**Distance Education**

**Summary/Purpose:** Distance Education programs and financial aid

**Study Abroad**

The University of Mississippi offers many opportunities for students to participate in programs off campus. These include study abroad as well as special workshops, camps and other experiences not offered on our traditional schedule. Some of these programs are administered directly by the University of Mississippi and earn University of Mississippi credits. Others are administered by a "host" institution and credits earned in the programs appear on a student’s transcript as transfer hours. These latter programs require a Consortium Contract between the University of Mississippi and the "host" institution. The difference in program administration affects how we process financial aid for various programs.

A student may use federal student financial aid to help defray the expenses of off-campus programs, but should follow the steps below.

First, students should determine whether the program will earn University of Mississippi credits or whether credits earned will be transfer credits. The Study Abroad Office can be contacted for this information at [http://www.olemiss.edu/abroad](http://www.olemiss.edu/abroad). For programs offered during the summer, financial aid will be packaged according to students’ remaining eligibility for the current academic year since the summer terms are considered the end of an award year.

**All Students:**

In order to receive most forms of federal student aid for any term, students must enroll at least half-time. Half-time enrollment is 5 hours for graduate and law students, or 6 hours for undergraduate and pharmacy students.

The Office of Financial Aid is responsible for calculating awards, disbursing aid, monitoring satisfactory progress and other student eligibility requirements, keeping records, approving disbursement of FSA funds and returning funds if the student withdraws from the program.

Students must be able to cover advance expenses (air fare, deposits, etc.) on their own until financial aid awards are available. Most aid cannot be disbursed in advance of the program.

**For Programs Offered Through Other Institutions**

Students whose programs are administered by another institution must complete a Consortium Contract with the host institution. Please contact the Office of Financial Aid to initiate this agreement at least six weeks prior to the beginning of the program.

Students participating in programs that require a consortium agreement are **not eligible** for State Aid (i.e. MTAG, MESG, William Winter, etc.) **nor** are they eligible for institutional or foundation Scholarships (i.e. Academic Excellence, Luckyday, Non-Resident Alumni, etc.)
The only types of aid eligibility with a consortium agreement are: Pell Grant, Stafford student loan, PLUS loan or private (alternative) loan.

- Student must provide the Office of Financial Aid a brochure, printed material or web site containing the details of the program in which the student wishes to participate.

- Student must submit a completed Transfer Credit Course Approval Form to the Study Abroad Office for "out of country" programs or a Permission to Transfer Form for "American universities" to your department or dean confirming that the credits earned in the program will transfer back and be counted toward your degree requirements.

- Complete a Direct Deposit Form with the Office of the Bursar to ensure timely delivery of funds.

   http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/bursar/UMFinancialAid--DirectDepositInformation.htm

- Student must plan to be billed by the other institution and not the University of Mississippi. The University of Mississippi Office of the Bursar will deliver financial aid proceeds and the student must arrange to handle the bill directly with the other institution.

- Student must contact the Office of Financial Aid in writing upon withdrawal from any Study Abroad program. Aid already disbursed must be repaid. Pending aid will be withdrawn from the student's award package.

**Correspondence Courses** (offered by the Office of Independent Study)

When the student enrolls for a correspondence course, his/her bursar account will be charged with the appropriate tuition and fees. The correspondence course tuition fee is a separate/additional charge, on top of any fees owed for classes taken on the main campus or at the satellite centers. (Therefore, if the student is enrolled as a full-time student with 12 or more hours, the correspondence course tuition charge will still be assessed as well as a full-time campus tuition charge.)

Most scholarships including University Scholarships, such as Academic Excellence and University Foundation Scholarships, will not accept correspondence courses as part of their enrollment requirements. No state aid including MESG and MTAG will allow correspondence courses to be used to fulfill the enrollment requirement. Faculty/Staff and Child of Faculty/Staff scholarships can be used to pay for Correspondence Courses.

A student may receive some types of federal financial aid when enrolled in correspondence courses. However, there are requirements that must be met before any aid will be released to the student's bursar account. The student must complete the on-line Request to Use Financial Aid for Independent Study Course(s) form and meet with a financial aid advisor to determine eligibility and aid amounts at least two weeks before the beginning of the semester or term of enrollment. If a student does not meet with a financial aid advisor, the student will not be able to have the course considered for purposes of federal aid. In general, the student must complete the mid-course exam before the hours can be counted.