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General Questions

1. Not necessarily a question but I feel that it is important to note that we have not been given a reasonable time frame to complete the proposals for the 2019-2024 RFP. Based on the time frame provided, we are given more time to pose questions about the RFP than we are to complete our proposal after our questions have been answered. (it makes the Q&A seem unproductive because even if our questions are addressed and clarification is given, adequate time to respond is not provided) I would like to request that we are all given an extra week to complete our proposals (Postmarked April 26th) so we can incorporate the feedback from the Q&A period in a more reasonable amount of time.

We appreciate the commenters' input and have updated the due date to 4/26/2019 – as postmarked.

2. Due date for the report is April 19 which is Good Friday and two days after the Tri-State Consortium of Opportunity Programs Conference. Can there be consideration that this is a holiday for many folks and that most of the HEOP directors participate in the Tri-State conference? Since the RFP was just released, would it be possible to extend the deadline in respect to the holiday and the professional development commitment of the field?

We appreciate the commenters' input and have updated the due date to 4/26/2019 – as postmarked.

3. If we choose not to apply this year, can we next year or do we have to wait 5 years?

You would have to wait until the next RFP, which is scheduled to be released in five years.

4. What are an institution's options for opt-out if they do submit an application? Do they have the option of rescinding their application? What negative impact would it have on the institution for future grant applications with NYS or NYSED?

IHEs should only apply if they are committed to the program. However, if it becomes necessary to withdraw an application due to unforeseen circumstances, email a notice to

HEOPRFP@nysed.gov with a justification for withdrawal. While there are no specific penalties for future grant applications, a pattern of such actions could raise issues concerning responsibility of the applicant.

5. When will applicants receive notification of the grant decision?

Award notifications will be sent as soon as the application review is completed. These are expected to be sent at the end of May or the beginning of June 2019.

6. When will SED notify institutions that their 2019-24 RFP was accepted and contracted? Is there a timeline?

Award notifications will be sent as soon as the application review is completed. These are expected to be sent at the end of May or the beginning of June 2019.

7. Confirming an earlier directive, should the proposal be mailed by regular postal mail and not use any medium that requires a signature at the time of delivery?

SED recommends tracking. Signature confirmation is not required, but the IHE can decide on shipping options like signature confirmation. Note the new postmarked date of 4/26/2019.

8. Will SED send notification to each participating institution that their proposal was received and is under review?

No.

Formatting

9. Are attachments allowed?

Yes. As outlined in the RFP; see question 14, too.

10. Is there a reason that the font size and spacing were changed from the 14-19 RFP? (i.e. 12pt font, Calibri, double spaced VS. 11pt font, Calibri, 1.5 spacing) - This effectively gives projects less space to complete the same amount of content.

While we appreciate the commenters' input, no changes have been made. Using a 12-point font allows better readability of the proposal.

11. If the proposal is in 11-point font, will the proposal be rejected?

No, but proposals will be converted to conform with the formatting requirements, and excess pages beyond the 32-page limit will not be read or scored.

12. What are the font and spacing guidelines to follow for the proposal narrative?

Double-space 8.5" x 11" pages with one-inch margin. Use Calibri font in a 12-point size.

13. The 2019 - 2024 RFP indicates that authorized attachments must be "double-space 8.5" x 11" pages with one-inch margins." Does the double spacing apply to the Proposal Narrative and Budget Narrative as well? If not, what spacing should be used? Single? 1.5?

Yes, please use the double-space 8.5" x 11" pages with one-inch margin for consistent formatting throughout your proposal. Use Calibri font in a 12-point size.

14. What are authorized attachments and addenda permitted? Can you give us examples of things we can and cannot include as attachments?

Please refer to page 46 in the RFP:

"Please reference the following and include as attachments:

i. A section on Key Personnel and/or HEOP Management

ii. Job/Title Descriptions (do not use resumes in lieu of Job/Title Descriptions)”

15. Rather than using pages for attachments may we included website addresses for certain college offices that can provide essential support for the HEOP office and its students?

No. While we appreciate the commenters’ input, it is preferred not to receive website addresses, but attachments as noted in the RFP.

16. Will programs be penalized for including charts that are not specifically requested in the guidelines? Will programs be penalized for including appendices or attachments that are not specifically requested in the proposal guidelines?

No, but any additional items that are not specifically required will not be scored.

17. In section, Proposal Guidelines, what is meant on pg. 44 by “unauthorized attachments or addenda?” For instance, during the last cycle, position descriptions, program brochures, and other supporting materials were included in an appendix to include information for the

recruitment process. Can you define an “unauthorized attachment or addenda” and would such documents be considered this?

The quoted language on p. 44 of the RFP refers to items that are not specifically required in the RFP. Job/title descriptions are listed as a required attachment on p. 46 of the RFP.

Brochures are not. See answer to Question 19.

18. Can all organizational charts be attached as appendices? In reference to p. 46 Part 5b.

Yes.

19. If a brochure or university-formatted position description are approved attachments, according to the guidelines “Attachments must be double-spaced, 8.5” x 11” pages.” These documents have their own formatting. Must they be reformatted for inclusion in the appendix?

These types of attachments will not have to be reformatted. As noted in question 17, position descriptions are required attachments. Brochures are not. Therefore, if a brochure

contains information that you wish to have considered by the reviewers, that information must also be included in the narrative.

20. a. Are you aware that the maximum page numbers for the individual sections of the narrative (32) is greater than the total number of pages allowable in the entire narrative (30)?

b. Pg. 44 - Guidelines state that the proposal narrative should be no more than 30 pgs., however, when each section's page max. is calculated, it comes to 31 pages and there is no page allotment for the extra credit. Could the max. page allotment for the proposal narrative be increased to 32 pages? To be clear, guidelines state the narrative must be in Calibri font, 12 pt., no more than 30 pages; however, when you add the section limits, the page total is 31 not including the extra credit section. Is the page limit 30 or the approved limits of 31 plus the extra credit?

Your proposal may have up to 32 pages for the program narrative and extra credit - not including attachments.

Funding

21. If a program is considering increasing their FTE, how can/should this be noted in the RFP and budget? I am uncertain as to whether I should put the current numbers and base the budget on that, or should I use the desired increased numbers and create the budget based on those figures?

Use the desired increased FTE numbers and create the budget based on those figures - as long as the FTE does not exceed 650.

22. On the first page of the RFP, it is stated that "HEOP awards will be a maximum of \$7,000 per FTE..." Our current annual budget is \$492,236 for 65 FTE or approx. \$7,572.86 per FTE. It appears that this would be a cut for us, and I was under the impression that we would be at level-funding (at a minimum). Could you please advise if we should assume level funding or if the figure per FTE will be updated?

The total amount requested must be calculated using the estimated number of FTEs

multiplied by \$7,000 for IHEs outside of New York City and multiplied by \$7,500 for IHEs within New York City.

