

SUNY RECONNECT

SUNY Reconnect: Frequently Asked Questions

[UPDATED September 24, 2025]

The following series of questions and answers have been compiled based on SUNY Reconnect information sessions, campus office hours discussions, and questions received directly via sunyreconnect@suny.edu. This list of questions is non-exhaustive and the SUNY Office of Community Colleges welcomes campus faculty and staff to contact us with additional questions or student situations as they arise by emailing the address noted above.

Included with this FAQ is a sample letter regarding eligibility requirements to share with students in their financial aid package to ensure their understanding of the parameters of SUNY Reconnect.

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Program Management/General

Will schools receive funding to support the management of this initiative? Can funding be utilized for admissions recruitment staff lines?

\$4M in new Direct State Tax Support has been allocated to campuses for operational support (e.g., advising, enrollment, outreach, awarding credit for prior learning, and other student services, supports, and campus implementation needs). Campuses have received the specific allocation amount and proposals had to be submitted - pursuant to the Allocation Guidelines - no later than June 20, 2025, for review and approval by the Chancellor or designee.

Will the campus support funds be available each year? This is helpful for hiring purposes to ensure continued employment.

Funding is currently recurring in the State's Financial Plan, and it is anticipated that it will be recurring on an annual basis

Could staffing be shared for management and supports for multiple programs (SUNY EOP, SUNY ASAP, SUNY Reconnect)?

There is no requirement for dedicated management staff for SUNY Reconnect. Campuses should check staffing requirements for all programs to best align operational need and available supports.

Will this program continue to admit new students year over year?

Yes, pursuant to continuation of funding.

What happens if SUNY Reconnect funds run out before the end of the academic year? Will there be additional funds made available or is this a first come first served program?

As this is the inaugural year of the program, the appropriation was based on enrollment projections for the high-demand program areas. It is anticipated that there is sufficient funding to meet the demand this year. SUNY System Administration is collecting enrollment data from campuses on a regular basis to continuously update spending estimates and share them with the NYS Division of the Budget.

What reporting will be required related to barriers to student participation?

We anticipate this reporting will be qualitative and serve to help us understand why eligible students do not enroll, persist, and complete to help inform future strategy, policy, and supports. SUNY will provide further instruction for the annual reporting requirements for this program.

What is the reporting code for SUNY Reconnect (e.g., Excelsior is 013)?

For SIRIS reporting purposes, a new Special Population Code of 025 has been added to the Early Student and End of Term Student submissions to identify Adult NYS Opportunity Promise / SUNY Reconnect students (available for use beginning in Fall 2025). In addition, a

new Financial Aid Type of 73 has been added to the SIRIS Financial Aid submission to identify the Adult NYS Opportunity Promise / SUNY Reconnect financial aid awarded (available for use beginning with the 2025-26 award year submission). These codes will be used by the System Administration Office of Institutional Research and Data Analytics for official reporting purposes.

Student Eligibility

If a student turns 25 during a semester, do they qualify? (e.g., they are 24 in August but turn 25 in October)

SUNY Reconnect may be awarded to an applicant enrolling in an eligible program who is at least 25 years of age or older as of the first day of classes for which the applicant makes initial application, but in no case is more than 55 years of age as of January first of the calendar year for the semester for which the applicant makes initial application. So, for this situation where a student's classes begin in August or September and the student turns 25 in October, they would not be eligible for that fall semester but would be eligible for the spring. If a student does not begin classes until a late start session and turns 25 before those sessions begin, they will be eligible for that semester.

Are current students in an eligible program able to receive this scholarship?

Yes, current students who meet all eligibility criteria and are enrolled in an eligible program are eligible for funding for the remainder of their program starting in Fall 2025. Funding will not be awarded retroactively for current students who have recently completed coursework in an eligible program.

Does a potential student have to have prior college credits, certificate or microcredentials to qualify for SUNY Reconnect?

No. This program is available to both new and returning students who do not have a prior degree.

Would a student who had stopped out be eligible to re-enroll and complete the program they had started?

