

Federal Academic Competitiveness Grant (AC Grant) Year 1 – First Year Students
 \$750 award for 1st academic year of study

Students must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Accrued fewer than 28 credit hours.
- Full-time student.
- Pell Grant Census Date is used to determine enrollment status.
- United States Citizen (“eligible non-citizens” are NOT eligible, even though they qualify for a Pell Grant).
- Federal Pell Grant Recipient.
- Has not been previously enrolled as a regular student in an undergraduate education program.
- Completed secondary school after January 1, 2006.
- Has “financial need” as defined by federal regulations (No overaward tolerance).
- Has not previously received a 1st year AC Grant...can only get grant for one year.
- Completed a rigorous secondary school program (special provisions for home schooled students) as defined below. Students must pass one of these standards:
 1. ***The Virginia Advanced Studies Diploma***
 2. ***The State Scholars Initiative requirements.*** This program, currently offered in Virginia and twenty-one other States and patterned after the recommendations of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, requires at least:
 - Four years of English;
 - Three years of math (including Algebra I, Algebra II and Geometry);
 - Three years of lab science (biology, chemistry, physics);
 - Three-and-one-half years of social studies; and
 - Two years of a language other than English.
 3. ***A set of courses similar to the State Scholars Initiative.*** This program of study requires passing grades in the following:
 - Four years of English;
 - Three years of Math (including Algebra I and a higher level course such as Algebra II, Geometry, or Data Analysis and Statistics);
 - Three years of science (including at least two courses from biology, chemistry or physics);
 - Three years of social studies; and
 - One year of a foreign language.
 4. ***Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses and test scores.*** This program requires a minimum of two Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses in high school and a minimum passing score on the exams for those classes. Students must score 3 or higher on AP exams and 4 or higher on IB exams.
 5. ***Virginia Coursework Requirements.*** This program requires:
 - Four years of English;
 - Three years of mathematics (including Algebra I and a higher level course such as Algebra II, Geometry, or Data Analysis and Statistics);
 - Three years of science (including at least two courses from biology, chemistry or physics);
 - Three years of social studies; and
 - An industry certification, state professional license, or successful completion of an occupational competency exam.

Renewal

The student may be eligible to receive a 2nd year Academic Competitiveness Grant if the following academic criteria are met after the end of the student's 1st academic year of study*:

1. Maintains continuous full-time enrollment;
2. Maintains Federal Pell Grant eligibility
3. Has "financial need" as defined by federal regulations (No overaward tolerance)
4. Attains at least a college grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale at the end of the student's 1st academic year of study*
5. Maintains the satisfactory academic progress standards of the institution for federal student aid programs.

* Student's 1st academic year of study concludes the semester in which they earn their 28th credit hour.