

**U. S. Department of Education  
Office of Postsecondary Education/Federal TRIO Programs  
Policies and Procedures for the Prior Experience (PE) Points Assessment  
Student Support Services (SSS) Program  
2015-2020 Grant Award Cycle**

***Brief summary of policies and procedures for assessing the PE points***

- The calculation of PE points for the 2016-17 APR reporting period based on:
  - A project's approved number of participants to be served;
  - A project's approved objectives; and
  - The student-level data a project submits in its annual performance report (APR).
- **A project that served less than 90 percent of the number of students the project was funded to serve will not have PE points assessed.**
  - To determine if a project has served at least 90 percent of the approved number of student to be served, standard rounding rules are applied; if the calculated Number Served rate is between 89.5 and 90.0 percent, it is rounded up to 90 percent.
  - To receive a score for the Funded Number criterion, a project must serve at least the number funded to serve. Except for the one situation noted above, no rounding is applied to the Number Served rates. For example, if the calculated rate is 99.6 percent, the rate will be 99 percent, not 100 percent.
- The score a project receives is based on meeting or exceeding the approved objectives. No partial credit is given. If the calculated rate is greater than or equal to the approved rate, a score will be calculated. Standard rounding rules are used (e.g., 79.6 percent rounds to 80 percent) for the Persistence, Good Academic Standing, and Attainment objectives.
- To receive a score for the **Attainment** criterion, a SSS project must have been operating a project and must have submitted an APR for the year in which the cohort is established.
- A project that does not submit an APR in this reporting period will not receive PE points. In addition, the project will not receive PE points in the subsequent assessment year for the **Persistence** objectives because the project's prior year's APR data file is used to verify that the current data file being submitted contains all the participant records required to calculate the project's persistence rate.
- A previously funded project who was successful in the FY2015 SSS competition but who did not submit an APR in reporting period 2014-15 will not be eligible for the completion objective for a period of four years (in the case of a 2-year institution) and six years (in the case of a 4-year institution) because no information was provided in 2014-15.
- The Department will not accept any changes to the project's APR data once the APR has been submitted.

The formulae for calculating the PE points are provided below.

***How is the Funded Number Criterion Calculated?***

A score is assessed based on the project having served the approved number of participants for the reporting year. The actual number of participants served must be equal to or greater than the number of participants the project was funded to serve.

Appendix

- The **denominator** is the project’s approved number of participants to be served.
- The **numerator** is actual number of participants served during the reporting year and is the sum of field #22 (Participant Status), options 1, 2, 8, and 9.

**How is the Persistence Rate Calculated?**

For a 4-year institution, a score is assessed based on the percentage of all participants served by the SSS project in the reporting year who enroll at the grantee institution in the fall term of the next academic year or graduate with a bachelor's degree during the reporting year.

For a 2-year institution, a score is assessed based on the percentage of all participants served in the reporting year who enroll at the grantee institution in the fall term of the next academic year or graduate with an associate’s degree or receive a certificate and/or transfer from a 2-year to a 4-year institution by the fall term of the next academic year.

The Persistence Rate is calculated based on the greater of the number of participants funded to be served or the number of participants served.

The calculation rules for the persistence rate are as follows:

- The **denominator** is the greater of the number funded to be served or the number served.
  - Number funded to be served is from project’s approved objectives.
  - Number served is derived from Field #22, Participant Status, options 1 (new), 2 (continuing), 8 (new summer, earned college credits), and 9 (new summer, did not earn college credits).
- The **numerator** is derived from Field #34, Persistence Status (at the beginning of the next academic year) and is the sum of all participants served who were reported in Field #34, Persistence Status, as indicated with a “ ✓ ” below.

| Field #34—Persistence Status Options:  | 4-Year Institution | 2-Year Institution |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 = Enrolled at grantee institution  | ✓                  | ✓                  |
| 2 = Has graduated from the grantee institution with an associate’s degree or received a certificate <b>and</b> transferred from a 2- to a 4-year institution |                    | ✓                  |
| 3 = Has transferred from the grantee institution (i.e., 2-year) to a 4-year institution without receiving an associate's degree or certificate               |                    | ✓                  |
| 4 = Has graduated from the grantee institution with an associate’s degree or received a certificate <b>but did not transfer</b> to a 4-year institution      |                    | ✓                  |
| 5 = Has graduated from the grantee institution with a bachelor’s degree or equivalent  | ✓                  |                    |

**How is the Good Academic Standing (GAS) Rate Calculated?**

A score is assessed based on the percentage of participants served who are in good academic standing (GAS). The GAS is calculated based on the greater of the number of participants funded to be served or the number of participants served minus those new summer participants that did not earn college credit.

