

MCS FAQs for Departments

I need to plan for my awards, how can I do that knowing this information?

We suggest including a disclaimer with all award notifications to your students including a section specifically on MCS. We also strongly encourage departments to be very upfront with students that any resources they receive can displace other Financial Aid they may be receiving. We are not currently suggesting any other changes to department awarding processes. Though a student with the Middle Class Scholarship may have a reduction to their award and see no net financial gain, there are other benefits that come from being selected for a scholarship/award/experiential opportunity.

Do you have any sample language we can use when notifying students about awards?

Yes. We actually have an entire handout designed to be attached to award notifications. It is available on our website: <https://www.finaid.ucsb.edu/policies-and-disclosures>

If you are looking for something brief, we suggest this:

Please note: [Name of Resource] is considered a financial resource for financial aid purposes. The total amount of financial aid that you may receive is determined by the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (OFAS) and is based on federal and state policy. If OFAS finds that you have received the full amount of aid for which you are eligible, your [Name of resource] may lead to a reduction in certain types of aid. If you are unsure about whether you have received the full amount of aid for which you are eligible, or to inquire about how receiving [Name of resource] may impact your existing financial aid, please contact the Office of Financial Aid and scholarships by joining the line to receive a call back at: <https://www.finaid.ucsb.edu/join-the-line>

The Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships currently helps me in selecting recipients.

Can you help me find a work around?

Unfortunately, we do not have any discretion in these reductions, and must abide by the program requirements established by the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC). We advocated with CSAC to allow for departmental awards to be treated differently but currently we don't expect any regulatory changes. As a result, MCS award amounts may be adjusted multiple times, before and/or after funds have been disbursed, and are subject to change throughout the year.

I want to make sure that I award a student without reducing their aid. How can I verify the student I select has enough room?

That may not be possible. Because of the interdependent variables of the MCS program and unique situations of each student, it is difficult to accurately predict what the implications of the award may be. We recommend you follow your current process for awarding your department's resources. We strongly recommend NOT excluding students with MCS from any opportunities.