



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

July 7, 2009

DCL ID: GEN-09-09

SUBJECT: National SMART Grant Program – List of Eligible Majors for Award  
Year 2009-2010

SUMMARY: This letter provides the list of academic majors eligible for the National  
SMART Grant Program for the 2009-2010 award year.

Dear Colleague:

The regulations for the National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant) Program, 34 C.F.R. 691.17(d), provided a mechanism for institutions of higher education to request that additional majors be designated as eligible majors in the National SMART Grant Program. In addition, as we explained on March 26, 2009, in Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) GEN-09-03, in accordance with section 401A(c)(3)(D) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), effective July 1, 2009, the Secretary may designate a liberal arts curriculum as an eligible major if the requesting institution demonstrates that the liberal arts curriculum complies with specific requirements. Specifically, HEA section 401A(c)(3)(D)(i)(I), as effective July 1, 2009, provides that a student at an institution of higher education that offers a single liberal arts curriculum that was offered prior to February 8, 2006, under which a student is not permitted to declare a major in a particular subject area, may receive a National SMART Grant if the student studies a subject that has requirements that are at least equal to the requirements for an academic major in the physical, life, or computer sciences, mathematics, technology, engineering, or a critical foreign language at another institution of higher education that offers a baccalaureate degree in that subject. Alternatively, under HEA section 401A(c)(3)(D)(i)(II), a student at such institution may undertake a rigorous course of study in mathematics, biology, chemistry, and physics that consists of at least four years of study in mathematics and three years of study in the sciences, with a laboratory component in each of those years.

In DCL GEN-09-03, we invited institutions of higher education to submit requests for additional majors to be designated as eligible majors for the National SMART Grant Program for the 2009-2010 award year. In response, institutions submitted eight requests for additional eligible majors. One of the requested majors was for a major already on the list of eligible majors: CIP code 30.1901, Nutrition Science.

Under HEA section 401A(c)(3)(C)(i), as effective July 1, 2009, an otherwise eligible student must pursue a major in the physical, life, or computer sciences, mathematics, technology, or engineering or a critical foreign language to be eligible for a National

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SMART Grant. Section 103(3) of the HEA defines critical foreign language as each of the languages contained in the list of critical languages designated by the Secretary in the Federal Register on August 2, 1985 (50 FR 31412; promulgated under the authority of section 212(d) of the Education for Economic Security Act (repealed by section 2303 of the Augustus F. Hawkins-Robert T. Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988)). Five of the eight proposed additional majors do not fulfill the statutory requirements because they are not majors in the physical, life, or computer sciences, mathematics, technology, or engineering or a critical foreign language.

The two requests for designation of a liberal arts curriculum as an eligible major satisfy the statutory criteria and have been added to the list of National SMART Grant-eligible majors. Furthermore, the Secretary adds all the critical foreign languages stipulated under section 103(3) of the HEA to the list of National SMART Grant-eligible majors.

The complete list of eligible majors for award year 2009-2010 is provided as an attachment to this letter.

Thank you once again for your support and assistance in awarding National SMART Grants to eligible students. If you have any questions regarding eligible majors, please contact Sophia McArdle at 202-219-7078 or by e-mail at [sophia.mcardle@ed.gov](mailto:sophia.mcardle@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel T. Madzellan", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Daniel T. Madzellan  
Delegated the Authority to Perform  
the Functions and Duties of the  
Assistant Secretary for  
Postsecondary Education

Attachment