding issue a few years ago. The number of members approved for CAP exceeded available funding. It was decided and the Legislature was promised that there would be a better process in determining the number of eligible members. Dr. Woodfaulk stated the proposal is a way to allow members who think they are going to complete AIT to submit their application by the August 1 deadline. MSgt. David stated it would be the service member's responsibility to know whether their AIT completion date is prior to the class start date. Lt. Colonel Egnew stated the Army Guard informs their members that it is their responsibility to inform financial aid of their CAP eligibility. SMSgt. Michael Morris asked if it was feasible for a member to apply by the August 1 deadline although the member will not be able to enroll until the spring 2016 term. Sgt. Mead responded he has 418 members who applied for spring only because they know they will complete AIT prior to the spring term. Lt. Colonel Egnew stated that the important factor is for the member to submit the application by August 1.

Dr. Woodfaulk asked the institutional representatives if there were concerns or questions. Ms. Upchurch asked how an institution would know if a member has been awarded "spring only." SFC Mead responded the comment box will reflect the terms of eligibility. Ms. Upchurch responded she does not view the comment box and asked if a column could be added to the database to reflect the term of eligibility. MSgt. David asked about a "projected AIT completion date" column. SFC Mead responded a projected eligibility date may be confusing because of the other dates in the database. Ms. Julie Frick asked if a member submits an application by August 1 and does not complete AIT until December, would the eligibility date be a date later during the fall term. SFC Mead responded yes. However, eligibility would be for the spring term. Ms. Frick responded if the eligibility date is not prior to the course start date, she does not award the student for that term. Mr. Fuller stated members that are eligible "spring only" should not be coded eligible during the fall term. Ms. Upchurch asked for clarification if there were "spring only" members in the database. SFC Mead responded there were "fall only" members in the database. However, the "spring only" members had not been coded eligible in database yet. MSgt David stated in his opinion there needed to be some clarity as to the coding of eligible members in the database. Dr. Settlemyer stated if a member is in the database with no eligibility date, she would know that the member is not eligible. Lt. Colonel Egnew stated members remain in the database regardless of whether they are "eligible" or "not eligible." Lt. Colonel Egnew stated the confusion appears to be whether a member enrolling for the spring term should be coded "eligible" or "not eligible." Ms. Copeland stated she likes the idea that members will not be entered into the database until eligible. Ms. Copeland also stated, to eliminate confusion, "not

eligible” members are not visible to the institutions. MSgt. David stated his concern is that the application window is open June 1 through August 1. Dr. Woodfaulk responded the application window is still June 1 through August 1. However, institutions may have additional eligible members during the term. SMSgt. Michael Morris asked what is the purpose of the August 12 application deadline if members can continue to be added for the spring semester. SMSgt. Morris stated the focus seems to be for the fall semester. Ms. Copeland responded that the August 12 deadline is the deadline for the Guard to enter all applications so institutions can award. Dr. Settlemyer responded SMSgt. Morris had a point because the sixty-day application window is for forecasting. SFC Mead stated there used to be a year round application. There was an issue previously with funding. The application window prevents over awards. Mr. Fuller stated the August 12 date is not important. The August 1 application deadline is important. Members have to complete AIT prior to their class start date. Dr. Settlemyer asked if the late eligibility was based on the availability of funds. Dr. Woodfaulk responded yes. MSgt. David asked if the CAP application would be revised. SFC Mead responded the CAP application for the Army Guard states awards are based on the availability of funds.

Ms. Upchurch asked if it was possible to add a column to database to reflect if a member is eligible for a particular term. This would be easier than reviewing comments for each member. Ms. Copeland responded that it is probably timely to view the “comment box” for each member. Dr. Woodfaulk responded that she or Ms. Copeland would speak with Ms. Camille Brown of CHE regarding an addition to the database. SFC Mead asked if he would have to review every application again and update the database with the term. Dr. Settlemyer responded that funding is between the member and the institution because the member has been approved for the entire academic year. Ms. Copeland agreed that eligibility is for the entire academic year. MSgt. David suggested that discussion continue for the next application window. Dr. Settlemyer stated the member has the opportunity to review and make changes to their financial package. Ms. Upchurch stated her institution packages the maximum award for each member if eligible. However, the invoice is based on the actual enrollment. Dr. Woodfaulk stated the proposal was a process and did not contradict regulation. The motion was made (Mead) and seconded (Egnew) to change the process to allow members to be considered for CAP eligibility if the member submits an application by August 1 and the member completes AIT by their course start date. The motion was accepted as presented.