Yes. Students who previously stopped out are eligible to re-enroll as long as they are enrolled in an approved degree program and meet all other eligibility criteria for SUNY Reconnect.

Is there a specific process outlined for how campuses need to verify whether individuals have a prior degree?

Campuses should use all available resources, including the National Student Clearinghouse and/or National Student Loan Data Systems. Campuses may also require student self-certification to verify prior degrees.

Will students starting with a certificate, where the school also offers an approved AOS degree, be eligible while completing the certificate?

A student must be matriculated (i.e., enrolled) in an approved associate degree program of study to qualify. Certificate programs are not eligible under the SUNY Reconnect program unless they are embedded within an approved degree program.

Are incarcerated individuals participating in a prison education program eligible?

Yes. An incarcerated student is eligible if they are enrolled in an approved degree program and meet all other eligibility criteria.

Can students be enrolled in Reconnect and the ASAP/ACE programs simultaneously?

Yes. ASAP students are eligible for Reconnect. *Please see page 10 for further clarification on how funding for these programs should be applied.*

Are veterans and military-connected individuals eligible for this (as they are for state aid)?

Yes. Any student who is eligible for in-state tuition, is enrolled in an approved degree program, and meets all other program criteria is eligible. In addition, SUNY academic policy directs campus policies to recognize credit for military education.

Are there any income limitations (income cap) for students to be eligible for this program?

There are no income limitations for eligible students under SUNY Reconnect.

Is a high school diploma or equivalency required?

Eligible students are not explicitly required to have a high school diploma or equivalency diploma to qualify for SUNY Reconnect. However, students must be matriculated (i.e., enrolled) in an approved associate degree program of study to qualify for the scholarship based on the college's enrollment policies.

Are students in a 24-credit program eligible?

Yes. If these students are enrolled in an approved degree program and meet all other program criteria, they are eligible for funding.

Will students who graduated from a foreign secondary school be required to establish the ability to benefit by earning qualifying scores on an approved placement test? What if a potential student has a degree from another country before they arrived in the U.S. (e.g., refugee populations) but is unable to provide a transcript?

Students will need to apply and be admitted to eligible programs using the standard campus admissions process. Eligible students cannot have a prior degree, regardless of where it was earned.

Are students who have been granted Borrower Defense eligible to participate in this program?

Yes. A student who has been granted a borrower defense to repayment by the U.S. Department of Education is not considered to have a prior degree for purposes of SUNY Reconnect eligibility.

Time to Degree Requirements

Can Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) be used to reduce time to degree?

Yes, CPL is highly encouraged if applicable for the eligible student.

How should campuses plan for winter and summer course work within an approved program of study? How will it impact the six-credit minimum/semester and the 10-semester limit?

For the sole purpose of determining whether students meet the six-credit minimum per semester and the 10-semester limit, where applicable, credits taken during a winter or summer term may be counted together with credits taken in a fall or spring term to allow a student to reach the six-credit minimum required for this program. In this case, for example, a student could take three credits in the summer and three in the fall to meet the six-credit minimum. It will be critical for advisors to assist students in mapping available winter and/or summer courses to ensure students do not fall below the six-credit minimum. Students should also be advised that if they do not complete the six credits by the end of the combined period, all credits in that period will be ineligible for Reconnect funding. Summer and/or winter coursework is not required for Reconnect eligibility and summer and winter terms should not be counted as separate “semesters” for the purposes of this program.

For SIRIS reporting purposes, campuses should report summer course activity on the summer Student and Term Section submissions, fall course activity on the fall submissions, winter on the winter submissions, and spring on the spring submissions.

When counting semesters, do we count all semesters or just semesters where they receive SUNY Reconnect funds?

The 10-semester limitation applies when an eligible student is enrolled in an approved program and is awarded SUNY Reconnect funding. Coursework outside of the approved program of study does not qualify for SUNY Reconnect funding and therefore does not count towards the 10 semesters, nor do semesters when all costs are covered by other forms of financial aid and no SUNY Reconnect funding is awarded.

Does enrollment in non-degree courses count toward the six-credit minimum? For example, if a student meets the six-credit minimum enrollment requirement, but only three credits count toward the degree, is the student eligible for funding toward three credits?