- The **denominator** is the greater of number funded to be served or the number served.
  - Number funded to be served is from project’s approved objective minus those new summer participants that did not earn college credit (Field #22, Participant Status, option 9).
  - Number served is derived from Field #22, Participant Status, options 1 (new), 2 (continuing), and 8 (new summer, earned college credits).

- The **numerator** is derived from Field #24, Academic Standing, and is the sum of all participants served who were in good standing (option 1).

**How are the Degree Attainment Rate / Transfer Rate Calculated?**

**Bachelor’s Degree Attainment Rate (4-year institutions):**

A score is assessed based on the percentage of participants served by the project in the 2011-12 cohort year and who completed a bachelor’s degree within six reporting years of first entering the project.

**Note:** A score will not be assessed for projects at 4-year institutions if they were first funded in the 2015-20 grant because the project did not serve students in the cohort year.

- The **denominator** is the number of participants in the 2011-12 cohort year.
- The **numerator** is the number of participants in the cohort year who graduated with a first bachelor’s degree or equivalent of a bachelor’s degree within six years from the grantee institution as reported by the grantee in the APR. The field and options used to determine the **numerator** are provided below.

| Field #31—Undergraduate Degree/Certificate Completed at Grantee Institution Options:         |
|--|
| 4 = 1 <sup>st</sup> Bachelor’s degree<br>6 = Equivalent of 1 <sup>st</sup> Bachelor’s degree |

**Associate’s Degree or Certificate Attainment/Transfer Rate (2-year institutions):**

Two-year institutions have two objectives related to the standard objective criterion for degree or certificate attainment and transfer.

**C1: Denominator and Numerator**

For the first objective (C1), the score is based on the percentage of new participants served in the cohort year who graduate with an associate’s degree or certificate within four reporting years of first entering the project.

- The **denominator** is the number of participants in the 2013-14 cohort year.
- The **numerator** for C1 is the number of participants in the cohort year who graduated with an associate’s degree only, received a certificate only, or graduated with an associate’s degree or received a certificate and transferred from a 2-year to a 4-year institution within four reporting years of first entering the SSS program. The field/options used to determine the **numerator** are provided below.

| Field #31—Undergraduate Degree/Certificate Completed at Grantee Institution Options:  |
|---|
| 1 = Certificate/diploma for occupational, educational program (less than two-year program)— <b>Did not transfer from a 2- to a 4-year institution</b>   |
| 2 = Certificate/diploma for occupational, educational program (at least two-year program)— <b>Did not transfer from a 2- to a 4-year institution</b>    |
| 10 = Associate’s degree only— <b>Did not transfer from a 2- to a 4-year institution</b>   |
| 11 = Associate’s degree <b>AND</b> transferred from a 2- to a 4-year institution within the academic year or by the beginning of the next academic year |

| <b>Field #31—Undergraduate Degree/Certificate Completed at Grantee Institution Options:</b>  |
|--|
| 12 = Certificate <b>AND</b> transferred from a 2- to a 4-year institution within the academic year or by the beginning of the next academic year |

For the second objective (C2), the percentage of new participants that will transfer with an associate’s degree or certificate within four years, the score is based on the percentage of new participants served in the 2012-13 cohort year who transferred with an associate’s degree or certificate within four reporting years of first entering the project.

**C2: Denominator and Numerator**

- The **denominator** for C2, is the number of participants in the 2013-14 cohort year.
- The **numerator** for C2, is the number of participants in the cohort year who transferred from a 2-year to a 4-year institution with an associate’s degree or certificate within four reporting years of first entering the project. The field and options used to determine the **numerator** are provided below.

| <b>Field #31—Undergraduate Degree/Certificate Completed at Grantee Institution Options:</b>   |
|---|
| 11 = Associate’s degree <b>AND</b> transferred from a 2- to a 4-year institution within the academic year or by the beginning of the next academic year |
| 12 = Certificate <b>AND</b> transferred from a 2- to a 4-year institution within the academic year or by the beginning of the next academic year        |