UCO CARES Act Report
University of Central Oklahoma
May 10, 2020

Background
The Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Section 18004(a)(1) of the CARES Act, Pub. L. No. 116-136 signed on March 27, 2020, authorized grant funds to the University of Central Oklahoma from a portion of the CARES Act Student Emergency Funds. These funds have been designated to provide emergency financial aid grants to students for expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus (including eligible expenses under a student’s cost of attendance such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and childcare).

As part of the reporting requirements by the Department of Education, the University of Central Oklahoma is reporting the following items in accordance with the Certification of Agreement.

Item 1
An acknowledgement that the institution signed and returned the certification and agreement form and that the institution has used or intends to use the funds to provide the mandated amount of at least 50% of the emergency financial aid grants to students.
- The University of Central Oklahoma signed and returned the certification and agreement form on April 10, 2020.

Item 2
The total amount of funds that the institution will receive or has received under the HEERF student portion.
- The University of Central Oklahoma has been granted $5,585,195 under the HEERF student portion of the CARES Act. UCO has not drawn down funds as of 5/10/2020.

Item 3
Of those funds, the total amount that has been distributed to students as of the date of reporting (i.e. the first 30-day deadline, and then every 45 days thereafter) and how it was distributed.
- As of 5/10/2020, there have been no distributions.
- The University is in the process of developing a plan for distributing the funds to students.

Item 4
The estimated total number of students at the institution eligible to participate in programs under Section 484 in Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and therefore eligible to receive an emergency financial aid grant.
- Out of the 13,924 students enrolled for the Spring 2020 term, UCO determined that 2,319 students are ineligible to receive CARES Act funding. UCO estimates that 11,605 students are eligible for assistance.

Item 5
The total number of students who have received an emergency financial aid grant.
Although the University has not distributed any CARES Act funds as of May 10, 2020, we utilized an assistance application process that has been in place since April 1, 2020. The application process has helped identify 953 eligible students that have completed FAFSAs for this year.

Item 6
How the institution determined which students did or will receive emergency financial aid grants and how much funding they did or will receive.

- Student’s eligibility is based on their eligibility to apply for or have previously applied for Federal Financial Aid or Title IV aid such as Pell, SEOG, Federal Work-Study, Student Loans. Based on Federal guidance, concurrent students, students who previously identified as having committed a felony, international students (except for those possessing a permanent resident card-Green Card), and students enrolled in fully online programs were not eligible.
- The University reviewed the UCO COVID-19 Emergency Relief Applications for the 953 students that completed FAFSAs for this year. Judgement was applied to each application in determining the award amount based on the students’ stated financial need. The University expects to award $276,410 to these students in total.
- The University is currently exploring other options for distributing CARES Act funds from tranche one. Our experience applying subjective criteria to the 953 applications has been laborious and unsustainable. The University is collecting data to create a system that will objectively assist CARES Act eligible students with their financial needs.

Item 7
Any instructions, directions, or guidance provided by the institution to students concerning the emergency financial aid grants.

- No funds have been distributed as of this report date. The initial application system has proven to be very time consuming.
- Guidance to students about the emergency relief funds are being drafted. Students will be informed as the institution adopts a broader strategy to distribute the CARES Act funds more efficiently.

Disclosure
The University of Central Oklahoma has continued to pay all its employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions and closures to the greatest extent practicable. The following actions and decisions were made:

- Classroom instruction transitioned to alternative delivery methods beginning March 28th.
- Essential faculty and staff transitioned to full-time telework with supervisor approval.
- Non-essential full-time, and part-time staff unable to work and not approved for telework were paid through April 18th after the University’s closure on March 25th and given 80 hours of emergency sick leave.
- Beginning May 3rd, employees are required to use available leave. Part-time employees will not be paid.
- All events were canceled or converted to virtual events and webinars.
- The University campus is closed until May 31st.