

UC SANTA BARBARA

Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships: American Rescue Plan

BACKGROUND

The Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund III (HEERF III) is authorized by the American Rescue Plan (ARP), signed into law on March 11, 2021, providing \$39.6 billion in support to institutions of higher education to serve students and ensure learning continues during the COVID-19 pandemic.

ARP funds are in addition to funds authorized by the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA) and the Coronavirus Aid, Recovery, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Emergency funds available to institutions and their students under all emergency funds total \$76.2 billion.

The Secretary of Education continues to strongly encourage institutions to expand support for students with the most significant financial needs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. ARP requires that institutions prioritize students with *exceptional need*, such as students who receive Pell Grants, in awarding financial aid grants to students. Financial aid grants may be used for any component of the student's cost of attendance or for emergency costs that arise due to coronavirus, such as tuition, food, housing, health care (including mental health care) or child care.

Table 1: Shares of American Rescue Plan Funding

University	Allocation	Min. Fin Aid
University of California, Berkeley	\$80,479,536	\$40,240,730
University of California, Davis	\$90,932,018	\$45,467,657
University of California, Irvine	\$96,416,507	\$48,216,328
University of California, Los Angeles	\$93,156,124	\$46,579,028
University of California, Merced	\$35,386,162	\$17,693,081
University of California, Riverside	\$81,467,469	\$40,740,127
University of California, San Diego	\$91,774,980	\$45,889,163
University of California, San Francisco	\$2,090,925	\$1,045,463
University of California, Santa Barbara	\$67,082,400	\$33,544,300
University of California, Santa Cruz	\$50,729,466	\$25,365,358
TOTAL	\$689,515,587	\$ 344,781,235

University of California Office of the President Guidance as of May 24, 2021

The UC Office of the President issued the following guidance for the financial aid portion of the ARP. This guidance reflects the University's current understanding of federal intent.

The UC Office of the President will help coordinate the sharing of information between campuses and with outside stakeholders. UCOP will not be involved in the allocation of the funding, which will come from the US Department of Education. Campuses are encouraged to work with the Office of the President on summarizing their plans, as well as on future reporting requirements to ensure systemwide coordination for both state and federal policymakers.

Principles for Emergency Grants

- Ensuring that students can continue to make progress towards graduation despite financial and other challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic should be the overarching goal of campuses' plans.
- As with prior HEERF grants, the campus Financial Aid Office will be in the best position to administer in compliance with existing and forthcoming regulations.
- UC Financial Aid Offices are requested to consult with other key leaders on campus, including the Graduate Division, Basic Needs Centers and campus Associated Students, as they develop their process and plans, although not on individual awarding decisions.
- Campuses continue to make myriad decisions about COVID-19 and therefore need flexibility as they develop their local emergency grant funding to meet the needs of their students. In general, the plans should reflect the following principles:
 - Efficient Delivery: Campuses should minimize barriers for students to qualify for emergency grants. For example, campuses can rely on a FAFSA as evidence of their need for emergency support
 - Equity: Campuses are also encouraged to prioritize students with demonstrated financial need and provide additional support to groups that may require exceptional assistance (e.g., parenting students). See below
 - Direct Emergency Grant Payments: The Department's guidance is clear that funds should be delivered directly to students, not to pay for past due bills, to reimburse prior expenditures by the campus (e.g., to pay back the campus for purchased laptops), or to replace lost wages.
 - Beyond the Cost of Attendance: The Department also has made it clear that this funding can be made available to students without regard to the normal total cost of attendance limits.
 - Disaster Emergency Relief: The IRS released guidance in late 2020 clarifying that the payments of disaster relief are not reportable on the 1098-T.

Emphasis on Exceptional Financial Need

The guidance from the Department of Education places an emphasis on the needs faced by recipients. Below is Question 7, Page 7 of the Q & A:

As under the CRRSAA, institutions are directed with the ARP funds to prioritize students with exceptional need, such as students who receive Pell Grants or are undergraduates with extraordinary financial circumstances in awarding emergency financial aid grants to students.

Beyond Pell eligibility, other types of exceptional need could include students who may be eligible for other federal or state need-based aid or have faced significant unexpected expenses, such as the loss of employment (either for themselves or their families), reduced income, or food or housing insecurity.

The Office of the President recommends that campuses require CRRSAA recipients either file a FAFSA or California Dream Act Application or develop a robust alternative means of confirming that a student has extraordinary financial need.

Undocumented and International Students

On May 11, 2021, the Department of Education released revised guidance that pertains to all HEERF funds. Of particular note, the Department clarified that all students are eligible for emergency grants:

8. Question: May undocumented students and international students receive HEERF?

Answer: Yes. The Department's final rule on student eligibility for HEERF states that all students who are or were enrolled in an institution of higher education during the COVID-19 national emergency are eligible for emergency financial aid grants from the HEERF, regardless of whether they completed a FAFSA or are eligible for Title IV. That includes citizens, permanent residents, refugees, asylum seekers, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) recipients, other DREAMers, and similar undocumented students.

Prior UCOP guidance encouraged campuses to find alternative fund sources to support undocumented and international students given the Department's reluctance to clarify their eligibility before the May 11 release.

