

Per federal guidance provided on April 21, 2020 by the U.S. Department of Education, CARES Act Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF) are to be provided to those students who were most adversely affected by the COVID-19 campus disruptions. Further student eligibility was defined by Secretary DeVos as Title IV (financial aid) eligible in order to receive any of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund.

On March 18, 2020, based on the declaration of Nevada Governor Steve Sisolak, and the direction of NSHE Chancellor Dr. Thom Reilly, in-person instruction and campus operations were closed to students. Course instruction and student services were delivered remotely as of this date. Adapting to this remote environment was a challenge for many faculty, staff and students.

Disruption in campus operations included closure of the student unions, food pantries, library, and student services normally offered on campus. Academic advising, counseling, disability services and other services critical to student success went 100 percent remote, while a limited number of services were not immediately accessible to students online, including testing services.

To address student need within the guidelines provided by the DOE, CSN developed a two-tier approach to identifying and awarding students that were most adversely affected by the disruption to instruction and operations.

First Tier

This group consisted of students who were Title IV eligible as defined below and who were not exclusively enrolled in online classes prior to March 13, 2020. This group included 9,654 students. Students were enrolled in anywhere from one to 27 credits. Eighty percent of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds went to the first-tier group.

CSN created a query of eligible financial aid applicants and merged the file with student record data to eliminate students who were already enrolled exclusively in online courses. The final list was sorted into four categories: full time (12 + credits), three-quarter time (9 – 11.9 credits), half time (6 – 8.9 credits), and less than half time (1 – 5.9 credits).

CSN calculated each award based on the enrollment status within these four groups. Students enrolled full time (12 credits or more) paid the highest registration and other student fees, and therefore experienced more significant loss and expense due to disruption of CSN campus operations. Award amounts were calculated on the basis of fees paid for services that were no longer accessible to students.

Group 1 = Full time	\$707
Group 2 = Three quarter time	\$590
Group 3 = half time	\$514
Group 4 = less than half time	\$274

Expense vs. Need was the guiding principle for award calculations. The amount of money a student attending classes on campus had to spend to move to the online/remote method of instruction is different than for a student who was already working entirely in an online/remote environment. For instance, campus Wi-Fi access was no longer an option for students who abruptly moved to a remote learning environment.

Since all CSN campus operations were impacted, all Title IV eligible students were affected. Students were no longer able to participate in activities for which they paid fees, such as student union and athletics fees. Technology fees were also charged to students for services that were no longer available.

Second Tier

CSN provided the remaining 20 percent of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds to the second-tier group. This group was a subset of tier one. Students with the highest need that were identified by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) with an Expected Family Contribution of \$0 (EFC=0) received an additional share of the CARES funding regardless of their enrollment status. Each student in the second tier received an additional \$316.45.