

Private College Advisory Board

Financial Aid Programs

Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant (TAG) Program

2020-21 Summary:

- The 2020-21 budget provided a total appropriation of \$71.1 million combined.
- An additional \$4.1 million was appropriated but then unallotted and unavailable for awards.
- Due to the loss in funds, phase-out of online TAG and uncertainty about the pandemic's impact on fall 2020 enrollments, the fall award was set at \$1,760 (\$3,520 annualized award).
- With lower new enrollments and quicker than anticipated phase-out of online students, the spring award was adjusted up to \$1,990 (combined with the fall award, resulted in annualized award of \$3,750: \$1,760 plus \$1,990).
- Also able to award all late applicants at the equivalent amounts.

2021-22 Outlook:

- The 2021-22 budget provides \$79.6 million.
- The projected award amounts are:

On-campus students

Undergraduate: \$4,000 (\$2,000 per term)

Graduate students: \$2,200 (\$1,100 per term)

Exempt distance learning students

Undergraduate: \$3,400 (\$1,700 per term)

Graduate students: \$1,700 (\$850 per term)

All other distance learning students

Undergraduate: \$2,000 (\$1,000 per term)

Graduate students: \$1,100 (\$650 per term)

Summary of Current Annual TAG Awards:

Award Degree Level	Type Enrollment	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Undergraduate Award	On-campus	\$3,400	\$3,750	\$4,000
	Dist. Ed in 2019-20		\$3,400	\$3,400
	All other Dis. Ed.		\$0	\$2,000
Graduate Award	On-campus	\$1,700	\$2,200	\$2,200
	Dist. Ed in 2019-20		\$1,700	\$1,700
	All other Dis. Ed.		\$0	\$1,100

The Distance Education students enrolled into 2019-20 will phase out in 2-3 years.

Historic Summary:**Maximum Annual TAG Awards and Appropriations**

Fiscal Year	Undergraduate	Graduate	Appropriations
2010-11	\$2,600	\$1,130	\$53,456,233
2011-12	\$2,750	\$1,200	\$55,956,233
2012-13	\$2,800	\$1,300	\$58,041,882
2013-14	\$3,100	\$1,550	\$64,812,665
2014-15	\$3,100	\$1,550	\$64,812,665
2015-16	\$3,100	\$1,550	\$64,812,665
2016-17	\$3,200	\$1,600	\$65,812,665
2017-18	\$3,300	\$1,650	\$65,812,665
2018-19	\$3,270	\$1,640	\$65,812,665
2019-20	\$3,400	\$1,700	\$71,098,303
2020-21	\$3,750	\$2,200	\$71,098,303
2021-22	\$4,000 *	\$2,200 *	\$79,598,303

* on-campus priority students, pending available funding and actual participation.

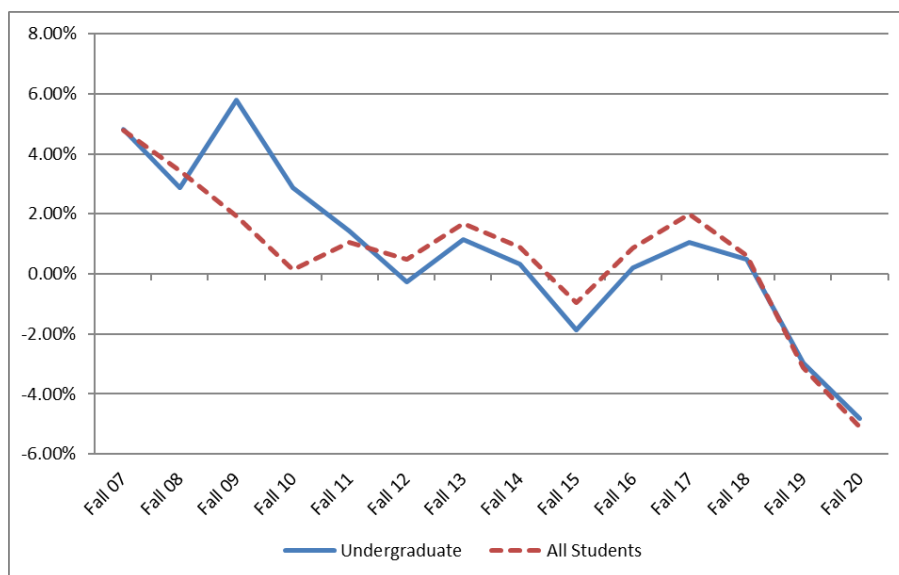
TAG Participation Trends:

