

**I have questions about gainful employment requirements and am not sure what to do.** Institutions should review the preamble and the final regulations published in the Federal Register on Oct 29, 2010. These FAQs, which will be updated regularly, provide additional guidance. In addition, the Department will be conducting a series of Webinars on the gainful employment requirements. The first webinars are scheduled for May 25 and 26 [see [ANN-11-11](#)]. Questions can be sent to [ge-questions@ed.gov](mailto:ge-questions@ed.gov). [May 12, 2011]

**Are non-TIV eligible educational programs subject to gainful employment disclosure and reporting requirements?**

No, only TIV eligible programs are subject to the statutory and regulatory gainful employment requirements. However, all students enrolled in a TIV-eligible program that leads to gainful employment in a recognized occupation – a GE Program – must be included in the disclosure and reporting requirements even if the institution does not participate in a loan program. This is true whether the student is a TIV aid recipient or not. [May 12, 2011]

**My teacher certification program does not award a degree or certificate, but instead consists of a series of courses that prepares students to receive a State professional teaching credential or certification. Would my program be considered a GE Program?**

No, the program as described is not a GE Program. On May 20, we posted [Gainful Employment Electronic Announcement #3](#) that provides specific information on this question. Electronic Announcement #3 supersedes the information related to teacher certification programs at all types of institutions provided in the Apr 20, 2011 [Dear Colleague Letter GEN-11-10](#).

Gainful Employment Electronic Announcement #3 advises institutions that a teacher certification that consists of a collection of course work that is required for a student to receive a State professional teaching credential or certification but does NOT lead to the awarding of a degree or certificate by the institution is not a GE Program. However, a teacher certification program that does lead to the awarding of a certificate or other non-degree (for a for-profit institution, also a degree) credential is a GE Program, and the institution must comply with all of the GE Program regulatory requirements. [May 27, 2011]

**The regulations talk about CIP and SOC codes. What are these and where can I find these codes?**

The Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) provides a taxonomic scheme that supports the accurate tracking and reporting of fields of study and program completions activity. Institutions report credentials awarded by CIP codes when completing the IPEDS Completion Survey. Institutions are also required to list individual programs by CIP on their Application for Approval to Participate in Federal Student Financial Aid Programs (E-App).

A listing of CIP codes is available at: <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cip2010>. There is also a list of CIP codes available when completing the E-App.

Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes are published by the Department of Labor and are available at <http://www.bls.gov/soc>. There is a crosswalk between CIP and SOC codes that can be found at: <http://www.onetonline.org/crosswalk>. [May 27, 2011]

**Since the gainful employment metrics will not be calculated until 2012, must my**

**institution still report information by Oct 1, 2011?**

Yes. The effective dates for the Oct 29, 2010 regulations remain as follows:

- **Jul 1, 2011** for notification of new programs and disclosures.
- **Oct 1, 2011** for reporting information about students enrolled in GE Programs. [June 6, 2011]

**I would like to end TIV participation for one of my GE Programs. How do I do that? Do I have to provide the disclosures if I end Title IV participation? What about the reporting in October?**

As noted in FAQ G-A2, the GE Program regulations only apply to educational programs that are TIV eligible.

Disclosures – If an institution ends an educational program’s TIV eligibility before Jul 1, 2011, it is not required to provide the gainful employment disclosures on the educational program’s website. If the educational program’s TIV eligibility ends on or after Jul 1, 2011, it must provide the required disclosures from Jul 1 until at least the end date of the program’s TIV eligibility.

Reporting – If an institution ends an educational program’s TIV eligibility before Oct 1, 2011, it is not required to report by Oct 1, 2011. If the educational program’s TIV eligibility ends on or after Oct 1, 2011, it should report the required information for all award years covered by the regulation.

To remove an educational program’s TIV eligibility, the institution must notify the Department by accessing its E-App at [www.eligcert.ed.gov](http://www.eligcert.ed.gov) and entering an end date for the program the institution wishes to have Title IV eligibility discontinued. If the program does not appear on the institution’s ECAR, the institution must add the program following the instructions in Electronic Announcement #5. After adding the program, or if the program was previously added and appears on the institution’s ECAR, the institution must identify in Question 69 the program, the end date, and whether the program is no longer being offered or will be offered without TIV eligibility. After completing all updates, the institution must follow the instructions for submitting the updated application. [June 8, 2011]

**Do I need to report information on students in a GE program if only a few students were enrolled in the program during the award year? Do I need to disclose information even if the number of students who completed the program is very small?**

Reporting – All domestic schools must report to the Department on all students in a GE Program regardless of the number of students enrolled, unless the school does not have a Social Security Number for the student. Foreign schools must report on all Title IV recipients and all other U.S. citizens (or U.S. nationals) enrolled in a GE Program if there were 10 or more students enrolled in the GE Program for the award year.

