



Information for First Year Cosmetology Students

The Department of Education (DOE) regulations governing the payment of federal funds (including but not limited to the Federal Pell Grant and FSEOG) changed for clock hour programs effective July 1, 2011. Gaston College's Cosmetology Diploma Program is now considered a clock hour program. Therefore, students enrolling in the program for the first time will have their federal aid disbursed based on clock hours (actual time in class/lab/salon), not on semester hour credit.

For federal aid purposes, an award year consists of a minimum of 900 clock hours and 26 weeks of instruction. During the first term of enrollment in the program, students can receive their first disbursement at the beginning of the semester. However, students must **successfully complete** the clock hours **and** weeks of instructional time before they can receive future disbursements - regardless if they receive a passing grade and have credit hours awarded. Payment of federal funds based on clock hours is student driven - not semester driven. Payment dates may be different for students depending upon clock hour completion. To receive the full Pell Grant listed in a semester on your award letter, you must complete 450 clock hours. A second disbursement cannot be released until 450 clock hours are successfully completed. After completion of the first award year (900 clock hours), disbursement amounts will vary for the remaining hours needed to complete the program.

Evening and part-time students will have their financial aid award prorated. Remember that a payment period is 450 clock hours. Therefore, evening and part-time students must complete 225 clock hours before the second disbursement is made in the payment period.

After the first semester of enrollment in the Cosmetology program, students must pay their registration fees out-of-pocket **or** make payment arrangements with the Business Office. The payment plan is open to all students enrolling at the College for tuition, fees, books, and supplies. In the event that the student does not successfully complete the required clock hours to become eligible for future financial aid disbursements, the student is solely responsible for the debt owed to the College.

Students must reapply for Federal financial aid each academic year by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). We recommend that you complete the FAFSA no later than April 30 to determine your eligibility for next school year that begins fall semester.

If you have additional questions about these specific changes, please contact the Financial Aid Office at 704-922-6227 or 704-748-5214.

Information regarding clock hour programs is subject to change.