4. SCNG CAP Program Evaluation - Student Survey

Dr. Woodfaulk stated the survey for the evaluation has previously been discussed. Before the survey is disseminated, the goal is to ensure that the right questions are included for measurement regarding quality and success. The goal is to implement the survey during the upcoming academic year. The Guard will disseminate the survey to their members through their existing processes. Mr. Fuller suggested that the question, “Can the CAP application process be improved” provide an option to provide comments. Dr. Woodfaulk stated a dissemination plan would be discussed in October. The goal is to have the survey results by April or May.

5. SCNG CAP Proposed Regulations

- **Removal of the 130 attempted credit hour maximum (Section 62-252 B. and other sections referencing attempted or credit hours earned)**
- **Removal of the full annual benefit in the final semester (Section 62-252 A. 3)**
- **Revision to proration of awards for less than full-time students (Section 62-252 G. 2)**
- **Draft Guidance**

- **Definition – Qualifying Members and Good Standing (Sections 62-252 A & 62-253 C. 1)**
- **Definition – Four Years (Sections 62-253 E. & 62-260 A. 2)**
- **Discharges (Sections 62-253 C. 1 & E, Sections 62-259 A. 1 & 3)**

Dr. Woodfaulk provided an overview of the proposed changes to the SCNG CAP Regulation. Regarding the proration of awards for less than full-time students, Mr. Fuller asked how many hours are less than ¼ time. Dr. Woodfaulk and Ms. Copeland responded 2 hours or less. Dr. Woodfaulk also provided an overview of the “draft” guidance regarding the proration of awards for less than full time students. Dr. Woodfaulk asked if the guidance would be helpful. Ms. Frick responded the guidance does help for clarification. Her concern had been for those members who were close to the 130 attempted hour maximum. The guidance helps to clarify that the member can receive a prorated award for their remaining hours of eligibility. Mr. Fuller asked if the 130 attempted hour maximum was going to be eliminated. Dr. Woodfaulk responded that it was being proposed. However, the guidance is clarification for the current language on calculating awards that are less than ¼ time. Dr. Woodfaulk stated the elimination of the 130 attempted hour maximum has to be approved by CHE and proceed through the Legislative process. Ms. Upchurch asked Dr. Woodfaulk if she thought the approval would be next year. Dr. Woodfaulk responded if the proposed regulation is not “withdrawn” by a Legislative Committee during the process, the proposed regulation could be approved by June 2017 and implemented moving forward. Dr. Woodfaulk stated if there were additional comments regarding the guidance, let CHE staff know. Otherwise, the guidance would be disseminated to all CAP institutional representatives.

Ms. Copeland stated the discharge language added to section 62-253 E. is intended to clarify that a member is not eligible for CAP after the discharge date. Ms. Copeland stated the member is supposed to remain in the Guard the entire term the benefit is received. If a member is discharged, the institution does not maintain the funds pursuant to their refund policy. Mr. Fuller stated that he assumed a member could be discharged from the Guard half way through the semester. SFC Mead responded if the member discharges from the Guard prior to the end of the semester, the funds would have to be returned. Mr. Fuller responded the institution has already awarded the funds. It would be fine if the Guard collects from the member, but the institution should not collect from the member which would create a debt for the member. Mr. Fuller also asked for clarification regarding the language that states officers shall continue their service for at least four years after completion of the most recent award or degree completion. SFC Mead provided an explanation regarding the language.