Coursework that is not part of an approved degree path does not count towards the six-credit minimum per semester. Campuses should carefully advise students to follow a program map for coursework to ensure courses are covered under SUNY Reconnect.

If a student starts at one community college and decides to transfer to another, does the 10-semester clock restart? How will campuses be able to keep track of the number of semesters used for transfer students?

If a student in an eligible degree program transfers to another campus, the 10-semester time limit still applies and does not restart. Campuses should track the number of semesters a student receives SUNY Reconnect funding on student accounts or on transcripts, if applicable. Campuses who are enrolling eligible students into SUNY Reconnect should develop a process to check on prior Reconnect enrollment with the institution from which the student transferred, if applicable.

Does the 10-semester clock stop if the student takes a leave?

The 10-semester clock will pause if a student must take leave and is approved by the campus. Students must be continuously enrolled without a leave of more than one academic year. The campus may extend this for an approved reason including but not limited to death of a family member, medical or parental leave, or military service. If a student returns and must take another leave of absence, they will remain eligible if the leave falls within the allowable parameters.

Program/Course Eligibility

Will remedial, pre-requisite and/or co-requisite courses be covered? For example, an engineering program starts with Calc 1, what if a student is placed into a lower math course?

As part of the approved program of study, any remedial, pre-requisite, and co-requisite courses the student may be required to take after program entry will qualify for the scholarship. For example, a remedial or co-requisite English course based on a student's placement would be supported. However, because the student must be enrolled in the approved degree program to qualify for SUNY Reconnect, courses that are an admission requirement to the program, or that must be taken prior to enrollment in the program, do not qualify.

For example, remediation needed for Calc 1, which is part of an engineering program would be eligible for SUNY Reconnect, but a calculus course that is required as an admission requirement for matriculation in an engineering program would not qualify. Therefore, campuses should carefully consider whether any current admission requirements represent unnecessary barriers and could instead be addressed during the course of study.

Is prerequisite, non-credit coursework counted as part of the six credits?

As part of the approved degree program, any remedial, prerequisite, and co-requisite courses the student may be required to take after program entry will qualify for the scholarship. Non-credit courses required as part of the program of study are eligible for funding; however, do not count towards the required six credits for that semester.

We offer a Pre-Nursing program, essentially General Studies, for students to take pre-reqs they may be missing for applying to the Nursing program. Would SUNY Reconnect apply in this case?

A student must be enrolled in an approved degree program to qualify. Courses that are admission requirements to a program, or must be taken prior to enrollment, do not qualify. General studies programs as part of a pre-nursing track do not qualify. Campuses should consider whether current admission requirements create unnecessary barriers and whether these could be addressed during the course of study.

Are concentrations of degrees allowed, or must the degree be registered in that CIP code?

Degree eligibility is determined at the program level rather than the track/concentration level. For SUNY Reconnect, the degree, as a whole, must have been determined to be eligible.

Program areas for teacher education sometimes capture a large variety of certification areas. All adolescent education students are captured in the same program, though they are pursuing different curricular areas that may or may not be shortage areas. Do we need to distinguish between these students, or if they are in the program identified by the CIP code, are they just considered eligible?

SUNY Reconnect is available for eligible, approved associate degree programs based on Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes that have been shared with each college. Specific teacher education programs that have been approved are based on identified shortage areas and meet additional requirements for inclusion (e.g., teacher education transfer program). Students are not required to indicate that they are pursuing a particular curricular area within the allowed program.

How were the specific degrees determined, and will eligible programs be reviewed for addition or removal? For example, an A.S. in Sustainability/Environmental Science is included while an A.S. in Geology is not, but these degrees lead to similar careers.

Program eligibility was determined using CIP codes that align with the high-demand areas listed in the program legislation and New York State Department of Labor workforce projections. Campuses can petition for the inclusion of a program if they believe it falls within an approved area by emailing sunyreconnect@suny.edu.