23. Our current per FTE credit rate is in excess of the \$7000 rate listed in the RFP, can we request at our current rate or are we limited to the \$7000 per FTE listed in the RFP.

An IHE outside of New York City cannot ask for more than \$7,000 per FTE.

24. Is it allowable to use the 18/19 Grant Budget (\$7,574 per FTE), when completing the budget for the 19-24 RFP?

No.

25. If (...) is approved for full funding ($\$7500 * FTE$), are we able to request more funds in the future; as soon as the first year of the cycle?

No. You are entering a contract with NYS for the cycle (five years) and the annual budget is based upon the appropriation approved by the legislature.

26. How are decisions made about the money awarded per FTE (it says “up to” \$7000—how low could it be and how is that decided?)?

An IHE can ask up to \$7,000 per FTE and up to \$7,500 per FTE for NY City, however it can be lower based upon the IHE's cost calculations per student.

27. Is there a minimum number of HEOP students to be served annually in the program?

Current programs have 32 or more student FTEs in HEOP. Therefore, SED recommends having a minimum of 30 FTEs annually in any program except for start-up programs; these may start with less than 30 FTEs in the first year, but SED recommends at least 10 FTEs – a “critical mass” is needed to ensure program's success.

28. Is there a requirement to involve a specific number of NYS Ed programs in the HEOP program?

I.e. if we currently have a CSTEP or STEP would we have to include a specific number of these students as HEOP students?

No, there is no requirement to include a specific number of students in other opportunity programs at the IHE as HEOP students. However, "double-counting" of students for reimbursement for the same activity from more than one program will not be permitted.

29. As a start-up program, if awarded, when is it expected the first cohort of HEOP students be enrolled?

The first cohort is required to attend the HEOP summer program in summer 2019 and is expected to be enrolled in classes in the Fall 2019 semester.

30. As a start-up program, is there a year 1 budget if no students are enrolled? Or is the expectation that students are enrolled beginning summer 2019?

A summer program and a year one budget are mandatory.

31. Can a continuing program increase its FTE/students served in the new contract cycle?

Yes, as long as the FTE does not exceed 650.

Definitions of Frequently Used Terms

32. Page 5. Full need packaging- If a student loses the TAP Grant is the educational institution responsible for the cost?

Yes, the institution is responsible for fully packaging all HEOP students.

Prequalification Requirement

33. Should the notice of intent come from a specific administrator of the institution (e.g., President's office)? Or may it be sent by any administrator with the authority to do so? (pg. 2)

The notice of intent email may be sent by any authorized representative of the applicant IHE.

Description of Program

34. Is there a responsibility to provide support to off-campus residents and commuters? pg. 6

(On-campus meals, living stipend, etc.)

Yes. All students need to be full-needs packaged. Please also see the Equity and Non-Discrimination Policy on p. 17 of the RFP and the Supplemental Financial Assistance section on p. 26 of the RFP.

35. On page 11, it states that HEOP funds may be used for salary increases. Does this mean that we could give our HEOP staff increases using grant funds even if the rest of the institution did

not receive increases?

The intent of this paragraph is to ensure that HEOP staff receive an equitable salary (including pay increases) with equivalent staff titles at the institution.

36. Page 8-9. Part-time student in a full-time program: Are seniors allowed to be on the roster if they are part-time during their last semester? The description is a bit confusing. The description initially mentioned students with extenuating circumstances being eligible. And if that is the case, who is the funding source? NYSED or Institution?

Yes, seniors are allowed to be on the roster if they are part-time during their last semester.

The funding source does not change. The funding source may come the HEOP grant and/or the institution. HEOP students, whether part-time or full-time, must be fully packaged.

37. Page 9. Special Sessions: “NYSED funds are not available for continuing students to attend a special academic session without Justification.” Can an example of a justification be given, and what is the appropriate documentation?

An example may be (but is not limited to) a prerequisite course that is offered during a

special academic session which the student needs to take to make academic progress in their studies. SED will inform the IHE what documentation is required.

38. On page 9 under "Special Sessions", item 1 specifies that if a director and financial aid officer verify a student's legitimate reason to attend a special session, they must document this. What constitutes a legitimate reason and what type of documentation is required? Are there any legitimate reasons that would justify the use of HEOP funds; if so, what is the process to seek SED approval?

See answer to Question 37. The process for approval is to email your SED liaison and provide the rationale for the request. SED will inform the IHE what documentation is required.

39. What's the success rate of start-up program application vs. a renewal program application for the last grant cycle?

The success rate of new applicants for the 2014-19 RFP cycle was 100%, which is higher than the programs that submitted renewal applications.

Student Eligibility

40. Page 13. Under “Criteria for determining educational eligibility for HEOP includes but not limited to the following ... #8 Attendance in a High-Needs High School.” Can we go outside of this list? If not, this does not work for universities that have higher academic criteria.

Yes. This list of criteria on pp. 12-13 of the RFP is not all-encompassing. Furthermore, all students need not have attended high school in one of the high-need districts listed at the link in #8. The IHE must strive to reach the most educationally disadvantaged students that are able to succeed at that institution.

41. Page 13. High Need HS: Is it correct to interpret that all NYC high schools are considered High Needs High Schools as detailed in the chart?

Yes. See: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/accountability/2011-12/NeedResourceCapacityIndex.pdf>.

42. Page 13 Item #2 – does this item include NY state residents attending boarding schools in programs in another state?

Yes, as long as the boarding school issued the student a diploma recognized by the state in which it is located.

43. Has the policy regarding college credits earned as a part of the high school curriculum (i.e. AP/IB/SUPA/College in HS, etc.) changed for the new RFP? (i.e. students with 12 SUPA credits and 2 AP classes would be ineligible for HEOP?)

The policy has not changed; however, the verbiage has been updated to clarify this policy. A student is ineligible for HEOP if, while in high school, he or she earned more than 15 college credits that would ordinarily be transferable to your institution.

44. Page 14. The new RFP states that student must not have earned 15 college credits or more in HS. The old RFP stated the same but had the clause “that are not transferable to your institution” What if your institution does not accept the transfer credits?

If your institution would ordinarily accept the credits, then the student is ineligible. The institution cannot render the student eligible by opting not to accept the credits.

45. Page 13 – 14 – Earned post-secondary credit bearing certificate or degree and college courses while in high school: Item # 2; Students must not have more than 15 college credits –
Question: What happens to students who have 4 credit bearing courses? Can an allowance be given in form of a range of 15 – 18 credits?

The question is unclear. As stated in answer to question 43, a student is ineligible for HEOP if, while in high school, he or she earned more than 15 college credits that would ordinarily be transferable to your institution.

46. What about students who initially do not disclose credits earned at a higher education institution and is not reflected on their high school transcript?

