

## **2009-10 Bright Futures Updates Questions and Answers**

The 2009 Florida Legislative Session resulted in several changes to the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program effective July 1, 2009, for the 2009-10 academic year. Please review the information below regarding frequently asked questions on recent Bright Futures changes.

### **1. What are the Bright Futures award amounts for the 2009-10 academic year?**

- Bright Futures recipients will receive a fixed cost per credit hour award based on their
  - **Award Level**
    - Florida Academic Scholar (FAS), Florida Medallion Scholar (FMS), or Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholar (GSV)],
  - **Institution Type**
    - 4-year, 2-year, or Vocational/Technical, and
  - **Credit Type**
    - Semester, quarter, or clock hour
- Students attending a public institution will not be paid tuition and fees; rather, they will be paid the established cost per credit hour award.
- Students attending a private institution will now be paid the established cost per credit hour award, not a full-time, three-quarter-time, or half-time amount.
- See the 2009-10 award amounts on the Bright Futures Web site at [www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/newsrenew.htm](http://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/newsrenew.htm).

### **2. Do Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) still receive a college-related expense allowance?**

- No. As of the 2009-10 academic year, the FAS college-related expense allowance is no longer available.

### **3. Do Academic Top Scholars (ATS) still receive an annual award?**

- Yes. As of the 2009-10 academic year, ATS recipients will now receive a per credit hour award.
- See the 2009-10 award amounts on the Bright Futures Web site at [www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/newsrenew.htm](http://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/newsrenew.htm).



### **4. Will Bright Futures recipients have to repay the cost for courses dropped or withdrawn?**

- Yes. Students will be required to repay the cost of any Bright Futures funded course dropped or withdrawn (after the end of the drop/add period) unless an exception is granted by the financial aid office at their home postsecondary institution.

- Repayment for the cost of dropped or withdrawn courses is required to renew a Bright Futures award at the end of the spring term for a subsequent academic year.



### **5. What happens when a student repays the cost of dropped/withdrawn hours?**

- When a student repays the cost of dropped/withdrawn hours, those hours are returned to that student's hours remaining for funding purposes.
  - For example: A student starts the term with 72 available Bright Futures hours and enrolls in 12 hours leaving a balance of 60 hours of future funding available. The student then drops/withdraws from 3 semester hours **and repays the cost of those 3 semester hours**. Those 3 semester hours are added back to the student's hours remaining for a total of 63 semester hours remaining. Since Bright Futures did not pay for those 3 semester hours, the student regains eligibility for future funding of those 3 hours.

### **6. Did the renewal criteria change for Bright Future recipients?**

- Yes. As of the 2009-10 academic year, Bright Futures recipients are required to meet new minimum credit hour requirements to renew their award each year. The Florida Legislature amended Section 1009.532 (1)(a), Florida Statutes, to require **full-time** students to earn at least 24 semester hours, or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours, to renew their award (prorated for part-time students).
- Students who enroll **full-time** (12 or more semester hours in the Fall and 12 or more semester hours in the Spring) must earn **24 semester hours (or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours)** per academic year.
- Students are **NOT REQUIRED to enroll full-time** to receive Bright Futures funding. Students **MAY enroll part-time** and receive Bright Futures funding. Part-time students must enroll in a minimum of 6 semester hours per term (or the equivalent). Part-time students must earn the required number of hours for which they were funded. Please see the chart below for additional information.
- Bright Futures renewal evaluations are conducted annually after spring term grade and hours are reported by the student's home postsecondary institution. Students are evaluated based on the earned credit hours for the entire academic year and their cumulative GPA. Students may enroll in and use summer grade and hours earned after spring evaluation if necessary to meet grade and hours requirements.
- Students who do not earn the required hours at the end of the 2009-10 academic year and thereafter may restore for subsequent academic years.
- The chart below outlines the new credit hour requirement for students funded in 2009-10 and thereafter.