On an annual basis, SUNY will work with the New York State Department of Labor (DOL) to identify possible changes to industries/fields for program inclusion. If the workforce needs change based on data from DOL or after a review period, eligible programs may be added or removed. If a current student's program is removed from the list while they are still enrolled, they will remain eligible for funding until completion of the previously approved program.

Student Requirements for Continued Eligibility/ Academic Progress

Is there a minimum GPA or passing requirement for SUNY Reconnect? For continued eligibility, does satisfactory academic progress refer to campus standards for federal aid or NYS standards for state aid?

Students will be required to maintain satisfactory academic progress in accordance with campus academic standards. Students who have probationary status or are reinstated after an academic dismissal are eligible.

How are repeated courses handled?

Repeat coursework should be handled like those for Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) purposes and may be eligible for SUNY Reconnect funding. Campuses must follow NYS administered financial aid requirements for repeat coursework: courses can only be repeated if the student failed the course, a higher grade is required by the program of study, or the course is significantly different than when the student originally took the course. The campus should document the approved reason for the repeated course.

If a student is pursuing dual-degrees and one of those degrees is awarded a semester before the other, would that end the student's eligibility?

A student is only eligible for funding of one degree under the SUNY Reconnect program. Upon completion of an eligible degree program, SUNY Reconnect funding will no longer be available for that student.

If a student loses a TAP award due to Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) will they still be eligible for SUNY Reconnect?

Students will be required to maintain satisfactory academic progress in accordance with campus academic standards.

Residency Requirements/Certificate of Residence

Is there a minimum length of time a student is required to live in New York State to be eligible for SUNY Reconnect? (Updated 9/24/25)

To be eligible for Reconnect, a student must either meet the New York State definition of “resident” for community college students which requires a 1-year physical presence in New York State, or qualify for a statutory exemption to receive the resident rate (e.g., military status). For students who live out of a college’s sponsorship area, a Certificate of Residence is required; for students within the sponsorship area, colleges should determine residency and eligibility under standard processes.

Can we wait to award SUNY Reconnect funding until a valid certificate of residence is submitted or qualifying residence in the sponsorship area is confirmed?

For community college students, absent a statutory exception such as active-duty military, the student must either (i) be a resident of the college's sponsorship area or (ii) provide a valid Certificate of Residence from their county by the deadline. All eligible students who are required to complete a COR must do so on an annual basis and must meet campus COR requirements and deadlines to be eligible for SUNY Reconnect. **Students who are required to provide a COR shall be treated as presumptively eligible for SUNY Reconnect pending the COR deadline** but should be advised that they must provide a valid COR by the deadline to remain eligible and receive a SUNY Reconnect award.

What is meant by students "who receive in-state tuition eligibility"? Does a person have to be a resident of NYS or reside in the sponsorship area for a minimum amount of time before they could be part of the program?

For SUNY Reconnect eligibility, a student must be a resident of NYS or eligible for New York State tuition (e.g., statutory exceptions such as active-duty military). As described above, most students (outside of a statutory exception) will be required to either (i) show residence in the college's sponsorship area or (ii) provide a valid Certificate of Residence (COR) from their county by the deadline. All eligible students who are required to complete a COR must do so on an annual basis and must meet campus COR requirements and deadlines to be eligible for SUNY Reconnect.

Student Award Requirements and Administration

How and when will colleges be paid for the scholarship funds? What will campuses need to submit to SUNY for payment?

Scholarship funds will be paid directly to the campus in a similar fashion as the campuses receive other State Aid. Funding will be provided following the end of the Fall and Spring semester for which monies are appropriated. Reporting requirements will be provided to campuses.

How is the SUNY Reconnect award calculated?

SUNY Reconnect funding is intended to cover any remaining tuition, fees, books, and supplies after all other forms of financial aid are applied. The calculation of the award under the statute is: *i) the sum of actual tuition, fees, books, and applicable supplies charged to the applicant and approved by the applicable community college, less (ii) the sum of all payments received by the applicant from all sources of financial aid received by the applicant with the exception of aid received pursuant to federal work-study programs authorized under sections 1087-51 through 1087-58 of title 20 of the United States code.*

Students in other programs such as EOP, ASAP|ACE, etc. are eligible for SUNY Reconnect funding support if they meet eligibility for SUNY Reconnect. SUNY Reconnect funds should still be applied after all other financial aid and supports, except as noted below on page 10.

