

FINANCIAL AID VERIFICATION POLICY

I. Abbreviations

- A. United States Department of Education or Department of Education (DOE)
- B. Office of Inspector General (OIG)
- C. Office of Financial Aid or Financial Aid (FA)

II. Policy Source and GSU Policy Expression

The DOE specifies Verification policy. The DOE Verification policy can be found at: <https://www2.ed.gov/finaid/landing.jhtml>. Access to GSU procedure associated with financial aid Verification resides on the FA website: www.govst.edu/financialaid. The University is required to establish this policy consistent with DOE regulations. All personal information remains subject to FERPA guidelines.

III. Policy Overview

Verification is the process of confirming the accuracy of student reported data on financial aid applications. The DOE selects students for verification. Financial Aid verifies the documentation of those students selected for verification as per the guidelines established by the DOE. In some instances, FA may place a student in Verification status if campus personnel identify a discrepancy or anomaly in the student file or related documentation.

IV. Procedural Responsibility

The Office of Financial Aid has principal responsibility for carrying out DOE policy, including but not limited to maintaining communication with prospective and current students via the www.govst.edu website, GSU student e-mail, and the FA self-service student financial aid portal. Financial Aid shall maintain a procedural manual consistent with DOE policy. Financial Aid shall ensure the Administrative Policy on Financial Aid Verification shall be *reviewed annually* to reflect changes in DOE policy.

Values upon which the FA applies Verification policy include but are not limited to timely flow of communication from the DOE to the student via the FA Student Service portal and through official electronic communication, respect for confidentiality and student integrity, and accurate and timely processing of student documentation.

V. Exclusions

Financial Aid applies DOE specified exclusions and requirements to procedures at GSU. Such exclusions include but are subject to DOE adjustment: death of a student during award year; student is not a financial aid Title IV recipient; student only receives unsubsidized loans; and aid disbursed prior to the student's departure from the University.

VI. Documentation

Financial Aid applies DOE specified requirements for documentation. Such documentation includes, but may not be limited to, verification of such financial data as: Adjusted Gross Income, tax information, household size, household expenses, and statement of benefits from the Department of Public Aid and/or Social Security Administration, verification of child support, and other family members enrolled in college.

VII. Effect on Student Status

Students may remain enrolled during the Verification and investigation process. Adjustments to financial aid awards due to Verification status may affect student debt to the University.

VIII. Student Consequences

The result of Verification findings may include adjustments in financial aid status, including increases, decreases, or elimination of Title IV financial aid. If FA administration, in collaboration with the Office of the Dean of Students, believes there is credible evidence that fraud or misconduct has occurred, the case shall be referred to the DOE's OIG for review. While Verification or a misconduct investigation is pending, processing and disbursement of aid is suspended.

IX. Audit

The Director of Financial Aid maintains an internal peer and supervisor review of FA processes to ensure accuracy. The GSU internal auditor reserves the right to audit FA processes, including Verification. External Auditors as well as the DOE maintains the right to audit University FA processes and adjust processes and outcomes accordingly.

Adopted 04/12/2018