## Bright Futures Credit Hour Renewal Requirements

Institution Term Type	Credit Hour Type	Student Funded (per term)	Required Earned Hours (per term)
<b>Semester</b>	Semester Hour	<b>12+ Hours</b> (Full-Time)	12
		<b>9-11 Hours</b> (Three-Quarter Time)	9
		<b>6-8 Hours</b> (Half-Time)	6
	Clock Hour	<b>360+ Hours</b> (Full-Time)	360
		<b>270-359 Hours</b> (Three-Quarter Time)	270
		<b>180-269 Hours</b> (Half-Time)	180
<b>Quarter</b>	Quarter Hour	<b>12+ Hours</b> (Full-Time)	12
		<b>9-11 Hours</b> (Three-Quarter Time)	9
		<b>6-8 Hours</b> (Half-Time)	6
	Clock Hour	<b>240+ Hours</b> (Full-Time)	240
		<b>180-239 Hours</b> (Three-Quarter Time)	180
		<b>120-179 Hours</b> (Half-Time)	120
<b>Quinmester</b>	Clock Hour	<b>180+ Hours</b> (Full-Time)	180
		<b>135-179 Hours</b> (Three-Quarter Time)	135
		<b>90-134 Hours</b> (Half-Time)	90

- Students are required to meet the minimum credit hour requirement for the academic year based on the terms funded.
  - For example, a student funded **full-time** (12+ hours) for **two terms** in a **semester hour** institution must earn a minimum of **24** semester hours and the required GPA to be eligible for renewal.
- Students with different enrollments (full-time, three-quarter time, or half-time) during an academic year must earn the required hours that correspond to their enrollment for each term.
  - For example, a student enrolled at a semester hour institution at **15** hours (full-time) for the fall term and **8** hours (half-time) for the spring term is required to earn a minimum total of **18** semester hours (12 hours for the fall term + 6 hours for the spring term) and the required GPA to be eligible for renewal.
  - A student funded for **two terms** at a **quarter hour** institution for 15 hours in the first term and 12 hours in the second term must earn a minimum

total of **24** credit hours (12 hours for the first term + 12 hours for the second term) and the required GPA to be eligible for renewal.

- A student funded for **240 clock hours** for only **one term** at a **quinmester** institution must earn **180 clock hours** and the required GPA to be eligible for renewal.

**7. Can students who lose their Bright Futures award for not meeting the minimum credit hours restore their award in a subsequent academic year?**

- Yes. Bright Futures recipients who do not meet the new credit hour renewal requirements will have the opportunity to restore their award in a subsequent academic year.
- **This applies to students who were funded and did not meet the minimum credit hour renewal requirements at the end of the 2009-10 academic year and thereafter.**

**8. Can Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (GSV) still renew as Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS)?**

- No. The Florida Legislature amended Section 1009.536(4), Florida Statutes, by removing the provision which allows GSV recipients to renew as Florida Medallion Scholars. GSV students may receive funding for up to 90 semester hours.



**9. Does a postsecondary institution have to report all drop/withdraw activity throughout the term, or just the net result of drop/withdrawn hours at the end of the term?**

- Postsecondary institutions are required to reconcile each student's account within 30 days after the end of each academic term. Institutions are not required to update drop/withdrawal activity for students with multiple transactions throughout the term.
  - For example: A student is originally disbursed for 15 semester hours, then drops/withdraws from 3 hours, adds another 3 hours, and finally drops/withdraws from another 3 hours.

The institution can report the original D00 disbursement for 15 semester hours and one additional D04 disbursement for 12 hours by the end of the term rather than the original D00 disbursement and three subsequent adjustments.



**10. How are Drop/Withdrawal Repayment Exceptions handled in relation to Grade and Hours Appeals?**

- Both Drop/Withdrawal Repayment Exceptions and Grade and Hours Appeals are handled by the postsecondary institution in accordance with Section 1009.40 (1)(b)4, Florida Statutes, and their institutional policy.
- They are reported separately to OSFA on the Disbursement Eligibility Report (DER) and Grade and Hours Report. It is possible to receive both or just one appeal. In both cases, the postsecondary institution reviews the student request for an exception or an appeal and makes a recommendation to OSFA [via the DER for Drop/Withdrawal Repayment Exceptions or via the Grade and Hours Report for Grade and Hours Appeals].
- OSFA reviews any recommendation for a Drop/Withdrawal Repayment Exception or Grade and Hours Appeal for approval.



**11. Is there a time limit for a student to repay the cost of dropped/withdrawn hours?**

- It is in the student's best interest to repay the cost of the dropped/withdrawn hours prior to the end of the academic term in which the drop/withdrawal took place. The student will be ineligible to renew his/her Bright Futures award for any subsequent academic years until repayment or a satisfactory arrangement to reimburse the institution is made.