Students who apply for but are not eligible for federal or State aid but meet all eligibility criteria for SUNY Reconnect remain eligible to enroll and receive SUNY Reconnect funding. If an eligible student does not qualify for any other aid, it is anticipated that SUNY Reconnect will cover their full balance of tuition, fees, books, and supplies for each eligible semester while enrolled in an approved program of study. Reconnect funding cannot be applied to non-academic charges such as housing or meal plans.

When should students be notified of their award?

Scholarship awards are to be included in student financial aid letters. This may require revisions of student aid packages when students enroll after the semester begins or they change from an ineligible major to an approved degree program. Colleges should ensure students understand all the eligibility requirements for the scholarship at the start of the semester. A draft letter for eligibility requirements to share with students is included with this FAQ document.

Can campuses require SUNY Reconnect students to pay tuition and then reimburse the students after State funding is received?

No. Students in SUNY Reconnect may not be charged for tuition, fees, books, and supplies.

Can a student opt-out of Reconnect funding in a given semester and remain eligible for Reconnect in future semesters?

Students cannot be forced to accept financial aid offerings, including the SUNY Reconnect program.

Can students supported through SUNY Reconnect receive blended supports through other funding sources or must their needs be fully funded through a SUNY Reconnect Cohort? For example, could a student that is part of SUNY EOP or ASAP* receive supports through SUNY Reconnect that are not met by these other programs?

Yes, students in other programs such as EOP, ASAP, etc. are eligible for SUNY Reconnect funding support if they meet eligibility for SUNY Reconnect. SUNY Reconnect funds will be applied after all other financial aid and supports, except as outlined below for ASAP/ACE nontuition benefits awards:

****ASAP|ACE students who meet Reconnect eligibility are welcome to participate and may receive the financial benefits of both programs as follows: The ASAP|ACE cost of attendance award for nontuition and fee needs and the monthly stipend for transportation/food and or other needs should be applied after the SUNY Reconnect tuition/fee award. The ASAP|ACE textbook stipend should be applied before the SUNY Reconnect textbook/instructional award.***

How should financial aid offices support students who may not have documents confirming their "citizenships"? For example, would an asylum-seeker that is not yet eligible for federal financial aid be eligible for this?

SUNY Reconnect requires that a student is a NYS resident or be eligible for in-state tuition and is required to apply for TAP or the NYS DREAM Act, if applicable. It is recommended that students make every effort to maximize federal aid through the FAFSA when possible. Any student who: (i) is a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen; (ii) has one or more required-FAFSA-contributor family members who is not a U.S. citizen or permanent resident; and (iii) does not want to complete a FAFSA; may use the newly announced Alternate Eligibility Path to apply to TAP. <https://www.hesc.ny.gov/altpath>

Can you clarify how veteran benefits should be applied in relation to this scholarship-which is last dollar in?

Veteran benefits should be applied before SUNY Reconnect funding. Reconnect will cover any tuition, fees, books, and supplies remaining after all other forms of financial aid.

If a student is unable to complete the associate degree within the allotted 10 semesters, is there any obligation for repayment?

There is no repayment requirement.

If a student has used (exhausted) all other aid would this scholarship take priority?

The program will cover any remaining balance for applicable costs after all other financial aid including, but not limited to, TAP, Pell, and Excelsior Scholarship (if applicable). Prospective students are not required to apply for federal or private loans to apply for this program.

What if we are not aware of a previous degree and inadvertently award aid? Should SUNY Reconnect funding be revoked?

SUNY Reconnect is only for students who do not have a prior degree. If a student is found to have a prior degree, they will immediately become ineligible for the SUNY Reconnect program.

Is the FAFSA required?

Students will be required to apply for TAP or the NYS DREAM Act, if eligible, and should make every effort to maximize federal aid through the FAFSA, though it is not explicitly required for SUNY Reconnect eligibility. All other aid, grants, and scholarships awarded will be applied to applicable costs before SUNY Reconnect funding.