The student is expected to be truthful in their application to the best of their knowledge and can be dismissed from HEOP if they falsify the application. See page 17 of the RFP: “If the student is responsible for misreporting income and/or educational data, the student will be removed from the program/roster with no liability for the institution.”

47. On page 14, item 2 under "Post-secondary credit-bearing certificate or degree and college courses while in high school" states that students may not have earned more than 15 college credits, with the exception of those participating in the 5 listed NYS sponsored opportunity programs. Could you please clarify if for these students they may earn more than 15 credits, so long as they have not earned a certificate or degree? Are students in NYS P-Tech allowed to have earned a certificate or degree and still be eligible for HEOP?

Students in the NYS-sponsored opportunity programs listed on p. 14 of the RFP may exceed the 15-credit limit, so long as they have not earned a post-secondary credit-bearing certificate or degree while in high school, with one exception: NYS P-TECH participants who exceed the 15-credit limit may be considered for HEOP, whether or not they earned a certificate or degree.

48. Page 14. Do the 15 college credits or more in HS credit limit apply to students who are a part of: STEP, LPP, MBK, SSECHS, & NYS P-TECH?

No.

49. Why are we not allowed to consider CUNY affiliated programs for transfer credits, like College Now or the Medgar Evers College Prep school?

Students from those programs can be considered for HEOP, if they have not earned more than 15 transferable college credits in high school. The only exceptions to the 15-credit limit are the NYSED-sponsored opportunity programs listed on p. 14 of the RFP.

50. I understand the need to support other NYS grant-funded programs. (LPP, STEP, MBK, etc. - pg. 14) However, are we unfairly overlooking HS students who have shown the same level of motivation and persistence through participation in TRIO programs like Upward Bound by saying the college credits that were earned as a part of UB will make them ineligible for HEOP? Whereas students who fit the same student profile but happened to be enrolled in LPP would not be disqualified based on earned college credits?

We appreciate the commenter's input. However, under the current RFP, students who participated in TRIO programs like Upward Bound are not exempt from the 15-credit limit.

51. RE: Transfer students- Are we allowed to consider students from the CUNY ASAP program or Guttman Community College eligible for HEOP consideration? Those students share many of the eligibility markers of HEOP students.

Only students transferring from opportunity programs funded under Section 6451 or 6452 (Higher Education Opportunity Program, Educational Opportunity Program, Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge, College Discovery) of the New York State Education Law are eligible to transfer into HEOP.

52. Page 16. Under the section Economic Disadvantage, the acceptable documentation section 8b. states “**social security supplemental income.**” Is that considered SSI benefits?

Yes.

53. Is it permissible to offer a prospective first-time student a place on a wait list, and if a spot in the HEOP incoming cohort opens BEFORE the beginning of the summer program she or he may be offered admission, and if not is denied admission? This is standard Admissions practice. I

see no mention of wait lists except in the context of transfers being admitted to the institution and being placed on a wait list for a program spot, which of course is not allowed.

Yes, but only for initial admission for first-time HEOP students in the first year. This does not apply to transfer students.

54. Page 17. “HEOP funds may not be used to support programs that are segregated on any basis, including admissions policy, housing arrangements, classroom facilities, and allocation of financial aid.” Does this statement mean that we should not be advising students to live in “low cost” housing?

The HEOP students must be treated the same as the general admit students. IHE shall not discriminate against HEOP students.

Scholarships for Academic Excellence

55. Is the NYS scholarships for Academic Excellence the same thing as Regents scholarships for academic excellence (Listed on pg 12. Under D. Eligibility)? If yes, does NYS inform a student that if they accept the NYS Scholarship for Academic Excellence they are not eligible for HEOP?

Answer to questions 55-58: Yes, the NYS Scholarships for Academic Excellence are the same thing as the Regents scholarships for academic excellence (“the Scholarship”). Pursuant to 8 CRR-NY 27-1.1(a), recipients of the Scholarship are not eligible for admission into HEOP. However, if the IHE made the eligibility determination and admitted the student to HEOP before the student received the Scholarship, the student may remain in that IHE’s HEOP program. The IHE must keep documentation on file to prove the student’s non-admissibility, by the college's normal admissions standards, in the degree program for which application is made.

56. Since recipients of Regents scholarships for academic excellence are notified of receiving the scholarship well after they are admitted to our institutions (typically over the summer), how are we expected to deny their initial eligibility for HEOP? It is my understanding that the process for nominating students for the scholarship is driven first by their high school counselors, followed by an application submitted by the student and then a fairly late notification to respective financial aid offices. These students are indeed the most

disadvantaged students admitted to the University based on our selective admissions criteria.

Again, how are we to know which students ultimately receive the scholarship?

See response to question 55.

57. Page 30: Recipients of regent's scholarships for academic excellence are not eligible.

Since this information may not be available during the admission cycle, please provide some guidance on expectations from the institution in implementing this requirement.

See response to question 55.

58. "In the 2017-2018 Program Year, the Commission promulgated changes to the Rules and Regulations 27-1 and 152-1 that were approved by the Board of Regents to reflect the changes in the law." However, per the NYS Rules and Regulations 27-1 (8 CRR-NY 17-1.1) for student eligibility, it states, "Recipients of regents scholarships for academic excellence are not eligible." Question: The RFP does not mention anything about the recipients of regents' scholarships for academic excellence found in NYS Rules and Regulations 27-1. What recourse does the institution have in the event that it learns that a student is the recipient of a Regents

scholarship for academic excellence after the student has been admitted to the institution as an HEOP-eligible student? Generally, information about regents' scholarships for academic excellence is not made known to the institution until during or after the summer program.

See response to question 55.

Institutional Obligation

59. What are summer program requirements for room and board?

As stated on p. 19 of the RFP, "First-time HEOP Students attending the HEOP summer program cannot be charged for their attendance." This means all costs of participating in the summer program must be covered by the IHE. Accordingly, if the IHE is a residential campus, it must provide room and board to all HEOP first-year students for its summer program. If the IHE is a commuter school, it must provide rooms and meals for non-local HEOP students so they can participate at no cost.

60. Page 30: Moreover,expected to give priority for admission into HEOP to the most educationally disadvantaged students..... Page 4: Educationally disadvantaged student is

defined.

For an institution which uses a holistic approach using multiple factors, please provide some guidance or examples related to seeking the characteristic of "most".

The IHE must strive to reach the most educationally disadvantaged students who are able to succeed at that institution. The determination of which students are most educationally disadvantaged—i.e., most lacking in the “academic proficiencies required to complete college-level work” (RFP pp. 4-5), based on a complete evaluation of each applicant’s educational profile using the institution’s established criteria—is a joint decision that is up to the HEOP Director and the Admissions Officer. See “Educational Disadvantage,” RFP pp. 12-13.

