FINANCIAL AID GUIDE

Effective Date: July 2025

Revised Date: July 2026

Statement of Purpose:

The purpose of this Financial Aid Guide is to provide students, families, and staff with a clear and comprehensive understanding of the financial aid process, policies, and resources available at our institution. It is designed to empower students to make informed financial decisions, understand their eligibility for federal, state, and institutional aid, and navigate the steps required to apply for, receive, and maintain financial assistance.

This guide serves as a central reference for ensuring transparency, promoting financial literacy, and upholding the highest standards of compliance with federal and state regulations, including Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965. It reflects the Institution's commitment of Title IV financial aid funds and to support each student's academic journey with stewardship, clarity, and care.

Financial Aid Code of Conduct:

This Code of Conduct ensures that all employees involved in the administration of the Student Financial Aid Act with integrity, transparency, and in the best interest of students. In accordance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008, the institution prohibits practices that may create a conflict of interest or the appearance of impropriety:

- Revenue-Sharing Arrangements: The institution will not enter into any revenue-sharing arrangement with any lender, guarantor, or servicer.
- Gifts from Lenders or Servicers: Employees may not solicit or accept any gift from a lender, servicer, or guarantor of student loans.
    - "Gift" includes any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, or other item having monetary value (with limited exceptions like coffee or nominal-value items).
- Contracting Arrangements: Financial aid staff may not accept compensation for consulting services or advisory roles with a lender, guarantor, or servicer.
- