



CIM Financial Aid Student Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all classes for which they registered, beginning with and including the first class session. Not only must a student be **registered** for a class, students must be in **active attendance** to count as “enrolled” for aid eligibility purposes.

Students must have attendance verified in their classes in order to meet the eligibility requirements for the federal student aid programs. The Department of Education requires schools to document student attendance prior to the disbursement of any federal aid funds. Until attendance is verified for a student, no federal financial aid will be disbursed.

CIM requires that faculty verify attendance the first two weeks of classes. **Students who fail to attend *any* classes by the end of the 2nd week of the semester are not eligible for aid and will be treated as an unofficial withdrawal.** If a student only begins attendance in some classes, but less than a full time class schedule, aid must be adjusted to reflect less than full time attendance.

- Academically related activities to be in attendance include but are not limited to:
 - physically attending a class where there is an opportunity for direct interaction between the instructor and students;
 - submitting an academic assignment;
 - taking an exam, an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction;
 - attending a study group that is assigned by the school;
 - participating in an online discussion about academic matters; or
 - Initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course.
- Academically related activities do NOT include activities where a student may be present but not academically engaged, such as:
 - living in institutional housing;
 - participating in the school’s meal plan;
 - logging into an online class without active participation; or
 - participating in academic counseling or advisement.

Once attendance has been verified, financial aid for which you are eligible may be disbursed per the standard aid disbursement schedule.

- For Federal Pell Grant recipients, the student’s Pell award amount will be based on the courses for which he/she is registered AND in attendance. The grant is disbursed based on the number of credits for which attendance has been confirmed. The student will not be eligible for these grants for courses which he/she does not attend. The student must be IN ATTENDANCE for at least 12 credit hours worth of classes to be considered eligible for full time Pell.
- For Federal Direct Stafford Loan recipients, the student must be enrolled as full time credit hours for the student’s loan to disburse. The student also must have attendance verified for at least one class.

As CIM will not always be able to obtain attendance records from CASE classes in that first two week time frame, we will proceed as follows:

- Document the student has attended *any* class, to establish the student is present and in school,
- If unable to obtain attendance documentation for 12 credit hours during the first two weeks, Pell grant students will have mid-term results reviewed to confirm active non-failing grades in at least 12 credit hours worth of classes. If less than 12 credits can be confirmed this way, individual faculty will be contacted to ensure the failing grade(s) were due to insufficient progress and not simply due to failure to ever attend. If it is determined at this

mid-term point that the student never officially began attendance in at least 12 credits of classes, the Pell grant will be recalculated based on the part time enrollment the student did attend.

- At the end of the semester, if a student did not successfully earn a passing grade for at least 12 credits of classes, CIM must obtain documentation from the faculty to ensure the failing grade(s) were due to insufficient progress and not simply due to failure to ever attend. If failing grade(s) were due to failure to ever attend, aid will be adjusted to reflect less than full time enrollment.

If confirmation of full time attendance cannot be established during the first two weeks of the term, federal financial aid eligibility will be re-evaluated for that term and may result in financial aid forfeiture and/or a balance due to CIM. In addition, the following are circumstances in which a student's Title IV aid will be adjusted/prorated:

- Withdrawal from classes during the first week may affect the awarding of Title IV aid. Students should be aware that their financial aid is based on the number of credits registered for at the end of the first week of classes. For example, an undergraduate student who registers as full-time (12 credits or more) and is packaged as a full time student, and subsequently drops to nine credits during the first week, will have their aid adjusted to 3/4 time status, reflecting the nine credit load.
- Federal regulations require schools to prorate Title IV aid for students who stop attending all classes after the first day of classes, up until the 60% point of the semester, based on number of days attended relative to number of days in the semester. This recalculation is based on the last date of attendance during the semester regardless of whether the student withdrew officially or simply stopped attending classes (unofficial withdrawal).
- The federal regulations (34 CFR 668.21) mandate that colleges, that participate in the federal financial aid programs, have procedures in place to determine if a financial aid recipient has begun to attend classes BEFORE any financial aid is credited to a student's account and a refund issued. The state grant and CIM Scholarship awards follow these same guidelines.
- The number of credit hours for which a student is paid financial aid, state and federal, will be based on the number of credit hours that he or she is enrolled at the time of the CIM's drop/add date which is the first Friday of each semester, assuming the student is in actual attendance for those enrolled classes. If a student's attendance in class is not verified, the student's financial aid will either be withdrawn or adjusted to pay for only those classes that student's attendance has been verified.
- Refer to CIM's Refund Policy for more details when a student withdraws or goes on leave of absence: http://www.cim.edu/assets/downloads/policies/refund_policy.pdf.

Please contact the CIM Financial Aid Office if you have any questions concerning the Financial Aid Student Attendance Policy.

Classes must be applicable to program requirements for federal aid eligibility

Students cannot be awarded federal financial aid for classes that do not count toward their degree or certificate program requirements. If a student is enrolled in courses that do not count toward a degree/certificate, those courses cannot be used to determine enrollment status and aid eligibility. All registered courses must apply to the student's program as a general education requirement, a major requirement, or applicable elective (whether restricted or free elective).

***Example:** If a student needs only a 3 hour history class to complete all program requirements to graduate, they cannot simply enroll in other classes to get up to a full time class load to obtain federal aid. Federal aid eligibility may only apply to the 3 credit class, and the student would be classified as less than half time, even if they still voluntarily enrolled for other classes that would otherwise be considered full time.*