61. Admission policies are expected to be flexible and expected to give priority to the "most" educationally disadvantaged students. Please provide some clarification and examples in helping an institution be in compliance with seeking the "most" and retaining the expected flexibility.

See the answer to question 60.

62. If a student was previously enrolled at a non-HEOP Institution or an open admissions institution and did not complete any coursework, are they disqualified from HEOP?

No. A student who completed 15 or fewer credits at a non-HEOP Institution or an open admissions institution can be considered for HEOP. A student with 15 or fewer earned credits is not to be considered a transfer student but a new applicant. As per RFP, the acceptance of these students in HEOP is not automatic; they may be accepted if they meet all HEOP eligibility requirements and at the discretion of the IHE.

63. NYSED defines a matriculated student as “an individual who is enrolled at a college/university as a student working towards a degree. This student is usually enrolled in 12 or more credits per semester.” Part-time students cannot enroll for more than 11 credits in any given semester. Can another sentence be added to the definition to include part-time students?

To clarify, a part-time student in an approved part-time HEOP school is considered

matriculated even if they are enrolled in less than 12 semester hours or the equivalent per term.

64. NYSED defines a commuter student as, “an HEOP student who is living at home with parent(s) or guardian(s).” This definition does not describe a part-time student. What is a working definition for a part-time student?

Under this RFP, a part-time student is a student who is enrolled for less than a full-time course load. As stated on p. 9 of the RFP, “HEOP students attending part-time in a full-time program must enroll for at least six semester hours or the equivalent per term, except for graduating HEOP students in their last term, when they can enroll for fewer hours.”

65. Part-Time HEOP Students and Summer/special sessions (page 9); In the current grant cycle our part-time students have been allowed to register for only 3 credits during summer for the following reasons:

a. the intensive nature of the classes (3 credits of coursework in 6 weeks)

b. Summer semester runs across grant-years and grant reporting, with Summer 1 session ending June 30, and Summer 2 session starting after July 1. Requiring HEOP students to take 6 credits also requires them to take multiple courses concurrently (all session 1 or all session two) rather than consecutively (one course session one, one course session two). 3 credit summer course loads increase part-time students' level of success and shorten the number of years it takes to complete a degree. Can we request to continue to allow students to take 3 credit course loads during the summer.

Yes. As per 2019-24 RFP at page 9-10: *"Part-time students in a part-time program can be enrolled in special sessions for 3 or more credits only in certain extenuating circumstances such as: students with disabilities, medical problems or family responsibilities. This can happen for up to two semesters during their HEOP tenure as part-time students in a part-time program."*

66. Summer Program: Our college admits students Fall, Spring & Summer, and we provide first-semester HEOP remedial & compensatory courses across all semesters. Limiting students to

only admitting for summer program would put our students at a disadvantage compared to our general admissions students. May we continue to admit to HEOP across all semesters?

This is not possible; all first-year HEOP students must attend a summer program prior to matriculation & enrollment. You could, however, accept eligible transfer students.

67. The HEOP RFP runs until 2024. If a student joins the College and the HEOP program in fall 2023, they would have 3 or 4 years to graduate after this grant ends. Will the College continue to receive funding for these students?

Yes, the IHE can be funded if it applies for and is successful in the next cycle in 2024, or per the phase-out methods described on page 30 of the RFP. Funding for the next round will be prioritized to support currently enrolled HEOP students in projects that phase out.

68. On page 47 of the RFP it states, "Recruitment from the local community is encouraged." On page 66 of the rubric it states, "Recruitment from the local community is preferred." The language is inconsistent. "Encouraged" and "preferred" can suggest different meanings. "Encouraged" can denote that it's great if it happens, whereas "preferred" can denote that

grant proposals who present stronger recruitment plans from the local community will be graded higher. Please confirm the intent behind this language. Should we be following the language from the proposal guidelines or the proposal evaluation rubric?

In order to receive full points for this section, applicants need to include their local community in their recruitment plans. However, they will not be penalized if they also recruit students from across the state.

69. Could you please clarify the full-time FTE calculation on pg. 8? (i.e. Total credits for the program year for all students for all semesters (including the special sessions) in the program divided by 24). Does this calculation use attempted credits or completed credits?

This calculation must use attempted credits – because students would be using semesters/credits of HEOP eligibility.

70. When the question is asked in the admissions section (pg. 48 - 1.a.)” How many students the institution is looking to support each year of the HEOP cycle” Are you asking us to restate our requested FTE? (i.e. we are looking to support 73 students each year of the cycle) Or are you

asking how many students we are looking to admit in each year of the cycle (i.e. we are looking to support 18-19 new students in each year of the program)

For ongoing programs FTE is the total number of contracted students per year. The start-up IHEs must complete the “Start-up Programs only” sheet on the Composite Budget showing how they plan to ramp up the enrollment. Note that Start-up programs should achieve their final FTEs by year 4. Please see page 44 of the RFP.

71. Documentation Policy, passage on p. 17: “Certification forms, with signatures of the Chief Administrator, the Chief Financial Aid Officer and the HEOP Director, will attest to the educational disadvantage and economic eligibility of each program student. These forms must be submitted as part of the HEOP reports as described in the Reports section.” Questions: I work at a large institution. The Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions signs the Verification of Educational Eligibility form, not the Chief Administrator. Can the Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions sign the form if I submit a designee letter from the Provost identifying this designee?

The Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions could only sign the form if the Chief Administrator signs the designee letter identifying this designee.

Full Need Packaging

72. Is it required to provide room & board for resident HEOP students? If so, is an institution required to provide and fund meals for commuter HEOP students?

Yes, based on each student's financial need. The IHE is required to meet HEOP students' full financial need to cover the cost of attendance, including realistic subsistence costs. This includes room and board for resident students, as needed, and meals for commuter students, as needed.

73. Section E: Asking for clarity: The section states that first-time HEOP students attending the HEOP summer program cannot be charged for their attendance. If programs offer courses for credit, it is permissible to charge tuition for those courses, but the grant or institutional funds (or other funds) need to be used to cover the costs?

Yes.

74. Are loans borrowed to cover residential housing costs a part of the cumulative loan burden rule?

Yes.

75. We have campuses in Westchester county as well as in NYC, so is the price per student different for the students who attend the Westchester county campus vs. the student who attends the NYC campus?

The students should be assigned to the campus where they take the preponderance of their coursework and the budget must be weighted appropriately/accordingly. For example, if the proposed program is for 50 FTEs in NYC and 50 FTEs outside NYC, the maximum allowable budget would be $\$7,500 \times 50 + \$7,000 \times 50 = \$725,000$.

