

9 2 123. Wyoming investment in nursing loan and grant program; eligibility criteria; procedures.

(a) There is created the Wyoming investment in nursing program administered by the Wyoming community college commission created under W.S. 21 18 201. The program shall be known as the WYIN program. Applicants shall be residents of this state or graduates of a Wyoming high school and may apply for loans from the WYIN program in accordance with this section.

(b) To qualify for a loan under the WYIN program, the applicant shall first:

(i) Be accepted into a nursing education program at a Wyoming community college, the University of Wyoming, or, in the case of a candidate for a doctoral degree, an institution providing the required nursing education courses under contract with the western interstate commission for higher education or in a distance nursing education program at a university that is regionally accredited; and

(ii) Apply for federal financial assistance and any employer-based financial assistance for which the applicant may be eligible. Wyoming community colleges shall allow students who apply for admission into an approved nurse aide training or nursing education program, and who will enroll in fewer than six (6) academic credit hours, to apply for federal financial assistance.

(c) Subject to the availability of funds appropriated for this program, loans under the WYIN program may be granted to applicants enrolled or planning to enroll in nursing education programs as follows:

(i) An applicant who is accepted into a Wyoming licensed practical nurse or registered nursing education program or a baccalaureate degree program in nursing may be eligible for a loan to pay the unmet need, as determined by the Wyoming community college commission or its designee, of attendance at the licensed practical nursing education program or the registered nursing education program leading to an associate's or baccalaureate degree;

(ii) A registered nurse with a baccalaureate degree who holds an unencumbered license with the Wyoming board of nursing, has the equivalent of at least one (1) year of full-time service teaching in a nursing education program in Wyoming as a registered nurse with a baccalaureate degree, with preference given to a registered nurse currently teaching at the University of Wyoming or a Wyoming college, and the registered nurse is accepted into a nursing education program at the University of Wyoming leading to a master's degree in nursing or nursing education may be eligible for a loan to pay the unmet need of attendance, as determined by the Wyoming community college commission or its designee, provided that in order to receive a loan for a master's degree program, the applicant shall agree to repay the loan by teaching at a Wyoming college or the University of Wyoming. If the applicant registered nurse is not accepted into a nursing education program at the University of Wyoming and upon approval of the Wyoming community college commission, the applicant registered nurse may be accepted into an accredited nursing education program at a university located outside of the state. Loans awarded for applicants accepted into programs outside of Wyoming shall not exceed the loan amounts available for programs at the University of Wyoming;

(iii) A registered nurse with a master's degree in nursing who holds an unencumbered license with the Wyoming board of nursing, has the equivalent of at least one (1) year of full-time service teaching in a nursing education program in Wyoming as a registered nurse with a master's degree in nursing and is accepted into a nursing education program at an institution providing the required nursing education courses under contract with the western interstate commission for higher education or in a distance nursing education program at a university that is regionally accredited leading to a doctorate level degree in nursing may be eligible for a loan to pay the unmet need of attendance, as determined by the Wyoming community college commission or its designee, provided that in order to receive a loan for a doctorate level degree program, the applicant shall agree to repay the loan by teaching at the University of Wyoming.

(d) A loan provided under this section shall not exceed the cost of attendance for the approved program, reduced by the amount of any Pell or other federal grant and any employer-based financial assistance received by the applicant.

(e) A recipient of a WYIN loan under this section may repay the loan without cash payment by working in Wyoming as a nurse or nurse educator as provided in subsection (f) of this section. To qualify as repayment under this subsection, and except for graduate students as provided under subsection (q) of this section, work shall be performed within the following time periods which begin with the calendar month following the month in which the student completed the academic program:

(i) If the loan can be repaid with work of two (2) years or less, within three (3) years;

(ii) If the loan can be repaid with work of greater than two (2) years, but no more than four (4) years, within five (5) years;

(iii) If the loan can be repaid with work of greater than four (4) years, within the amount of time the loan could be repaid, plus two (2) years.

(f) Qualified work under subsection (e) of this section shall be credited so that the student's loan balance is reduced on the basis of one (1) year of full-time employment repaying the loan balance for one (1) academic year of full-time enrollment, or twelve thousand dollars (\$12,000.00) of the loan, whichever is less. Qualified work shall be credited on a proportional basis.

