NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

APPLYING FOR TOPS

Priority Deadlines for NSU
ACT – April 12, 2008
FAFSA – May 1, 2008

An initial qualifying score achieved on the **June 14, 2008** national test date will be accepted, but you will be penalized one semester (or two quarters) of eligibility.

LOSFA has an agreement with ACT, Inc. that requires ACT, Inc. to electronically report to LOSFA all ACT test scores for Louisiana residents. Occasionally, individual test scores are omitted from the reports. For this reason, LOSFA recommends that when registering for the ACT, students include the **TOPS report code of "1595"** in the list of institutions to receive the test scores. Students opting to take the SAT should use the TOPS report code of 9019.

1. Complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) after **January 3, 2008**
    Deadlines:
    - ❖ **July 1, 2008 (for full award)**
    - ❖ **The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must be received no later than July 1 immediately following high school graduation.**
    - ❖ **If the application is received from 7-2-2008 through 7-1-2009, the student's award will be paid beginning the AY 2009-2010.**
    - ❖ Penalties will apply if application is received from 7-2-2009 through 10-29-2009. Application received **after October 29, 2009 will be ineligible for TOPS.**
    - ❖ Students who apply for TOPS by submitting the FAFSA without the income-related information or who file the TOPS On-Line Application will be the first to lose their award in the event of a budget shortfall.
    - ❖ FAFSA is processed and transmitted to the Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA).
    - ❖ OSFA verifies the student's information with the federal processor, ACT center and the Local Education Authority, LEA.
    - ❖ Students eligible for a TOPS award will be notified by means of an official award letter from LOSFA.
    - ❖ Students are awarded the highest TOPS award they are eligible for.
    - ❖ NSU is notified by LOSFA every Friday of new eligible students.
    - ❖ NSU pulls all students registered at this university from a master roster.
    - ❖ Estimated aid is posted toward the students account.
    - ❖ To access the Student section of the TOPS Portal, students must have an account.

2. Student will need to create a password to access their information. There are five steps to creating a TOPS Student Portal. (www.osfa.state.la.us)
    - ❖ Click – TOPS Portal
    - ❖ Click - student
    - ❖ Enter your social security number and date of birth, if the data is not yet on our files, or is in error, the account can not be created.
    - ❖ Provide us with a challenge question and answer
    - ❖ Enter your email address
    - ❖ Create Account

After you have successfully created an account, your browser will return to the Sign on menu. Please allow two to three minutes for the server to validate your account before you sign in.

FIRST DATE FOR STUDENTS TO CHECK ELIGIBLITY ON THE TOPS WEBSITE IS MAY 2008. TOPS recipients are personally responsible for knowing the specific policies and regulation stipulated in this program. To obtain additional TOPS information, contact the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance at 1-800-259-5626, Ext. 1012 or visit their website at **(www.osfa.state.la.us).**

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