Given the new guidance, UCOP encourages campuses to provide equivalent HEERF support to California's undocumented students, particularly those with demonstrated financial need through the California Dream Act Application.

UCOP strongly recommends that campuses develop an alternative means to assess the financial need of any international students before providing a HEERF emergency grant. For example, campuses could require that international students provide a written narrative with documentation of their financial challenges, including how their circumstances may have changed since filing their I-20. Alternatively, campuses could ask international students to fill out the equivalent of a FAFSA, e.g., using online need analysis calculators.

Furthermore, as the Department emphasizes, priority should be given to domestic students. As the May 11 guidance expands,

International students may also receive HEERF. However, as noted in Questions 11 and 12, institutions must ensure that funds go to students who have exceptional need. The Department encourages institutions to prioritize domestic students, especially undergraduates, in allocating this funding. This includes citizens, permanent residents, refugees, asylum seekers, DACA recipients, other DREAMers, and similar undocumented students.

Communicating Grant Eligibility

The Department of Education guidance states that "Institutions may not... condition the receipt of emergency financial aid grants to students on continued or future enrollment in the institution." Furthermore, in the answer to Question 17, they make it clear that the emergency grants are not to be included as part of a student's regular financial aid package:

17. Question: Can institutions include the amount of a HEERF student emergency financial aid grant in students' financial aid award package?

Answer: No, these emergency financial aid grants are not financial aid. As always, students have discretion about how they receive their grants, and institutions must receive affirmative written consent from students before using emergency financial aid grants to satisfy a student's outstanding account balance. Additionally, as described in Question 27, institutions may not use HEERF grant funds to advertise or recruit students by promoting the opportunity to receive a student emergency financial aid grant.

UCOP will work with campuses to analyze guidance from national associations and the Department to refine how to communicate the availability of these grants to new and continuing students

UC Santa Barbara American Rescue Plan Awarding

Table 1: ARP Emergency Grant Allocation and Fall 2021 Enrollment Type.

Enrollment Type	Headcount	%
Undergraduate	23,427	88.83% of enrolled students
Graduate	2,943	11.17% of enrolled students
Total Eligible Students	26,370	
Total Student Award Allocation	\$33,544,300	
Undergraduate	\$26,835,440	80.00% of student award allocation
Graduate	\$6,708,860	20.00% of student award allocation

Table 2: Summer 2021 ARP Emergency Grants for Undergraduate Students

FAFSA Filer Type	Headcount	Amount	Funding
Pell Grant Eligible EFC	1343	\$500	\$671,500
Pell Grant Eligible EFC*	105	\$200	\$21,000
Pell Grant Eligible EFC**	1	\$150	\$150
Grant Eligible EFC	443	\$300	\$132,900
Total Funding Disbursed	1,892		\$825,550

* Pell grant eligible students with \$200 awards also received \$300 HEERF II awards, totaling \$500.

**Pell grant eligible student with \$150 award also received a \$350 HEERF II award, totaling \$500.

Table 3: Fall 2021 ARP Emergency Grants for Undergraduate Students

FAFSA Filer Type	Headcount	Amount	Funding
Pell Grant Eligible EFC	7,054	\$2,250	\$15,871,500
Targeted Pell Grant Eligible EFC*	273	\$3,250	\$887,250
Other Grant Recipients	3,584	\$1,750	\$6,272,000
Targeted Grant Recipients*	15	\$2,750	\$41,250
Non-Grant Recipients with Financial Need	764	\$1,500	\$1,146,000
Appeals	95	\$1,000	\$95,000
Total Funding Disbursed	11,785		\$24,313,00
Remaining Allocation**			\$1,696,690

* Targeted populations received special consideration for funding, including: student parents, formerly incarcerated students, former foster youth, unaccompanied homeless youth, and students with an approved dependency override appeal.

Email Communication:

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Dear Undergraduate Students,

We are pleased to inform you that emergency financial aid grants, made possible through the American Rescue Plan (ARP), have been awarded to eligible undergraduate students. These grants are similar to those distributed in Spring 2020 through the CARES Act and Winter 2021 through the CRRSA Act.

Since we understand that each student has been uniquely impacted by the ongoing pandemic, we worked diligently to implement an awarding plan that ensured all students whose 2021-22 financial aid applications demonstrated financial need would receive support.

The American Rescue Plan (ARP), which established and funds the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund III (HEERF III), directs institutions to use this new federal funding to provide direct emergency financial grants to students for COVID19 expenses related to any component of their cost of attendance, including: tuition, food, housing, health care (including mental health) and child care. ARP requires that institutions prioritize students with exceptional need, such as students who receive Pell Grants, in awarding financial aid grants to students.

The funding for this program is separate from the one authorized in the Coronavirus Aid, Recovery, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA).

Eligibility for ARP Funding Through HEERF III

To establish eligibility for funding at UCSB, the 2021-22 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the California Dream Act Application (CADAA) were used in order to accurately determine financial need and corresponding award amounts.

