

## **First Generation Matching Grant Program February 23, 2006 Notes**

The following changes are recommended for the “First Generation Matching Grant Program” Bill.

- An alignment of the definition of “first generation college student” with the definition used by the federal government for other support programs (e.g., TRIO). [Not only do we agree with this change philosophically; it also will make record keeping much easier at the campus level.]
- A reference to Board of Governors regulations instead of rules.
- Eliminate the start date when universities may start collecting matching funds from donors, to alleviate the concern that July 1 is too late for the program to be effective this fall. [Even if this precedes any passage of the bill, the universities may use the funds for the intended purpose.]
- A removal of the statewide eligibility requirement that a student be enrolled full-time. [Some universities serve large part-time populations of students for whom “demonstrated financial need” may cover the cost of attending college, but not the additional costs associated with raising a family. Thus, some students will still need to be able to attend part-time. However, some universities really want to focus on full-time enrollments, because of the increased probability of their particular student populations persisting to graduation if they attend full-time. Institutional flexibility is recommended for the greatest positive effect.]
- A reference to student eligibility for initial and renewal awards in conformance with subsection (4), regulations adopted by the Board of Governors, and regulations adopted by individual university boards of trustees. This addition will make the above recommendation possible.
- The elimination of the requirement to apply for the federal Pell Grant, because this is an automatic procedure when one completes the FAFSA (which remains a requirement).
- Recordkeeping processes for audit purposes would be much easier if the reference to the reward amount was tied to the student’s annual cost of attendance.
- If the monies are to be placed in the Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund, it probably would be best to include the Office of Student Financial Assistance as a recipient of annual reports. Would it be better to place the funds in a BOG Student Financial Assistance Trust fund to keep everything more clear, as opposed to involving both the DOE and BOG offices in the process?
- Should a specification be added that institutions shall return unused program funds to the Trust Fund by June 1 of each year?
- Is it the intent that the grant be awarded based on the student’s need assessment only after Pell and all other aid has been applied? If so, this might need to be specified.