76. Definitions of Frequently Used Terms, Full Need Packaging, passage on p. 5: “Total resources, including all grants, expected family and institution’s contributions, work study, and loans to fully meet the needs of a student attending a HEOP institution (including room and board as needed); must be maintained for the duration of HEOP eligibility - even if the student loses

TAP or its successor for any reason.” Question: In the situation of a TAP loss, whether the student has failed to meet SAP standards or has exhausted eligibility, is the institution allowed to include among the resources any loan funding equal to the TAP loss, even in the event that the student exceeds his annual or aggregate loan limit at that time or later in their degree program due to this circumstance? We see this as a justifiable reason equivalent to allowing a student to exceed his loan limit to cover an EFC increase (referenced on p. 20 of the RFP).

No, the IHEs are responsible for academic advising and full need packaging despite the loss of TAP and/or Pell grants.

77. Full Need Packaging, Maximum Allowable Loans, passage on p. 20 “1. The maximum cumulative loan for a resident HEOP student to complete a baccalaureate program is \$25,000 and the maximum cumulative loan for a commuter HEOP student to complete a baccalaureate program is \$20,000 for all students who start in the 2019-2024 RFP cycle. 2. It is strongly recommended that first-time HEOP students not be packaged with loans. However, if a first-

time HEOP student is packaged with loans the student may not be packaged with more than \$5,000 per year for residential students and \$4,000 per year for commuter students.”

Questions: Are institutions held to annual loans limits or the TOTAL loan limit for the student’s undergraduate career? If there is an annual loan limit, is there an annual loan limit for all students beginning with the 2019-2024 RFP cycle, or does the annual loan limit apply only if students are packaged with loans as a first-time HEOP student?

The IHEs are held to annual loans limits for the first-time HEOP students, with no more than \$5,000 per year for residential students and \$4,000 per year for commuter students, AND to the TOTAL loan limit for the student’s undergraduate career, as follows:

Outside NYC: the maximum cumulative loan limit for a resident HEOP student to complete a baccalaureate program is \$25,000 and the maximum cumulative loan for a commuter HEOP student to complete a baccalaureate program is \$20,000 for all students who start in the 2019-2024 RFP cycle.

In NYC: the maximum cumulative loan limit for a resident HEOP student to complete a baccalaureate program is \$30,000 and the maximum cumulative loan for a commuter HEOP student to complete a baccalaureate program is \$20,000 for all students who start in the 2019-2024 RFP cycle.

Prorating Loans and Exceptions

78. Page 20. Maximum Allowable Loans for HEOP: Are there any loan limits for students in other New York State opportunity programs; e.g. EOP?

No.

79. Page 20. “In the rare case of unusual and extraordinary circumstances where it is necessary for students to take out loans above the mandatory loan limits, IHEs must submit a written request to NYSED with documentation justifying packaging additional loans. This justification must be submitted and approved by NYSED before packaging a student with loans that exceed the loan limits. IHEs must not allow students to take out additional loans without prior approval.” Is the approval needing every time a student with an elevated EFC has to take an

additional loan or when they are near the threshold of accumulative loan limit? If approval is needed every time the student takes out the additional loan, it will be difficult for a school with 575 FTE.

No, SED does not need to approve loans taken to cover the EFC (“expected family contribution”), and these loans do not count against loan limits. Any loan amounts over EFC count against loan limits. Schools must keep documentation on file.

80. Prorating Loans and Exceptions, passage on p. 20 “Exceptions can be made for students who need to take loans to cover no more than the expected family contribution (EFC). In the rare case of unusual and extraordinary circumstances where it is necessary for students to take out loans above the mandatory loan limits, IHEs must submit a written request to NYSED with documentation justifying packaging additional loans. This justification must be submitted and approved by NYSED before packaging a student with loans that exceed the loan limits. IHEs must not allow students to take out additional loans without prior approval.” Question: When an exception is being made for a student to borrow loans to cover the EFC, does this require

approval from NYSED or is approval only required when this action would cause the loan limit to exceed the total maximum limit? Is approval required if it exceeds the annual limit?

No, SED does not need to approve loans taken to cover the EFC, and these loans do not count against loan limits. Any loan amounts over EFC count against loan limits. Schools must keep documentation on file.

81. Prorating Loans and Exceptions, passage on p. 20 “For students who are transferring from other NYS opportunity programs (SEEK/CD/EOP), the IHE should assess the amount of loans the student has taken while in another opportunity program and package the student with no more than \$5,000 for residential students and \$4,000 for commuter students for each year the student is enrolled.” Question: Is the annual loan limit for all transfer students limited to \$5000/year residential and \$4000/year commuter even if the assessment of the prior loan history indicates that the student will not exceed the maximum loan limit at the time of graduation?

Yes.

82. a. In the case where transfer students have accrued previous loans that could put them over the total loan limit of \$25,000/\$20,000 (for example, students coming from EOP), can IHEs still package these students at the annual rate of \$5000/year residential and \$4000/year commuter?

Yes.

b. If so, does this need to be pre-approved by NYSED?

No.

c. When reporting loan totals for transfer students, do we exclude loans accrued while the student was in an EOP program?

Yes. Previous loans do not count towards the loan limit.

83. Page 20 – Prorating – States that the maximum grant for transfer students is \$5,000 per year. However, some institutions that use staggered loan calculations (ex., freshmen \$2,000, soph. \$3,000, Jr, \$4,000 loan, etc.), need to budget 4th and 5th year students with loans that are

higher than \$5,000 per year, while still staying within loan limits. Can this be reworded to reflect flexibility as long as the loan limits are adhered to?

No, IHEs must pro-rate for transfer students.

84. Transfer students who come from community colleges often have no loans prior to transfer, due to low cost of CC tuition (TAP, PELL covers all or most). If a transfer student needs to have more than \$5,000 per year in loans, why is this limited? These students will not come close to reaching the loan limit.

The annual loan limit is to protect HEOP's economically disadvantaged student population from excessively burdensome loan repayment obligations, consistent with the purpose of HEOP.

Expenditures

85. Can you please explain "items which previously have been assumed by the institution" further as a non-allowable cost? For example, as a start-up program, is it not permissible to propose placing a part of an existing counselor's salary on the HEOP budget if that counselor will

dedicate time to HEOP students if awarded? That counselor will have new tasks to that IHE – counseling HEOP students, therefore in this narrow case (start-up programs) only it would be allowable.

HEOP funds may not be used to supplant services or activities that are currently paid for out of other funding sources. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure that HEOP funds are used to benefit the intended population rather than to fund the basic educational program that the IHE would have provided in the absence of the grant. Consistent with this purpose, a start-up program can reassign staff to work with HEOP students and may charge salaries to the HEOP funds, up to the amount of time dedicated to HEOP services.

Budgets (FS-10)

86. Please explain what we should be following for the budget narrative, as it does not align with the rubric. For example, pages 54 - 55 do not align with the rubric presented on page 79.

The narrative outlines the specific guidelines used for programmatic purposes, while the rubric details the scoring process. The budget should include the specific elements described

starting on page 54 and on page 78 and will be scored based on the general qualities in the rubric on page 79.