Disclosures – For all schools, if the number of students who completed a GE Program during the award year was less than ten (10), for privacy reasons, the school should not disclose to the public:

- Median debt amounts (TIV debt, private educational loan debt, and debt from institutional financing)
- On-time completion rate

Schools must disclose all of the following, regardless of the number of students who were enrolled in or completed the program:

- The occupations (by names and SOC codes) that the program prepares completers to enter
- Tuition/fees charged to complete the program in normal time; typical costs for books and supplies (unless those costs are included as part of tuition and fees); and costs of room and board, if applicable
- Placement rates if aligned with the requirements of the accreditor or State [June 8, 2011]

### **How do I treat students without Social Security Numbers for GE Program reporting and the GE Program disclosure requirements?**

Students for whom the institution does not have a Social Security Number, in any institutional record, should not be included in the required GE Program reporting. Nor should information about those students be included when calculating median debt and completion rates for GE Program disclosures. [June 15, 2011]

### **Disclosure**

**Our institution has two programs with the same 6-digit CIP code and Credential Level but with different specializations and different program names. They each have a home page on our website. Should we disclose the median debt separately by specialization or should we combine the students in the two programs and report as one program?**

As noted in Dear Colleague Letter GEN-11-10, a GE Program is identified by the combination of the first 6 digits of the institution's OPEID, the program's 6 digit CIP code, and the program's Credential Level. Therefore, these two programs are to be treated as one program for reporting and disclosure purposes under 34 CFR 668.6. The combined median debt levels, disclosed separately by TIV loans, private loans, and institutional financing plans, must be disclosed on the home pages of each specialization.

We remind institutions that they should carefully review each of their educational programs to ensure that the appropriate CIP code has been assigned. The full listing of CIP codes is available at <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cip2010>. [May 12, 2011]

**The regulations say that institutions must use the disclosure template provided by the Department. Will the Department's template be available in time for me to post the information by the Jul 1, 2011 deadline? If not, what should I do? Do I have to immediately switch to the Department's template once it is released?**

The Department has developed a disclosure template and is currently reviewing the public comments that were received by Jun 13, 2011, the closing date for the initial public comment period. The initial design of the template can still be viewed at the Department's Web site <http://edicsweb.ed.gov> by selecting the Browse Pending Collections link and scrolling to and then clicking on the listing (04561) 1845-0107 v2. Until the template is available, institutions must comply with the disclosure requirements independently. Once the Secretary's disclosure template is available, institutions are expected to use it within a reasonable time. [June 17, 2011]

**The gainful employment disclosure regulations require that all promotional materials for a program include the required information specified in the regulations at 34 CFR**

**668.8(b)(1). How does that requirement apply to postcards, invitations, flyers, billboard and transit advertising, radio, television, web and similar advertising and solicitations?**

If the invitation, advertisement, or solicitation mentions or otherwise refers to a specific educational program or programs, the disclosure information must be included whenever feasible. If providing the information is not feasible because of the size or structure of the invitation, advertisement, or solicitation, an institution may include either the printed URL or a live link to the website where the required information is located, with a clear explanation of the information that is available at that website.

An example of a compliant disclosure under this guidance could include the following text: “For more information about our graduation rates, the median debt of students who completed the program, and other important information, please visit our website at, [www.XYZcollege.edu/ABCprogram/disclosure](http://www.XYZcollege.edu/ABCprogram/disclosure).” [May 12, 2011]

**An institution must disclose to prospective students information about each GE Program no later than Jul 1, 2011 for the most recently completed award year. What should be disclosed when Jun 30, 2011 is the last day of the most recently completed award year (2010-2011) which is just one day before the required disclosure date of Jul 1, 2011?**

Institutions may use information from the 2009-2010 award year for the disclosures that are required by Jul 1, 2011. However, within a reasonable amount of time once 2010-2011 information is available, institutions must update their disclosure information. Similarly, institutions must update their disclosures within a reasonable amount of time after the end of subsequent award years. [May 12, 2011]

**How do I calculate the median loan debt for purposes of gainful employment disclosures?**

The median is the middle value in a distribution of values, above and below which lie an equal number of values. To calculate the median loan debt for a program, an institution would follow these steps.

