



Office of the President

November 24, 2021

Dear Albizu Students:

Background

The Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund III (HEERF III) is authorized by the American Rescue Plan (ARP), Public Law 117-2, signed into law on March 11, 2021, providing \$39.6 billion in support to institutions of higher education to serve students and ensure learning continues during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The HEERF III ARP funds are in addition to funds authorized by the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA / HEERF II), Public Law 116-260 and the Coronavirus Aid, Recovery, and Economic Security (CARES / HEERF I) Act, Public Law 116-136. Emergency funds available to institutions and their students under all emergency funds total \$76.2 billion.

The ARP provides that emergency financial aid grants to students can be used by students for “any component of their cost of attendance” or for “emergency costs that arise due to coronavirus, such as tuition, food, housing, health care (including mental health care) or childcare”. Students determine how they may use their emergency financial aid grant within the allowable uses. Like the CRRSAA, the ARP allows institutions to apply the emergency financial aid grant towards a student’s outstanding account balance, but only if the institution first obtains the student’s written, affirmative consent.

Students who are or were enrolled in an institution of higher education since the start of the COVID-19 national emergency (as of March 13, 2020) are eligible for emergency financial aid grants from the HEERF, regardless of whether they completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or are eligible for Title IV. The Department’s final rule on student eligibility for HEERF states that all students who are or were enrolled in an institution of higher education during the COVID-19 national emergency are eligible for emergency financial aid grants from the HEERF, regardless of whether they completed a FAFSA or are eligible for Title IV. That includes citizens, permanent residents, refugees, asylum seekers, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) recipients, other Dreamers, and similar undocumented students.

The ARP requires institutions to use the student portion of the allocation to prioritize grants to those students with “exceptional need”. The US Department of Education guidance identified “students who receive Pell grants” as an example of identifying students with exceptional need. Further, students exclusively enrolled in distance education courses are also eligible for emergency financial aid grants under ARP. The institutional portion of the ARP HEERF III allocation may be used to cover Institutional Costs to “defray expenses associated with coronavirus.” The CRRSAA lists, for example, reimbursement for allowable expenses already incurred, technology costs associated with a transition to distance education, faculty and staff trainings, and payroll as examples of appropriate expenses.

Allocation

Albizu University received an allocation of \$4,318,539 in funds from HEERF III. In accordance with the governmental allocation guidelines, a minimum of \$2,159,270 must be designated solely to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants (“Grants”) to students of the Miami and San Juan Campuses, and the Mayagüez University Center. In accordance with the requirements of HEERF III, Albizu University will prioritize grants to students with “exceptional” need. Prioritization of students with exceptional need under HEERF III is being accomplished by awarding the highest award amounts to Pell Grant recipients. Students who are not non-Pell recipients will receive grants in different amounts based on the student’s Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The formulas below provide details on how each category of student is determined.

Distribution at Albizu University

Albizu University is allocating both the required minimum of \$2,159,270 for Emergency Financial Aid Grants, as well as setting aside a portion of the institutional funds of approximate \$626,730 to supplement student Grant awards, resulting in an approximate total allocation of \$2,786,000 from HEERF III funds for student grants.

Albizu University will distribute the funds for the Grants in line with the guidance provided by the United States Department of Education (USDE) at the time of the distribution.

The Grant awards under HEERF III will be distributed to active Albizu students who meet the criteria described below the current 2021-2022 academic year (hereinafter referred to as “Eligible Students”).

The Grant awards will be allocated for distribution among all Eligible Students enrolled in the Fall 2021 term in accordance with the formula described below, which provides for three categories of students. These categories and allocations allow Albizu to meet the requirement to prioritize students with the greatest need based on the information available through the students’ FAFSAs or the Institutional Assistance Request Form.

Students who have been on Leave of Absence status since the start of the Fall 2021 academic term or who were not enrolled in the Fall 2021 academic term are not considered Eligible Students for purposes of the allocation formula and will not receive grants from the available HEERF III funding.

The formulas below will be applied based on the student's status on November 13, 2021, as an active and enrolled student and based on the information listed on the FAFSA submitted on or before November 13, 2021, or Institutional Assistance Request Form they submitted on or before December 10, 2021. Note for students who filed a FAFSA: changes made to a student's FAFSA after November 13, 2021, will not be considered for purposes of calculating the student's grant under HEERF III.

Students who did not complete a FAFSA by November 13, 2021, can still apply for emergency aid funding by completing the Institutional Assistance Request Form and submitting it no later than December 10, 2021. Students who request aid using the Institutional Assistance Request Form may receive a grant as either a Non-Pell Recipient with EFC equal to zero (0) or a Non-Pell Recipient with EFC equal to one (1) or more, as described below.

The distribution formula is as follows:

I. Pell Recipients

Are Eligible Students who meet all of the following criteria:

1. completed a FAFSA by November 13, 2021;
2. have been classified as Pell recipients during the current Title IV financial aid award year (FAFSA for 2021-2022).
3. are enrolled in the Fall 2021 term; and
4. are active students on November 13, 2021, per the Registrar enrollment count.

The allocation per student who meets these criteria is estimated to be \$2,000.

Institutional Assistance Requests forms will not be accepted for the allocation of grant awards under the category of Pell Recipient.

II. Non-Pell Recipients with EFC equal to zero (0)

Are Eligible Students who meet all of the following criteria:

1. completed a FAFSA by November 13, 2021, or Institutional Assistance Request Form by December 10, 2021;
2. have an EFC of zero (0) as determined by the FAFSA or the Institutional Assistance Request Form;
3. are enrolled in the Fall 2021 term;
4. are active students on November 13, 2021, per the Registrar enrollment count;
5. have not been classified as Pell recipients during the current Title IV financial aid award year (FAFSA for 2021-2022); and
6. for students who completed an Institutional Assistance Request form, Pell is not calculated.

The allocation per student who meets these criteria is estimated to be \$1,000.

III. Non-Pell Recipients with EFC equal to one (1) or more.

Are Eligible Students who meet all of the following criteria:

1. completed a FAFSA by November 13, 2021, or Institutional Assistance Request Form by December 10, 2021;
2. have an EFC of one (1) or more as determined by the FAFSA or the Institutional Assistance Request Form;
3. are enrolled in the Fall 2021 term;
4. are active students on November 13, 2021, per the Registrar enrollment count;
5. have not been classified as Pell recipients during the current Title IV financial aid award year (FAFSA for 2021-2022); and
6. for students who completed an Institutional Assistance Request form, Pell is not calculated.

The allocation per student who meets these criteria is estimated to be \$500.

All students will receive an agreement to accept or reject the grant award through the Student Self-Service platform. However, the agreement will not state the amount of the award being granted. The award amount provided to each Eligible Student will be disclosed at the time the award is paid out. It is important that each student understands the purpose of the emergency financial aid grant and certify that these funds will be utilized for the established purpose. It is for this reason that the agreement must be signed by each student in order to receive their award.

If a student does not accept their emergency financial aid grant by 12:00 pm on December 10, 2021, through the Student Self-Service platform the institution may choose to void the check and redistribute the funds to other students. Please note that there is no appeal process available should a student miss the deadline to accept the emergency financial aid grant award.

Anticipated Date for the Disbursement of Funds


By December 31, 2021 to students who completed a FAFSA before November 13, 2021.

By January 31, 2022 to students who are eligible to submit an Institutional Assistance Form and who submit the form by December 10, 2021.

Additional Information

If you have questions, please review the HEERF III FAQ at <https://www.albizu.edu/cares-act/after> December 1, 2021 or contact your financial aid officer via email.

Cordially,


José Pons Madera, PhD
President