87. Academic Support Services – Page 24 Code to be used to pay peer tutors that are not HEOP students. Please clarify which code in the Budget FS-10 is to be used to pay for this expenditure. Are they considered Educational Assistants?

Please use Code 15 for any peer tutors or other tutors who are not HEOP work-study students (not the same as federal work-study). Use code 16 for HEOP work-study students.

88. Does the budget that we are approved for cover summer program cost or is there a separate RFP process for summer program expenses, similar to EOPs process?

There is not a separate RFP process for summer program. All required program elements, including the summer program, need to be included in the FS-10 and the composite budget.

89. In the previous RFP we completed the composite budget in the HEOP B-1 form. Is there a specific format in which we should submit this information this time around? If so, where can it be found?

In the Composite Budget form. <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/kiap/colldev/heop/2019-2024heopcompositebudget.xlsx>

90.If all State funds go to tuition, fees, and books, do we need to include institution funds for staff and salary? Do we need to show any institution funds?

Yes, all elements of the program, whether funded out of the state grant or with institution funds, need to be included in the Composite Budget form.

<http://www.highered.nysed.gov/kiap/colldev/heop/2019-2024heopcompositebudget.xlsx>

91.Is the budget that we are approved for supposed to cover all expenses such as tuition, supportive services, salaries etc.?

The budget (FS10) only shows how you will spend the State funds. The Composite Budget form shows how you will spend all funds needed for HEOP (including institutional and other funds).

92. How should five years of expenses be reflected in the Composite Budget? For example, for a 1.0 FTE HEOP director (salary) who will serve for 5 years -one-line item @ 5.0 FTE?

The Composite Budget form only asks for first-year expenses.

93. Is it allowable to use the 18/19 Grant Budget (\$7,574 per FTE), when completing the budget for the 19-24 RFP?

No.

94. Is it OK on the budget portion of the RFP to simply use a percent for benefits, rather than specifying each category?

No. You must use whole dollar figures. You may use percentages to calculate the dollar figures to be included in the budget, and then make sure that the dollar figures add up to the correct total. Ensure that the fringe rate does not exceed the IHE's allowable maximum.

Details on the breakdown of fringe benefit categories can be included in the FS-10 description and/or in the budget narrative.

95. Please clarify page 25, Remedial, Developmental, Compensatory and Summer Courses –

Sections 3 & 4. The and/or clauses make it confusing. If credit is earned for the course, does this still apply?

The point of these provisions is that the composite HEOP budget—taking into account both state funds and institutional funds—may not include both the salary of the instructor AND tuition for the same course.

96. On page 25, in the section covering "Remedial, Developmental, Compensatory, and Summer Courses," could you please explain points 3 & 4 further? In particular, it seems that point 3 is a mistake and point 4 is the intended statement.

Both statements are correct. The point is that it would be double-counting to charge both the salary of the instructor AND tuition for the same course against the HEOP budget.

97. How is outside aid (not federal/state) calculated/affected for a HEOP aid receiving student?

IHE must make sure that the student is packaged to full-need. The inclusion of outside funds is at the IHE's discretion.

98. What are the expectations about separate services other than the director, summer program, etc. (tutoring, career counseling, mental health counseling, etc.)?

HEOP students need to be served in such a manner so that they will be academically successful in school.

99. How is the financial aid portion calculated and awarded?

Using a Federally-recognized needs analysis system (i.e. FASFA or its successor and/or other federally-recognized Institutional methodology).

100. What is the institutional contribution to aid for HEOP students?

The IHE makes that determination, as long as the student is packaged to full-need, including outside funds.

101. When entering data in the Summary Page, there is a column for Federal and State Grants (TAP/PELL) that can be used to offset tuition, but there is no column for "Other" which would include loans, scholarship, ACCESS-VR, EFC, which institutions may use to offset the cost of Room/board as well as tuition. Can this column please be added, or could the grants

heading be changed to include “Other?”

It can be found under “Other Sources”, in the Composite Budget form on the Summary tab

at [http://www.highered.nysed.gov/kiap/collddev/heop/2019-](http://www.highered.nysed.gov/kiap/collddev/heop/2019-2024heopcompositebudget.xlsx)

[2024heopcompositebudget.xlsx](http://www.highered.nysed.gov/kiap/collddev/heop/2019-2024heopcompositebudget.xlsx).

Institution Name			
HEOP Award	Institution	Other Sources	

HEOP Office Organization and Administration

102. Description of Program, HEOP Office Organization and Administration, passage on p. 11

“The HEOP director must report to a senior level administrator of the institution. A senior level administrator is one who directly reports to either the institution's President, chief academic officer, and/or governing board. The institutions are strongly encouraged to have the HEOP director report to a Chief Academic Officer (e.g. provost or Vice President of Academic

Affairs).” Could you clarify if the HEOP director MUST report to a senior level administrator (VP or higher) or if they are STRONGLY ENCOURAGED to report to the Chief Academic Officer (VP or better)?

HEOP Director must report to someone who directly reports to either the institution's President, chief academic officer, and/or governing board at the time of application. That said, it is strongly encouraged to have the HEOP director report directly to a Chief Academic Officer.

105. Will a program be penalized if the HEOP director does not report directly to a VP or have a direct connection to Academic Affairs (Provost) but a clear rationale for the reporting structure/division is made?

HEOP Director must report directly to a Senior level Administrator. As per the RFP, “A senior level administrator is one who directly reports to either the institution's President, chief academic officer, and/or governing board.” If this requirement is not met, full points will not be awarded in the Organizational Background section of the rubric.

106. In reference to the requirement that the HEOP Director report to a Senior Administrator, would a dual reporting line to both Academic and Student Affairs be approvable? More specifically; the HEOP Director will report directly to AVP of Student Success (who does not report directly to a Senior Level Administrator) with a dual reporting line to the Executive Director of Academic Policies, Operations & Services (who reports directly to the President). Would this reporting structure be approved per RFP guidelines?

Yes.

107. I work at a large institution and report to an Assistant Vice President. This was allowed in the previous RFP. For this RFP, is it required or strongly encouraged? Will my application lose points if I report to an AVP? If it is required, does my reporting to Provost/VP need to be established at the time of the application or can it be later?

It is required for the HEOP Director to report to a senior-level administrator and to submit a signed Acknowledgement Form affirming that this requirement is met. Your example would only meet the requirement if that AVP is AVP of Academic Affairs and meets the definition

of “A senior level administrator is one who directly reports to either the institution's President, chief academic officer, and/or governing board”. If this is not the case, the IHE will be expected to restructure the reporting to meet this provision by the contract start date. If, in the application, the reporting structure is unclear or discrepancies exist, points will be deducted. If an applicant is successful and is awarded a contract, discrepancies must be addressed as directed by SED, within a reasonable time after the preliminary award notice is made and before a contract can be issued.