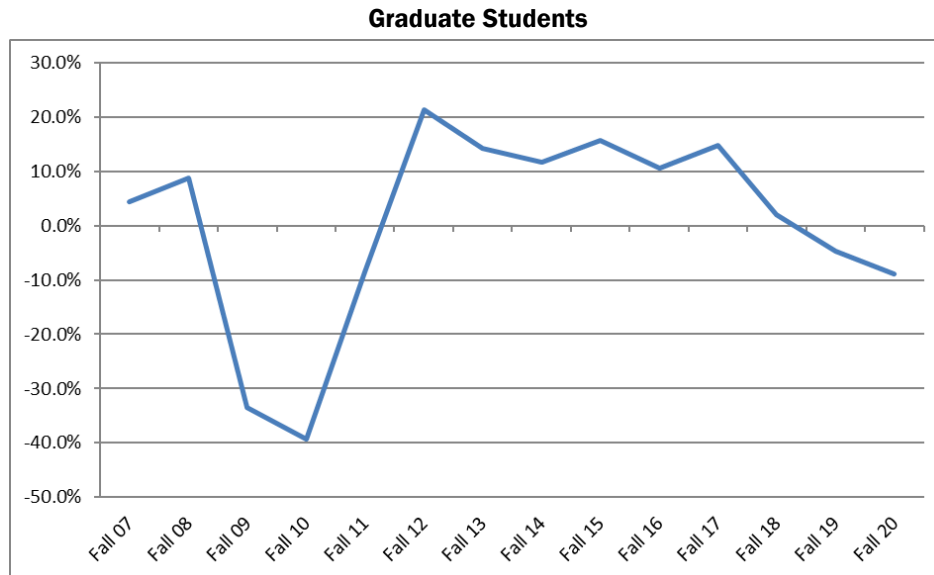
The change in the TAG participation rate among priority undergraduate students remained stagnant or in decline for seven of the past nine years. For fall 2020, TAG participation among priority students was down -4.8%, from 20,307 to 19,331 priority award recipients. (Priority students are returning students or new students filing an application by the July 1 priority deadline.)

The *graduate* program (Health Professionals only) represents just over seven percent of total TAG recipients and had been growing rapidly with double-digit percent increases until a more modest two percent increase in FY19 and then a decline over the past two years. For fall 2020, TAG participation was down -8.9% from 1,681 to 1,532 priority award recipients. (The FY09 and FY10 decreases were due to restricting eligible programs to just health professionals.)

For FY21, the decline in participation is partly attributable to phasing out TAG participation for new distance learning and online education students. Taking those students into account, TAG participation for undergraduate students declined by 345 students for an adjusted -1.7% and graduate participation declined by 104 students for an adjusted decline of -6.2%.

Annual Percent Change in Participation: Fall Priority Students Undergraduate and Overall Students





Distance Learning / Online Education Students (distance learning)

- In the 2020 session, the policymakers began to phase-out TAG awards for distance learning students.
 - Any distance learning student enrolled in 2019-20 retains TAG eligibility at the 2019-20 award rates (\$3,400 / \$1,700).
 - Any other distance learning student would no longer be eligible for a TAG award.
 - Primarily affected four institutions: Bluefield College, Liberty University, Mary Baldwin University, and Regent University. Relatively minor impact on other institutions

- In the 2021 session, the policymakers partially restored TAG awards for distance learning students.
 - Any distance learning student enrolled in 2019-20 retains TAG eligibility at the 2019-20 award rates.
 - Any other distance learning student receives a reduced TAG award. For 2021-22, the reduced amount is \$2,000.
 - Updated guidance is anticipated by mid-summer.

Tuition Equity Update:

In 2020, policymakers created a provision - commonly referred to as the Tuition Equity provision - for undocumented students to have access to the in-state tuition rate.

To be eligible, the student must:

- Complete two years of high school in Virginia (public or private, homeschool also permitted).
- Complete high school education in Virginia (diploma or GED).
- File state taxes for at least two years immediately prior to beginning enrollment.
- Have any legal status other than the F, J, M, or H3 visas.
- The new law provided access for in-state tuition as of the 2020-21 award year.

In 2021, legislation extended benefits for students meeting the above requirements to include consideration for state financial assistance, including TAG, effective with the **2022-23 award year**.

Students who are not a US citizen or national cannot complete the federal FAFSA form; therefore, Virginia is in process of creating a state application that will provide an equivalent of the federal Expected Family Contribution (EFC). This “state-EFC” will be used to calculate student need so students can be considered for state need-based assistance.

While TAG is not need-based, private institutions with students ineligible to complete the FAFSA could use the state application to calculate an EFC equivalent so that the institution can determine eligibility for the Two Year College Transfer Grant (requires maximum 12,000 EFC) or institution-controlled need-based programs.

The new state application is expected to be available in fall 2020 for the 2022-23 financial aid filing. Private institutions participating in state financial aid programs will be provided access to this application.