Would students need to take federal loans before getting this funding?

Students are not required to apply for, or accept, federal loans to be eligible for SUNY Reconnect funds. FAFSA application is recommended to maximize federal aid.

What if a student completes the FAFSA but is ineligible for federal financial aid due to eligibility issues, such as default or an outstanding overpayment. Would this limit a student's eligibility for Reconnect?

Students who are not eligible for federal aid but meet all eligibility criteria for SUNY Reconnect remain eligible to enroll and receive SUNY Reconnect funding. If an eligible student does not qualify for any other aid, it is anticipated that SUNY Reconnect will cover their full balance of tuition, fees, books, and supplies for each eligible semester while enrolled in an approved program of study.

Eligible students are required to apply for TAP. Is there a difference between submitting and completing the TAP application? Will there be a resolve for TAP aid a student would have received had they followed through with the application?

Students must complete the TAP application (or NYS Dream Act, where applicable) on an annual basis and receive a determination from HESC on a financial aid award before SUNY Reconnect can be applied. Students are not required to receive a TAP award to be eligible for SUNY Reconnect but must complete the application. Students who do not complete their TAP application will lose eligibility for SUNY Reconnect funding.

What if a student applied for TAP but their application status is “pending”?

If a student’s TAP application is in a “pending” status, they remain presumptively eligible for Reconnect while the campus awaits the TAP award determination from HESC. The determination must be secured in the semester that the student is enrolled to remain eligible for SUNY Reconnect funding. Students should be advised that, while they are being treated as presumptively eligible while the application is pending, completing the application is required for eligibility for both TAP and SUNY Reconnect. The final Reconnect award will then be allocated to the student following all other financial aid received to cover any remaining tuition, fees, books, and supply costs.

Do students who hold work status, R-1, and/or H-4 visas qualify for Reconnect if they meet all other criteria? (Updated 9/24/25)

Students with visa status who meet all program requirements for SUNY Reconnect and complete a TAP, Dream Act, or TAP Alternate Eligibility Pathway application are eligible to receive Reconnect funding.

When a student applies for TAP through the Dream Act link, if they are denied, they do not appear on an SSL and we cannot view them on the HESC site. How can we confirm that the student completed a TAP application in this case? (Updated 9/24/25)

HESC doesn’t receive TAP denials for Dream Act applicants so any denials don’t appear on the Student Status Listing (SSL). However, the Dream Act vendor sends an email notification to the student if TAP is denied. To confirm that the student applied for TAP through the Dream Act, the student may be asked to provide this email to the campus to verify the student completed an application for Reconnect eligibility. These documents should not be recorded or saved for privacy purposes; they are only meant to serve as verification of a completed application.

Outstanding Balances, Student Holds, Late Registration, Drop/Withdrawals

If a student drops or withdraws from a course, are they responsible for payment of tuition and fees charged for the dropped course(s)? (Updated 9/24/25)

If a student enrolled under the SUNY Reconnect program drops and/or withdraws from a course(s), campuses should make every effort to waive liability for tuition and fees, pursuant to the authority afforded the chief executive officer of each community college under New York State Regulations 602.11 (a)(5)*, with the desired result being that no Reconnect student should be held liable for any tuition or fees associated with withdrawing from or dropping a course after the start of classes. Under this intent, colleges should make every effort to ensure that bills sent to students should be immediately retracted and the amounts owed waived.

SUNY acknowledges that many students participating in the SUNY Reconnect program have not attended higher education at all or for some time, and if they decide early that they cannot attend courses this semester, holding them liable for tuition would pose an undue hardship for the student. Because this program is still in the process of being operationalized, and students likely would not have realized the potential for liability after dropping course when it has been marketed as a fully free program, students should not be held liable for tuition and fees.

*602.11(a)(5) the tuition and fee liability may be waived at the discretion of the chief executive officer of the college.

(5) Notwithstanding any other provisions for refund, when a student has withdrawn through circumstances beyond his or her control, under conditions in which the denial of refund would cause undue hardship, the chief executive officer of the college may, in his or her discretion, determine that no liability for tuition and fees has been incurred by the student, provided the student has not received or will not receive academic credit for the term. Such action, including the reason therefor, shall be in writing.