108. Page 11 – director reporting supervisor Question: Would an Associate Dean of academic support services qualify as long as the program is under Academic Affairs?

Only if they report directly to a Senior level Administrator and meet the definition of “A senior level administrator is one who directly reports to either the institution's President, chief academic officer, and/or governing board”.

109. Page 11. “The HEOP director must report to a senior level administrator of the institution. A senior level administrator is one who directly reports to either the institution's President, chief

academic officer, and/or governing board.” Can your proposal be denied if this reporting structure is not put in place?

Your proposal must include a signed acknowledgement form affirming that this requirement is met. If, based on the totality of your proposal, the reviewers determine that the reporting requirement is unclear or discrepancies exist, you will not be disqualified solely on this basis. However, your proposal will be penalized by a deduction of points for this section.

Moreover, if the applicant is successful and is awarded a contract, the IHE will be expected to restructure the reporting to meet this provision, as directed by SED, within a reasonable time after the preliminary award notice is made and before a contract can be issued.

Monitoring

110. Page 30. Probation for HEOP institutions, the criteria for Graduation Rates; Which rates, 4 year or 6 year for the 4-year degree?

SED will monitor the 4-year and 5-year graduation rates. As per the RFP, a HEOP student is allowed ten semesters or equivalent of opportunity program eligibility.

111. Page 30. Probation for HEOP institutions, the criteria for retention and/or graduation rates would be applied starting with which cohort?

SED will monitor the 2019-20 cohort for retention rates for all programs and 4-year and 5-year graduation rates for previous cohorts for current IHEs; start-up programs' graduation rates will be evaluated starting in 2023.

112. Page 30. Probation for HEOP institutions; the criteria related to retention and/or graduation rates: Is a similar criterion expected or currently in effect for the other opportunity programs of the State, e.g., EOP, SEEK?

Accountability criteria for each of the State's opportunity programs are based on the programs' specific goals and statutory requirements. NYSED collects data on student progress and attainment, such as retention and/or graduation rates, and uses the data to monitor whether programs are meeting expectations. We cannot answer this question in detail for EOP, which is managed directly by SUNY, or for SEEK, which is managed directly by CUNY.

113. Please clarify the sections on Reporting and Probation, pages 28 & 30, which state

That “HEOP students [must] meet at least 90% of the overall retention and graduation rates at the IHE” and that an IHE will be put on probation for “Retention and/or Graduation Rates for HEOP students less than 90% of the IHE’s overall students’ rates for two consecutive years.”

Can an example be given for clarity?

For example, if the IHE retention rate is 90% overall for the freshmen, then HEOP must have at least 81% retention rate ($0.9 \times 0.9 = 0.81$). If the HEOP student retention rate is less than 90% of the retention rate of the IHE for two years in a row, then the IHE would be placed on probation.

114. Page 30: Probation for HEOP Institutions: Retention and/or Graduation rates less than 90% of the institution. Was there an empirical or research methodology to derive this 90% standard for comparison?

SED has a fiduciary duty to make sure that IHEs are accountable for the spending of NYS funds. HEOP strives for comparable outcomes between HEOP students and overall student

outcomes at the IHEs. Since HEOP students start their academic career disadvantaged, SED estimated that reaching at least 90% of the IHEs overall outcomes is a fair and equitable goal.

115. On page 28 of the RFP it states the following regarding program performance: ". . . satisfactory performance of the grantee in previous academic years including but not limited to meeting 95% of the contracted number of FTEs and having HEOP students meet at least 90% of the overall retention and graduation rates at that IHE." It is possible this proposed 90% threshold when compared to retention and graduation rates at our institutions might prove unrealistic when it comes to our student population. There are two primary concerns for this. One, the size of our programs compared to the general student population at our institutions is disproportionate. If a small program (35 FTE) were to lose 8 students during the course of a year, and the general graduation rate for their college was 87%, it could place them in violation of this metric. Two, general admission students often have more "parachutes" than our HEOP student population, which can experience myriad emotional, financial, and family

challenges that could inhibit their ability to persist. Could there be further criteria for this standard? For example, only count students toward this threshold who did not persist due to academic difficulties, rather than emotional, financial, family or health reasons. It seems unreasonable to punish programs for things we cannot control, whereas academic success is something we are actively charged with working with students on.

Student retention is a critical measure of program effectiveness. Therefore, there are no criteria that would exempt students from being counted; all HEOP students must be counted in this calculation. As stated on p. 13 of the RFP, the IHE's admissions process must be designed to assess the likelihood that students can persist and succeed. Consistent with the purpose of HEOP, the IHE must work with students to help them overcome not only academic stresses, but also financial stresses, such as losing TAP eligibility. As per page 30 in the RFP, a one-year variance would not result in the IHE being put on probation; Retention and/or Graduation Rates for HEOP students would have to be less than 90% of the IHE's overall students' rates for two consecutive years.

116. Can you please clarify the explanation presented on page 8 of the RFP regarding calculating FTE by aggregating total credit hours for semester students and dividing by 24? We understand the baseline expectation is that full-time students at semester schools should take at minimum 12 credit hours per semester, and thus 24 for the year. But if one student exceeds that amount for the year (say 30 hours), and another student falls below it (say 18 hours), that would appear as 2 FTE, but it is not reflecting that one student was actually full-time while the other was part-time, and it seems the priority of SED is to maintain our students as full-time. What is the logic behind calculating FTE this way?

This allows for the fact that most HEOP students would face difficulties if they were required to take 15 credit hours per semester.

120 hours to graduate / 10 semesters allowed for HEOP = 12 hours/semester

This is the same methodology as in the current cycle.

117. Can you please define retention? Typically, colleges define retention as persistence rate from the first year to second year. Can you define SED's interpretation of retention, as it's not listed in the definition glossary in the RFP?

As per USDOE at <https://fafsa.ed.gov/help/fotw91n.htm>: “Retention rate is the percentage of a school’s first-time, first-year undergraduate students who continue at that school the next year. For example, a student who studies full-time in the fall semester and keeps on studying in the program in the next fall semester is counted in this rate.” This would be calculated the same for sophomores continuing to junior year and for juniors continuing to senior year.

118. Page 31 Item #3 – Phase out due to unsuccessful reapplication – it says, “Institutions that are unsuccessful in their reapplication in the next round of 2024-2029 funding cycle will be phased out from HEOP.” Should this read “next round of 2019-2024”?

Institutions that are awarded funding for 2019-2024 under this RFP, and which are unsuccessful in their reapplication for the 2024-2029 cycle, will be phased out at that point,

consistent with the terms of this RFP. Any currently-funded institution that is unsuccessful in its reapplication under this RFP will be phased out in a similar manner.

