

Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG)

The federal government is launching a new federal grant called the Academic Competitiveness Grant starting 2006-07.

Amounts are:

- \$750 for 1st year of college
- \$1300 for 2nd year of college

Recipient:

- must be a US citizen
- must be Pell Grant eligible
- must be enrolled full-time
- must have completed a “rigorous” secondary school program of study (see below).

In addition:

- first year students may not have been previously enrolled and must have graduated high school after January 1, 2006
- second year students must have a 3.0 GPA and must have graduated high school after January 1, 2005

How to apply:

- Students must submit the FAFSA for 2006-07. Starting July 1, 2006 USDE will notify all FAFSA applicants who are citizens and Pell eligible of the website with the “rigorous” secondary school programs (see below).
- Students will self-identify their having completed the “rigorous” secondary school program (see below) and complete the ACG Verification Form (coming soon).

USDE California Rigorous Secondary School Programs

The options for eligibility for the 2006-07 school year for a student from California are:

- ***The California Golden State Seal Merit Diploma***
- ***A set of courses similar to the State Scholars Initiative.*** This program of study requires passing grades in the following:
 - Four years of English;
 - Three years of Math (including Algebra I and a higher level course such as Algebra II, Geometry, or Data Analysis and Statistics);

- Three years of science (including at least two courses from biology, chemistry or physics);
 - Three years of social studies; and
 - One year of a foreign language.
- ***Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses and test scores.*** This program requires a minimum of two Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses in high school and a minimum passing score on the exams for those classes. Students must score 3 or higher on AP exams and 4 or higher on IB exams.
 - ***California A-G Requirements.*** This program is available to students who complete the normal course requirements for the A-G requirements for admission to the UC or CSU, or complete a modified version of the A-G requirements for admission to the UC and CSU, in which a year-long, career technical education course that meets or exceeds the rigorous academic content standards approved by the State Board of Education may substitute for one of the courses that counts toward completion of the “G” requirement.
 - A. History/Social Science: 2 years required. Two years of history/social science selected from world history, cultures and geography; U.S. history; or, a combination of U.S. History, American government/civics, and economics equal to one year; and
 - B. English: 4 years required. Four years of college-preparatory English that includes frequent and regular writing, and reading of classic and modern literature. No more than one year of ESL-type courses can be used to meet this requirement; and
 - C. Mathematics: 3 years required. Three years of college-preparatory mathematics that include the topics covered in elementary and advanced algebra and two- and three-dimensional geometry. Approved integrated math courses may be used to fulfill part or all of this requirement; and
 - D. Laboratory Science: 2 years required. Two years of laboratory science chosen from biology, chemistry, physics, or physical science. Advanced laboratory science classes that have biology, chemistry or physics as prerequisites and offer substantial additional material may be used to fulfill this requirement. Two years of an approved integrated science program may be used to fulfill this requirement; and
 - E. Language other than English: 2 years required. Two years of the same language other than English. Courses should emphasize speaking and understanding, and include instruction in grammar, vocabulary, reading, composition and culture; and
 - F. Visual and Performing Arts: 1 year required. A single yearlong approved arts course from a single VPA discipline: dance, drama/theater, music or visual art. Courses used to fulfill this requirement must satisfy the five State standards for artistic perception, creative expression, historical and cultural context, aesthetic valuing, and connections, relations and application; and

G. College Preparatory Electives: 1 year required. One year, in addition to those required in “A-F” above, chosen from the following areas: visual and performing arts (non-introductory level courses), history, social science, English, advanced mathematics, laboratory science and language other than English (a third year in the language used for the “E” requirement or two years of another language).

- The USDE website for rigorous secondary school program of study is <http://www.ed.gov/admins/finaid/about/ac-smart/state-programs06.html>.