

Georgia Highlands College HEERF III Student Funding Plan

March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP) (Pub. L. 117-2). The ARP appropriated approximately \$39.6 billion for the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) and represents the third stream of funding appropriated for HEERF to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus. Taken together, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) (Pub. L. 116–136), the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA) (Pub. L. 116-260), and the ARP represent HEERF I, HEERF II, and HEERF III, respectively.

Students who are or were enrolled in an institution of higher education during the COVID-19 national emergency are eligible for emergency financial aid grants from the HEERF, regardless of whether they completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or are eligible for Title IV. As under the CRRSAA, institutions are directed with the ARP funds to prioritize students with *exceptional need*, such as students who receive Pell Grants or are undergraduates with extraordinary financial circumstances in awarding emergency financial aid grants to students.

To meet this requirement, GHC will issue the ARP funds to those students who have or are eligible to receive Pell funding at a higher rate than those who are not eligible. Expected Family Contribution (EFC) numbers will be utilized so that students with lower EFC numbers receive the largest awards. GHC has been awarded a total of \$7,436,589, and will disburse funding for Fall 2021 and Spring 2022. A total of \$995,141.22 will be applied to complete HEERFII eligible student awards per the approved HEERFII plan. The remaining will be utilized for emergency awards.

The below schedule will be used to issue the awards.

		Total Amount	\$ 7,436,589.00
EFC Range	Est. Number of Students	Amount Per Student	Total Amount Awarded for Fall 2021 & Spring 2022
0 -1000	1545	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 4,635,000.00
1001 - 3199	370	\$ 790.00	\$ 584,600.00
Tier 3	3300	\$ 180.00	\$ 1,188,000.00
	Additional Need HEERFII		\$ 995,141.22
	Estimated Emergency Funding		\$ 33,847.78
		Total Estimated Awards	\$ 7,436,589.00

Students will be notified via email that they can elect to have the money applied directly to any open charges on their account along with instructions on how to make the election. Unlike the original CARES Act funding, students who are fully online are eligible to receive this award.

GHC CARES Act Emergency Fund Awarding Process

The GHC Cares Act review committee will be made up of the following representatives:

Bursar's Office	2 representatives
Financial Aid	1 representative
Student Support Services	1 representative
Academic Division Chair	1 representative

Eligible students will have the ability to submit one application, requesting emergency funds. Applications will be reviewed by the GHC Cares Act Committee and presented at a weekly meeting. The deadline for submissions will be 48 hours prior to each meeting. The committee will notify students within 48 hours of each committee meeting. The initial deadline, to apply, will be 03/01/2022. If there are funds remaining after this date, a second application submittal period will be opened.

Award decisions will be based on the established criteria outlined in the application. Award amounts will be determined based on eligibility, the request, proof of need, and available funds. Awards will average approximately \$500, however extenuating circumstances may warrant a higher amount. All requests and awards will be tracked and recorded by Financial Aid for student retention monitoring and reporting purposes.

GHC HEERF III Act Emergency Criteria

GHC CARES Act Emergency funds may be used to assist students with unexpected emergency expenses related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Expenses should be related to the cost of attendance, and could include, but not limited to:

- Food expenses
- Tuition
- Housing
- Technology
- Course materials
- Unanticipated and/or extraordinary expenses for their dependent children including, but not limited to, child-care, formula, and diapers
- Medical bills or medications
- Sudden emergency moves or change in living conditions or to prevent homelessness
- Safety needs (i.e. lock changes)