
Professional student:

(1) A student enrolled in a program of study that awards a professional degree upon completion of the program;

(i) A professional degree is a degree that signifies both completion of the academic requirements for beginning practice in a given profession and a level of professional skill beyond that normally required for a bachelor's degree, where professional licensure is also generally required.

(ii) These programs are designated as professional degrees: Pharmacy (Pharm.D.), Dentistry (D.D.S. or D.M.D.), Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.), Chiropractic (D.C. or D.C.M.), Law (L.L.B. or J.D.), Medicine (M.D.), Optometry (O.D.), Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.), Podiatry (D.P.M., D.P., or Pod.D.), and Theology (M.Div., or M.H.L.).

(iii) Additional professional degrees must be designated by the Secretary through rulemaking, as required by 20 U.S.C. 1098a and 5 U.S.C. 553.

(2) **Interim Definition of Professional Student Through June 30, 2027.** Through June 30, 2027, professional student means, a student enrolled before July 1, 2027, in a program of study that awards a professional degree upon completion of the program. A program of study that awards a professional degree is one that meets the criteria under (1)(i) through (iii) of this definition and any other degrees that meet the following conditions:

(i) Existed as of July 4, 2025, and for which students received title IV funds in the 2024-2025 award year;

(ii) Meets the criteria in paragraph (1)(i) of this definition; and

(iii) Designated by the institution as a professional degree. An institution designates a program as a professional degree by providing, on or before July 4, 2025, clear and conspicuous information describing such program of study:

(A) to current and prospective students in accordance with § 668.43 or

(B) to the Department

(3) A professional student under this definition:

(i) May not receive title IV aid as an undergraduate student for the same period of enrollment;

(ii) Must be enrolled in a program leading to a professional degree under paragraph (1) or (2) of this definition, as applicable; and

(iii) Has completed the equivalent of at least three years of full-time study either prior to entrance into the program or as part of the program itself.