Step 1: Determine which students completed the GE Program in the most recently completed award year. As noted in the response to [D-Q4](#), an institution may use information from the 2009-2010 award year for disclosures that must be included on the GE Program’s website homepage by July 1, 2011, but are expected to update that information with 2010-2011 award year information in a reasonable amount of time.

Step 2: Arrange each student’s debt in ascending order, including students with zero debt.

Step 3: Identify the middle value since the median is the middle value in the distribution of all values. If there is an even number of values in the distribution and thus there is no middle value, calculate the mean (average) of the two values at the halfway point.

Example A: The following are the loan debt values for nine (9) students in the 2009-2010 award year listed in ascending order:

1. \$0
2. \$0
3. \$1000
4. \$1750

5. \$2343
6. \$4709
7. \$6881
8. \$6881
9. \$9995

Since this distribution includes an odd number of values, the median loan debt is \$2343 because the fifth value is the “middle” number when these debts are ranked in ascending order.

Example B: The following are the loan debt values for twelve (12) students in the 2009-2010 award year listed in ascending order:

1. \$0
2. \$0
3. \$500
4. \$1674
5. \$2126
6. \$3000
7. \$4000
8. \$4000
9. \$6524
10. \$8326
11. \$8591
12. \$10000

Since this distribution includes an even number of values, to determine the median loan debt for these twelve students the institution must calculate the mean of the sixth and seventh values ( $\$3000 + \$4000 = \$7000$ ;  $\$7000 \div 2 = \$3500$ ). The median loan debt for this cohort of twelve students is \$3500. [May 12, 2011]

### **What loans need to be included in the three calculations of the GE Program’s median loan debt?**

For the purposes of the disclosure of median TIV loan debt, all loans provided under the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program and the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) Program are to be included in the calculation of Title IV median loan debt, except for Parent PLUS loans and TEACH grants that may have been converted to Unsubsidized Direct Loans. Federal Perkins Loans are not to be included.

For the median loan debt of private loans, the Truth-in-Lending regulations at 12 CFR 226.46(b)(5) provide the definition of a private education loan. Examples of private education loans include, but are not limited to, loans made expressly for educational expenses by financial institutions, credit unions, institutions of higher education or their affiliates and States and localities.

For the median of institutional financing plan debt, include any loan, extension of credit,

payment plan, or other financing mechanism that would otherwise not be considered a private education loan but that results in a debt obligation that a student must pay to an institution after completing the program. [May 12, 2011]

**When calculating on-time completion rates for disclosure purposes, how do we determine “normal time”?**

The regulations at 34 CFR 668.6(c) refer to 34 CFR 668.41(a) for a definition of “normal time”. Normal time is defined as the amount of time necessary for a student to complete all requirements for the degree or certificate as provided in the institution’s catalog or other promotional materials. This is typically four years for a bachelor’s degree program in a standard term-based institution, two years for an associate degree program in a standard term-based institution, and the scheduled time for certificate programs as provided in the institution’s publications.

For clock hour programs, it is the time, measured in days or weeks, provided in the institution’s catalog or other promotional materials stating how long it takes a student to complete the program. For example, an institution’s materials may state that the normal time to complete a 1500 clock hour program is 50 weeks.

Note that in all instances, “normal time” is not 150% of the published time nor is it the timeframe used in the calculation of completion rates for Student Right to Know disclosures. [May 20, 2011]

**What placement rate do we disclose if our institution is not required by our accrediting agency or State to calculate a placement rate?**

If there is no requirement by the State or an accreditor to calculate a placement rate for either the institution as a whole or for the specific GE Program, the institution does not need to disclose a placement rate. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is currently developing a methodology that will be used to calculate placement rates for GE Programs. When the NCES methodology becomes available, institutions must use it to calculate a GE Program’s placement rate. We do not expect the NCES methodology to be available this year. [June 8, 2011]

**Our institution is required to calculate placement rates for both our State and for our accrediting agency, must we include both rates in our disclosures?**

Yes, the institution must report both rates. The regulations at 34 CFR 668.6(b)(1)(iv) provide that if the institution is required by its accrediting agency or State to calculate a placement rate, it must disclose the rate on a program basis and identify the accrediting agency or State agency under whose requirements the rate was calculated. [June 8, 2011]

**In some instances existing CIP codes do not crosswalk to one or more SOC Codes. Can we expect updates to this area? May we select a SOC Code that may not crosswalk to the selected CIP code?**

The last update to the CIP/SOC crosswalk was completed in 2010 and can be found at <http://www.onetonline.org/crosswalk/>.

