

Graduate Theological Union Reporting for American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP) Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERFIII) Report Financial assistance to students

On March 11, 2021, the President signed the [American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](#). This most recent coronavirus relief package provides an additional \$40 billion to the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) established in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

At least half of an institution's allocation under [ARP \(a\)\(1\), HEERFIII](#), must be used to make emergency financial aid grants to students (the Student Aid Portion); the remainder may be used for institutional purposes (Institutional Portion). ARP requires that institutions prioritize students with exceptional need in awarding grants to students.

All students who are or were enrolled in an institution of higher education on or after the date of the declaration of the national emergency due to the coronavirus (March 13, 2020) are eligible for emergency financial aid grants from the HEERF, regardless of whether they completed a FAFSA or are eligible for Title IV. That includes citizens, permanent residents, and international students.

On May 24, 2021 the U.S. Department of ED issued updated written guidance in their [Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund III Frequently Asked Questions](#), to clarify whether or not undocumented, DACA or International students may receive these funds. The new guidance allows any individual who is or was enrolled at an eligible institution on or after March 13, 2020, the date of declaration of the national emergency due to the coronavirus to receive HEERF funds.

Emergency financial aid grants may be used by students for any component of their cost of attendance or for emergency costs that arise due to coronavirus, such as tuition, food, housing, health care (including mental health care) or child care. Students determine how they may use their emergency financial aid grant within the allowable uses.

Institutions who previously received HEERF funding are not required to submit a Certification and Agreement for HEERFIII. The GTU received notification for a student allocation of **\$66,218**.

Applicants must be enrolled in the spring 2021 term and expenses must have incurred after March 16, 2020; the date that the Shelter in Place order was put into effect in Alameda County. The Director of Student Life sent an email inviting students to apply.

Of 152 eligible students, 40 applied and were awarded on April 20, 2021. Student awards ranged between \$600 and \$8700 depending on the student's request and the amount of funds available. The total amount of emergency grants distributed is \$66,218 as of June 30, 2021.

Funds were applied directly to the student's account for those who selected "Yes" to the student authorization section of the application. Students who opted not to apply the funds to their student account were issued a check. Consideration was given to those with the highest tuition balance, and other factors such as requested amount, the number of family members in their household, if the student is employed, and if the student is the sole or primary provider. Priority consideration was given to those having difficulty with paying their outstanding balance.

The GTU agrees that all employees and contractors will continue to be paid during the period of any disruptions or closures in compliance with Section 18006 of the CARES Act.