(g) Any recipient of a WYIN loan who fails:

(i) To complete the academic program for which the loan was provided shall commence cash repayment of the loan no later than forty-five (45) days after the recipient leaves the academic program;

(ii) To obtain employment in the targeted occupation for which the person received the education within ninety (90) days after successfully passing the appropriate certification or licensure examination shall commence cash repayment of the loan within one hundred twenty (120) days after successfully passing the appropriate certification or licensure examination;

(iii) The appropriate certification or licensure examination on the first attempt may retake the examination at the next available opportunity before commencing repayment of the loan. The recipient shall notify the Wyoming community college commission or its contractor of the intent to retake the examination and the date the examination will be taken. Any recipient of a WYIN loan who fails the examination after the second attempt shall commence cash repayment of the loan within forty-five (45) days after receipt of notification of the second failure by the board of nursing. If the recipient of a WYIN loan who fails the examination on the first attempt does not retake the examination at the next available opportunity, cash repayment shall commence within forty-five (45) days after the next available examination is conducted.

(h) Loan repayment options under this section may be deferred for a period not to exceed four (4) years while a loan recipient is serving on full-time active duty with any branch of the military services of the United States.

(j) The Wyoming community college commission shall have the powers and duties specified in W.S. 21-18-202 to implement this section and shall establish terms and conditions of loans issued under this section, including:

(i) Interest rates and loan terms;

(ii) The form and process for loan application, review and award;

(iii) Criteria under which students may be relieved from having to repay loans and interest thereon, in whole or in part, where the requirement to repay would cause undue hardship.

(k) Funding of the loan program established under this section shall be by appropriation of the legislature. The Wyoming community college commission shall transfer approved loan amounts to the University of Wyoming and to Wyoming

community colleges at which loan recipients are enrolled. In consultation with the university and affected community colleges, the commission shall establish procedures for transferring loan amounts and for reporting requirements on the expenditure of transferred loan amounts.

(m) Cash repayment of loans and interest thereon shall be credited to the general fund.

(n) The Wyoming community college commission shall annually review the loan program established under this section and report to the governor and the legislature in accordance with W.S. 9-2-1014, regarding program results, funds received and loans issued during the preceding academic year, together with the status of all outstanding loan commitments and repayments under the program.

(o) This program created by this section shall expire effective June 30, 2016.

(p) Notwithstanding subsection (o) of this section:

(i) Any person beginning a nursing education program as authorized by this section shall continue to receive funding for the program so long as the person remains eligible as required by this section;

(ii) Repayment of loans provided under this section shall continue as specified in this section until all loan obligations have been satisfied.

(q) A recipient of a WYIN loan under this section and attending a master's or doctorate nursing level program may begin loan repayment through qualified work as authorized under subsections (e) and (f) of this section concurrently with enrollment in the nursing education program, subject to the following:

(i) If the recipient is enrolled in a master's nursing degree program, the recipient shall perform qualified work for not less than one (1) year following completion of the education program;

(ii) If the recipient is enrolled in a doctorate nursing degree program, the recipient shall perform qualified work for not less than two (2) years following completion of the education program.

#### FACULTY FUNDING:

21-18-202 (c) (vii) Powers and duties of the commission

(vii) Subject to appropriation by the legislature, the commission shall fully fund a teaching faculty position whenever a community college commits to expanding its college-funded nursing program capacity by eight (8) students. A community college shall be eligible to apply for the funding under this paragraph only if enrollment in the nursing program of the applicant institution was not less than ninety-five percent (95%) of the total college-funded nursing program capacity at the beginning of the most recent fall academic semester. Funding provided under this paragraph for the specific purpose of expanding a nursing program capacity shall be reduced by an amount equal to that provided to fund one (1) teaching faculty position for every reduction of eight (8) full-time equivalent students in the college-funded nursing program, as determined by comparing the beginning enrollments of the two (2) most recent fall academic semesters. Funding reductions shall not exceed the total amount of funding provided to a community college under this paragraph. Any appropriation made for purposes of this paragraph shall, in accordance with W.S. 21 18 205(e), be accounted for and distributed separately from the funding allocation model for community colleges;