Dear Beacons,

In response to the economic challenges created by the coronavirus pandemic, the federal government established the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). I am writing to you now to explain how the CARES Act may benefit you and what you need to do to establish your eligibility. Please pay close attention to these rules and deadlines so that we can move as quickly as possible to support you.

UMass Boston will receive federal funds from the CARES Act. Six million dollars of this money will be provided to students whom the federal government has defined as qualified. Eligibility has been determined by the Department of Education to include students who qualify for federal financial aid AND have incurred emergency expenses due to the move to remote learning necessitated by the pandemic.

Allowable Expenses
The U.S. Department of Education has designated these funds as being available for students with expenses related to the change in campus operations. Our FAQ page spells out what kinds of expenses are allowed, but examples include costs associated with technology, child care, housing, and transportation.

Eligibility

1. **Graduate and undergraduate students** who are eligible for federal financial aid can apply for these funds if they incurred expenses due to the move to remote instruction.
2. Students are required to have a [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](https://fafsa.ed.gov) (FAFSA) on file by **Friday, May 15**.
   - Students graduating this term should complete a FAFSA for the 2019-2020 academic year.
   - All other students are encouraged to complete the 2020-2021 FAFSA.
3. Unfortunately, the federal rules do not include all students in this program. Those who are currently ineligible include:
   - Students who are enrolled in online-only programs and those that are not eligible for federal financial aid.
4. **UMass Boston is committed to all of our students.** We have limited resources available to help those students who don't meet the pre-determined federal guidelines but have qualifying expenses. Nonetheless, we will do what we can to help those who are not eligible by calling on funds we raise through philanthropy or can provide via other forms of institutional support.

**Application**

- Both the federal funding and the institutional aid require students to complete an online application. This is important because we must be able to substantiate that student need matches the federal eligibility rules.
- The online application is available from today through Friday, May 15, and should take less than 5 minutes to complete. We anticipate having additional application cycles during the remainder of the calendar year 2020.
- **This URL will take you to our online application.** Be sure to complete it no later than the close of business (5 p.m.) on Friday, May 15!

**Financial Aid Decisions**

- Financial Aid Services will distribute funds based on the number of applicants and demonstrated expenses starting the week of May 18. It is anticipated that awards will range from $200 to $1,200.
- Funds will be distributed to students via direct deposit (**sign up for direct deposit here**) or by check. Direct deposit is faster for most students.

**Timing**

- ASAP: Submit **FAFSA** online to be eligible
- Friday, May 15, 2020: Round 1 **online application** due
- Week of May 18, 2020: Financial Aid Services will begin awarding funds

We hope you are able to take advantage of the opportunity presented by these grants. Check out our **FAQ page** or reach out to The One Stop at [www.umb.edu/onestop](http://www.umb.edu/onestop) with questions or concerns.
Thank you,

Katie Lynch
Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management

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