If a student has a large balance from a previous semester, or has an account that has gone to collections, do we have to let them register?

Students with past balances or financial holds will be eligible to register regardless of campus policy. SUNY Reconnect funding may not be used to pay past balances. Past balances should only be forgiven or discharged pursuant to SUNY and campus policies.

How should campuses manage late registration courses? If a student is only registered for three credits at the start of the Fall semester, but adds some late starting courses in October for another three credits, are they eligible for the award?

Students are required to complete six credits per semester (but please refer to the question above about using summer and winter credits to meet the six-credit minimum). SUNY Reconnect funding will be provided at the end of the term to accommodate changes in student schedules including late registration to help students meet the credit requirements for funding.

How is financial aid applied for SUNY Reconnect when students drop or withdraw from classes in a semester and fall below the six-credit minimum?

If a student falls below the six-credit minimum per semester, they become ineligible for SUNY Reconnect funding. Students will remain eligible in a given term as long as the number of credits for which they are charged 100 percent remains at or above six credits during the counting period. Advising students to ensure they meet program requirements will be critical to their financial eligibility and success.

If a student has a balance due (e.g., after aid being returned for dropping classes for the semester, Return to Title IV Calculation, etc.), will the SUNY Reconnect scholarship increase to cover that new outstanding balance?

SUNY Reconnect is awarded after all other financial aid is applied, and funding will be provided at the end of the semester to incorporate any enrollment changes that may have occurred. Students will remain eligible in a given term as long as the number of credits for which they are charged 100 percent remains at or above six credits during the counting period. I.e., if a student drops a course during add/drop, it will not count towards the minimum requirement, but eligible courses with an earned grade or a W will count towards the credit requirement for that period.

What about balances accrued after the eligible student begins their enrollment under SUNY Reconnect? For example, a student does not have a balance prior to Fall 2025 but at the end of the fall 2025 semester the student owes the college money (e.g., parking/library fees, COR not submitted resulting in higher tuition rate). Must the college allow them to reenroll for the spring 2026 semester?

If a student has a prior balance from any term at the campus, it shall not prevent their ability to register as an eligible SUNY Reconnect student going forward. That said, SUNY Reconnect funding is intended to cover remaining tuition, fees, books, and supplies costs after all other applicable financial aid, and cannot be used towards any prior balance.

If we are required to allow students with open balances to register, are we permitted to use student authorization for the purpose of applying financial aid for the upcoming/current semester to pay the open balance?

No, SUNY Reconnect funding cannot be used or increased to either directly or indirectly pay any prior balances.

What about other types of holds for registration (i.e., immunizations). If a student has another type of hold, are they still able to register or is that only for financial/past balance holds?

Unless stated in the SUNY Reconnect guidance, colleges should follow their campus policies for non-financial registration holds. Campuses should work with each student to ensure they maintain compliance with other campus policies and stay enrolled. When specific issues arise, colleges can email SUNYReconnect@suny.edu for clarification.

Fees, Books, and Supplies Coverage

How should campuses calculate Cost of Attendance for SUNY Reconnect?

The SUNY Reconnect Program is intended to support standard costs of attendance remaining after all applicable financial aid, related to tuition, fees, books, and supplies. The SUNY Reconnect program is not intended to change and/or adjust how your campus develops its Cost of Attendance figure for books and supplies.

In terms of supplies that can be included, if there is a program-specific supply that i) without which the program offering cannot be completed and ii) aligns with your College's reasonable allowance, then it can be included in the final cost of attendance.

It is important that Colleges continue to follow the institution's standard cost of attendance processes in place for all students. The general baseline of allowable items should not be adjusted, increased, or reduced, unless items are specifically required to complete eligible programmatic offerings.

Is there a cap on program fees that are covered in this initiative?

All fees for courses in approved degree programs will be covered under SUNY Reconnect. If an approved program has program fees that are well above the average, please notify sunyreconnect@suny.edu to review.

Do students need to purchase the books from the school bookstore? Or can we give them funds to purchase textbooks?