COVID ARP Grant

The UCSB Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (OFAS) established the COVID ARP Grant to make direct awards to eligible undergraduate students. Award amounts are based on financial need: Pell Grant recipients received the largest awards, followed by non-Pell Grant recipients that were otherwise grant-eligible, and non-grant recipients with demonstrated financial need

received the most modest awards. Targeted populations in each of the three categories received special consideration, including: student parents, formerly incarcerated students, former foster youth, unaccompanied homeless youth, and students with an approved dependency override.

Eligible undergraduate students were awarded on September 9, 2021. If you were determined eligible, you can view your COVID ARP Grant on My Aid Status. A total of 11,165 students received awards ranging from \$1,500 to \$3,250, equaling \$23,059,250 in emergency funding

Refund Timeline and Processing

The COVID ARP Grant will be refunded in full. This means that funds will not be applied to any outstanding balance on BARC.

Students enrolled in eRefund (direct deposit) with BARC can expect to receive their funding by September 17, 2021. If you are not signed up for eRefund, a refund check will be mailed to the permanent mailing address you have on file with BARC and is expected to be delivered during the week of September 20th.

Appealing for Support

We recognize that all students have been affected by the current situation one way or another. Though we were not able to award all students, we have established an appeal process so that students can notify us of their circumstances. If you are a student that did not receive the COVID ARP Grant, please complete the COVID ARP Grant Consideration Form. The following students are encouraged to complete the form: international students, students who did not submit a 2021-22 financial aid application, and students who did not have demonstrated financial need on their 2021-22 financial aid application. The consideration form will remain open until all remaining funding has been exhausted.

Differences in Grant Amounts: CARES (Spring 2020), CRRSAA (Winter 2021) and ARP (Fall 2021)

If you received a COVID-related grant previously, you may have noticed that they are different amounts. There are several reasons this might be the case, including but not limited to:

- The authorizing legislation for all three funding sources, and therefore the guidance and allocations to colleges and universities, differs.
- Different student aid applications were used to determine eligibility: 2019-20 aid application in Spring 2020, the 2020-21 aid application in Winter 2021, and the 2021-22 aid application in Fall 2021.
- Campus enrollment fluctuates from year to year.

You may also notice that other colleges and universities are distributing funding differently. In each distribution of funding, UC Santa Barbara's automatic distribution process was designed after careful review of our student financial aid application information, and in order to provide emergency funding as quickly as possible, to as many eligible students as possible.

ARP Student Aid Portion & Reporting

UCSB received \$33,544,300 in HEERF III funding for Student Aid. Those funds are being distributed among undergraduate and graduate students

- Undergraduate student aid (\$26,835,440) from HEERF III includes COVID ARP Grants and successful appellants.
- Graduate student aid (\$6,708,860) from HEERF III is being managed by the Graduate Division

UCSB will publish a quarterly ARP Student Aid Portion report on the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships website for the duration of the program.

Resources

While we hope that these grants make a positive difference in the lives of students who are struggling financially due to the ongoing pandemic, we also recognize that they alone may not be enough to address students' financial challenges. Please keep in mind that there are several ongoing services available if you are experiencing financial hardship.

Basic Needs Peer Advising

Available in person and remotely

The Food Security and Basic Needs Advising Center (SNAC), located in the UCEN, offers in person basic needs advising, CalFresh registration assistance, immediate resources such as mask and toiletries distribution, and more. Stop in during hours of operation. Visit food.ucsb.edu to live chat with a basic needs advocate to chat about resources.

Financial Crisis Response Team

When students are experiencing a financial crisis or emergency that may jeopardize their path to graduation, this team will review the student's circumstances holistically to provide support and resource connections. Students may qualify for transitional housing, emergency grants, and meal plan scholarships to assist.

Please reach out to financialcrisis@sa.ucsb.edu.

Associated Students Food Bank

AS Food Bank provides fresh, free, and nutritious food as well as toiletries to the Gaucho community.

Currently open for brown bag and seed bank distribution on Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. and Fridays, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

[Visit AS Food Bank website](#)

Miramar Food Pantry

The Miramar Pantry provides free, healthy food to all qualified UCSB students to ensure Gauchos are food secure!

Serving our west campus student community, the Miramar Pantry is open Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.

We wish you all the best.

Sincerely,

Margaret Klawunn, Ph.D.

Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

Michael Miller, Ed.D.

Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Services

Saúl Quiroz

Director, Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships

UC Santa Barbara | Division of Student Affairs

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Dear UCSB Student,

We're happy to inform you that you were awarded the COVID ARP Grant, which was made available through the American Rescue Plan (ARP). Please see the notice sent from the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (VCSA) on September 10, 2021 for more information regarding this award.

Your ARP Grant was disbursed to BARC on September 27, 2021. Awards were refunded in full, and can be used to pay for any educational expenses in your Cost of Attendance, including paying down any amounts that might still be owed on your BARC account.

[Log in to MyAidStatus](#)

If you would like to get in touch, please use the following options to contact us:

- Visit our website's homepage to “Join the Line” and receive a call from an advisor
- Text OFAS to 805-585-5821
- Email us at: <https://www.finaid.ucsb.edu/contact-us>



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