Mr. Fuller stated the discharged member would be coded “ineligible” at some point during the term and assumes ineligibility for the next term. Mr. Fuller stated that he would not retroactively cancel an award for a current term because the member was coded eligible and awarded. However, Mr. Fuller agrees that the member would not be eligible for the next term. SFC Mead responded if the ETS date is not after the course completion date, he does not code the member eligible. MSgt. David responded he does the same also. However, some discharges are unforeseen and unexpected. Mr. Fuller stated the only reason for him to cancel an award

would be if the award was an error. Ms. Upchurch and Ms. Frick responded that they agreed with Mr. Fuller.

Lt. Colonel Egnew stated in his opinion, per section 62-259 A. (1) and (2) of the SCNG CAP Regulation, a discharge is in the same category. The Guard does not have the ability to collect the funds because the Guard did not award the funds. Dr. Woodfaulk stated, based on the regulation, collection is the responsibility of the institution. Mr. Fuller stated the language pertains to a withdrawal from the institution, not the Guard. Dr. Woodfaulk responded that the language also includes reimbursement for members who also become “otherwise” ineligible. Ms. Upchurch stated if a member withdraws from the Guard and the institution returns the funds, the balance remains with the institution because the member is not going to repay the institution. Lt. Colonel Egnew responded the bottom line is that the member did not meet the commitment for the funds. Dr. Woodfaulk asked the Guard if institutions were expected to collect funds from the member for ineligibility that occurred after the drop/add date. Dr. Woodfaulk stated that her understanding from the institutions is that they do not have to collect from the member after their institutional drop/add date because the member has met the institutional obligation. Dr. Woodfaulk asked if institutions were expected to collect funds awarded after their drop/add date. Lt. Colonel Egnew stated in the past, there has been discussion regarding discharges and how the Guard could develop a procedure to collect the funds. However, there is no mechanism for the Guard to collect the funds because the Guard does not award the funds.

Lt. Colonel Egnew wanted to clarify that if a member discharges, the institution decides whether to collect the funds from the member and CHE would be fine with the decision. MSgt. David responded the only authority the Guard has is with their federal programs. Lt. Colonel Egnew asked for clarification as to whether there was any expectation of notification when a member discharges for any reason. The member stated that they would serve their entire term. However, the member can discharge for any reason, not serve their entire term, and still receive the benefit. SFC Mead will code the member “ineligible” in the CAP database and update the comment section with no further action. Dr. Woodfaulk asked the institutions for feedback because it has always been in the regulation that the institution collects from the member. Mr. Fuller stated the language pertains to a member and the institution, not a withdrawal from the Guard. Dr. Woodfaulk responded that the language includes reimbursement of CAP funds for members that become “otherwise” ineligible according to the refund policy of the institution. Mr. Fuller stated that an institution would not issue a refund regardless of whether a student is in the Guard. Dr. Woodfaulk stated this language is consistent with the refund policies of the other scholarship programs. If the member owes the institution, the institution owes CHE. If the member does not owe the institution according to their refund policy, the institution does not need to repay the funds.

Dr. Settlemyer stated the verbiage “or otherwise becomes ineligible” could also include unsatisfactory participants in addition to discharges. Dr. Settlemyer stated this language can also be interpreted that a member is ineligible for the benefit. MSgt. David suggested that the language be revised to include to discharges. Dr. Woodfaulk stated that the language would be revised to state “ineligible under section 62-253 C. (1).” Lt. Colonel Egnew stated with the

addition of this language, the Guard is committed to notifying the institutions of discharges and the institutions are committed to receiving the funds. Dr. Woodfaulk responded that the institutions receiving the funds should adhere to their institutional refund policy. Mr. Fuller stated he felt it was important that it was clear that the institution would not pursue reimbursement regardless of whether the student is in the Guard. Mr. Fuller stated the revised language includes Guard ineligibility. However, the refund policy of the institution has nothing to do with whether the student is in the Guard. Dr. Woodfaulk responded if the student does not meet certain requirements, the member is not eligible and the institutional refund policy determines if funds should be returned. SMSgt. Michael Morris asked if there was an administrative responsibility to code a member's eligibility from "eligible" to "not eligible" when a member discharges. Dr. Woodfaulk responded that would be the only way an institution would know the member is ineligible.

Other Business, Comments, or Concerns

No other business was discussed.

Adjourn

Respectfully submitted,

Lorinda Copeland
Recording Secretary