Campuses should follow their normal practice for books and supply purchases with the understanding that a SUNY Reconnect student shall not be required to pay for books and supplies out-of-pocket for reimbursement.

How is book and supply amount determined and what defines “required supplies”? Should award amounts for books and supplies be calculated based on established cost of attendance or actual cost?

Books and supplies are to be determined by campus-specific requirements for an approved program of study. Campuses should follow their normal practice for books and supply awards and purchases. SUNY System will not require submission of receipts for student books and supplies. “Required supplies” should be program-specific supplies (e.g., tools, equipment). In the case where a campus currently determines a single COA for all programs, where specific eligible programs require more than standard supplies (specialized equipment, uniforms, etc.), the program cost of attendance should reflect that, rather than being flat across campus.

Can the SUNY Reconnect scholarship pay for a student's credit for prior learning fee?

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Campuses should take all possible steps to maximize the use of credit for prior learning. If the student is matriculated in an approved degree program AND the credits awarded count towards the degree, then the fee can be covered by SUNY Reconnect.

Does the award cover testing such as NCLEX?

The scholarship covers tuition, fees, books, and supplies (after all other applicable financial aid) related to the students' approved program. Additional costs that are outside of these categories are not covered under SUNY Reconnect.

Sample Student Letter

Dear Student,

Congratulations! We are excited to inform you that you have been granted the SUNY Reconnect Award! The award covers the costs of tuition, fees, books, and supplies after other forms of tuition assistance, such as NYS TAP, are applied. **Campus Name** has several resources available to ensure your success:

- **Credit for Prior Learning** – You can receive credits for previous work or educational experiences which can accelerate your journey towards your degree!
- **Flexible Course Scheduling** – availability of courses to fit your schedule, including online and evening courses allow you to balance education with work and family responsibilities.
- **Academic Advising** – academic advisors are available to help you select the right courses, develop your academic plan, and navigate any challenges you may face. To access academic advising, [see here \[insert link\]/reach out to xyz.](#)
- **Tutoring** – Tutorial services can help reinforce course material and enhance your academic performance. To access tutoring, [see here \[insert link\]/reach out to xyz.](#)
- **Career Advising** - Our career advising office has workshops, events, and 1:1 services to assist you with interview preparation, job search strategies, and resume writing. To access career advising, [see here \[insert link\]/reach out to xyz.](#)

Here are some key details you should know about your grant:

1. **Enrollment Requirements:** To maintain your eligibility for the Free Community College Award, you must enroll in at least 6 credits each semester. This requirement ensures you are making satisfactory progress toward your degree. You can choose to attend either full-time or part-time, but remember that you must complete your degree within 10 semesters.
2. **Leave of Absence:** If you need to take a break from your studies, you may do so for up to one academic year without losing your eligibility. Leave of absences beyond one year will make you ineligible for the program. If you require additional time away for circumstances such as military service or medical reasons, exemptions may be granted. Please communicate with **THIS office** to discuss your situation.
3. **Academic Standing:** To keep your award, you must maintain good academic standing according to the college's standards as well as specific program requirements. This means

staying on top of your coursework and achieving the necessary grades. Please contact **THIS OFFICE** for tutoring or academic support.

4. Eligible Degree Programs: The award specifically applies to associate degree programs in high-demand fields, including advanced manufacturing, nursing and allied health, engineering, technology, cybersecurity, AI, green jobs, and teaching pathways in shortage areas. For a full list of programs, **please visit this webpage**.

5. Maintaining Your Major: You are required to stay in an eligible major. If you wish to switch majors, please ensure that your new choice also falls within the eligible categories. If you switch to a major not covered by the program, it will not be paid for under SUNY Reconnect.

We encourage you to take full advantage of the resources available to you at our institution. Should you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to our office.

Please sign the Acknowledgement section below and return to **xyz@abc.edu** within 14 days of receipt.

Best regards,

[Campus Name]

Admissions Office

Acknowledgement of Receipt:

I, [Student Name], acknowledge that I have read and understood the document above concerning my SUNY Reconnect Award.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____