Requirements

Prequalification for Individual Applications

119. If an institution has a NYS Grants Document Vault that is up-to-date with all forms, is it still necessary to go through the Pre-Qualification Process in the Grants Gateway?

Your institution's status must be prequalified on the Grants Gateway at the time of application.

Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (M/WBE) Participation Goals

120. Would you please provide examples of how IHE's have used the services of M/WBE in their HEOP programs?

M/WBE is not required in the current HEOP RFP. However, NYSED strongly encourages applicants to seek New York State certified M/WBE subcontractors or suppliers to the extent possible for expenditure items in their budget submissions.

Vendor Responsibilities

121. More clarity on how to determine if a school is a vendor? What are the criteria needed to make the determination? Current description very convoluted.

For this RFP, all applicants are vendors. Anyone receiving a contract with NYS is considered a vendor.

122. Where can we find our NYS Vendor ID?

Any school that has a contract with NYS has a vendor ID. You may be able to find your vendor ID on the following systems: [Grants Management](#); [SEDREF](#); [Statewide Financial System](#); or [OSC Vend Rep](#)

Application Forms

123. Acknowledgement Form, p. 43: “Chief Executive Officer / President: “Question: Can an institute designee sign the Acknowledgement form if a designee letter is provided?”

Yes.

124. Financial Aid Award letters – page 19 Section E – Full Need Packaging Item #2 – Can award letters be kept in electronic format or is it mandated to only have printed copies in the files in the HEOP Office?

Electronic files for FA Awards letters are acceptable.

125. Page 41 – Please clarify what is meant by “Total Number of Students Served over the cycle.”

For current programs: Multiply the number of FTE per year by 5 years = Total Number of Students Served over the cycle

For new programs: Complete the “Start-up Programs only” worksheet in the Composite budget form found at <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/kiap/colldev/heop/> to determine

the subtotal number of students served for the first four years (ramping up). Year five FTE is the same as year four FTE. Add year five FTE to the subtotal from the previous calculation to get the “Total Number of Students Served over the cycle”.

126. Page 48 – Population – Item a. “State how many students the institution is looking to support each year of the HEOP cycle.” Question: Please clarify, does this mean new entering students for years 1-5, or does this include returning students total enrollment for the 5-year cycle?

This means the total FTE served in each of the 5 years. For current programs, this number will typically be relatively steady across the 5-year cycle. For Start-Up programs, this number will increase each year up until year 4, as new students enter. The FTE for start-ups will remain steady during years 4 and 5.

127. Page 42 – in reference to the Payee Information Form – please define who is required to complete this form.

Your institution would only need to complete this form if it does not yet have a NYS vendor ID or if you need to change information on this form.

Proposal Guidelines

128. May a continuing program increase the number of FTEs for the new RFP?

Yes, up to the maximum.

129. Does the Original proposal, 2 copies and all the additional forms all get added to the USB drive and mailed in the same packet?

The USB drive must include one electronic copy of all paper materials submitted (scanned original, forms, and attachments). To avoid confusion, it is best to mail all materials in the same package.

130. Why is the FTE calculation method so different from the original method which is adding the number of Fall roster students + the number of Spring roster students and dividing the total by 2?

The new RFP FTE calculation is the same as the most recent RFP.

131. Do we have to use the forms provided for the Verification of Economic Eligibility, Educational Eligibility, and Sample Checklist for Student’s Financial Aid file or can we use our own version we use currently?

These are samples. An IHE can decide to use these or their own forms.

132. How many pages are required for Section E (p.47)?

You can go up to 5 (five) pages max, with 2 (two) pages as the maximum per each goal. (E.g. 2 pages +2 pages +1 page = 5 pages)

133. Section B – “This section summarizes the proposal’s purpose, scope and outcomes.” Are you referring to the proposal or the program?

The proposal describes your program, ergo the proposal must describe program’s purpose, scope and outcomes.

134. Section C – What do you mean by “Description of compliance with reporting requirements and student outcomes in the last HEOP cycle or for similar opportunity programs (e.g., C/STEP, TRIO, or similar campus-based programs supported by the IHE).”

- **If your IHE is currently an HEOP grant recipient, you'll have to describe your compliance with HEOP reporting requirements and student outcomes in the last HEOP cycle.**
- **If your IHE is NOT a current HEOP grant recipient, you'll have to describe your compliance with the reporting requirements and student outcomes for similar opportunity programs (e.g., C/STEP, TRIO, or similar campus-based programs supported by the IHE)."**

135. Please clarify the expectations for sections for the Needs (D) and the Recruitment and Admission (G) sections. How is Section D.2 "description of the target population" (p. 47) different from Section G1B on p. 48, which asks for a description of the specific characteristics of the pool of potential HEOP-eligible students?

To avoid repetition in these two sections of your proposal, it is recommended that you describe the target population in one section and, if necessary, cross-reference that description in the other section. The difference should be in the focus of the narrative. We expect Section D to focus on the educational need that your program will meet in the

communities to be served, while we expect section G to provide an in-depth summary of the IHE's specific plans and processes to recruit and admit eligible applicants.

Proposal Rubric

136. On page 69, are we looking for the program/services on campus for all underrepresented populations on campus? (HEOP and traditionally admitted) - Section 1.c.

Yes.

137. Which format should we follow when responding to the RFP: the narrative outline presented in the RFP, or the grading rubric provided at the end? As currently presented, they do not align. For example, the tutoring format presented in the narrative on pages 52 - 53 compared to the rubric for that section on page 73.

The narrative description and the rubric should correspond for each section. The narrative outlines the general guidelines used for programmatic purposes, while the rubric details the scoring process. Follow the rubric for scoring purposes.

136. Page 76 – Rubric for Extra Credit Section: Maximum Loan Limits Proposal describes how the program will provide financial aid packages that keeps the annual loans less than the maximum allowed. Question: Is this referring to loan packaging for the first year only, or each year in college? Please clarify.

This asks the IHE to state the annual loans limits that they commit for each year in college, for the duration of the cycle.

Appendices

137. If we plan to enroll fewer than 20 HEOP-eligible students, is a full- or half-time HEOP Counselor required for the summer program?

The IHE should staff their program appropriately to ensure that the academic and counseling needs of the students are being met. There are recommendations for staffing in the RFP, particularly in Appendix 1 (p. 57). Note that SED recommends having a minimum of 30 FTEs annually in any program except for start-up programs; these may start with less than 30 FTEs

in the first year, but no less than 10 FTEs. A “critical mass” is needed to ensure program’s success.

138. If we plan to enroll fewer than 20 HEOP eligible students, please confirm that we are required to have a half-time HEOP Counselor during the first academic year.

See question 137.

139. Does the HEOP Counselor requirements increase (half-time to F/T) as more students enter the pipeline in subsequent years, or is that requirement based on first-time HEOP students?

See question 137.