At a minimum, institutions are required to disclose the SOC codes that correspond to the selected CIP codes on the O\*NET Crosswalk website. For CIP codes that do not crosswalk to one or more SOC codes, institutions can add SOC codes that align significantly and substantively with the program learning outcomes provided that the institution has evidence

that graduates of the program found employment in these fields. [June 15, 2011]

**How do I calculate an on-time completion rate for the gainful employment program (GE Program) disclosures required by the Oct 29, 2010 regulations?**

The regulations at 34 CFR 668.6(c) explain how an institution calculates an on-time completion rate for GE Programs. The formula is as follows:

Divide the number of students who completed the GE Program during the most recently completed award year within normal time by the total number of students who completed the GE Program in the most recently completed award year and multiply the result by 100.  
Example: During the 2009-2010 award year 100 students completed the GE Program but only 75 of them completed in normal time. Divide 75 by 100 to get .75. Then multiply .75 times 100 to get 75. Thus for this program, 75% is the completion rate. [June 15, 2011]

**If a student took an approved leave of absence, may I only use the student's actual enrollment time to determine if this student completed within the normal time for the GE Program?**

No. Leaves of absence are to be included when determining whether a student completed a GE Program within normal time. For example, if the normal time to compete a GE Program is 2 years and a student took 2.5 years to complete because of a 6 month leave of absence, the student would NOT be one that can be included as having completed the GE Program within normal time when calculating the GE Program's completion rate. Thus, students who do not complete the GE Program in normal time because of a leave of absence (or any other reason) are to be included in the denominator of the completion rate fraction but not in the numerator. [June 15, 2011]

**Should median debt that must be disclosed as required by the Oct 29, 2010 regulations include loan amounts that exceeded a student's institutional charges?**

Yes, when calculating the median Title IV debt and private educational loan debt for a GE Program's disclosure information, the total amount that each student received for attendance in the GE Program, without regard to how much went to institutional charges, is to be included. For debt from institutional financing plans, the amount to be used in the calculation is the amount the student has outstanding upon leaving the program.

For example, a student may have received a loan totaling \$10,000 for attendance in a GE Program where \$6,000 went to pay institutional charges and \$4,000 was provided to the student to meet other educational expenses (e.g., books and supplies, living expenses). When calculating the median loan debt for the disclosures, this student would be considered to have \$10,000 in loan debt. [June 15, 2011]

## **Reporting**

**When will the file layout for the reporting requirements be available?**

The NSLDS File Layout is now available and can be accessed under "[Resources](#)" on the Gainful Employment Information Page. Remember, the reporting deadline is Oct 1, 2011. [June 13, 2011]

**If institutions are only required to report on TIV eligible programs, why does the Department's draft file layout included with Dear Colleague Letter GEN-11-10 ask if the educational program is a GE Program?**

Although schools are only required to report on students who were enrolled in GE Programs, reporting on non-GE Programs is optional. For some schools, it may be easier for them to report on all students. [May 12, 2011]

## **New Programs**

### **What is the process for notifying the Department that my institution will be starting a new GE Program?**

An Electronic Announcement explaining the process and what documentation institutions need to provide will be posted shortly. There will be a link to that Electronic Announcement on the Gainful Employment Information page at:

<http://www.ifap.ed.gov/GainfulEmploymentInfo/index.html>. [May 20, 2011]

### **My institution cannot submit the notification for a new GE Program 90 days before the planned first day of class. We will not have the program approved by our governing board by then. What do we do?**

The regulations at 600.20(d)(1)(ii)(C) say that if an institution does not provide timely notice it must wait for Departmental approval before disbursing TIV funds to students enrolled in the new GE Program. We consider timely notice to be a materially complete application with all required information, documents and approvals. If the institution cannot provide a materially complete application at least 90 days in advance – regardless of the reason – it will have to wait for the Department to approve the program before disbursing TIV funds. [May 20, 2011]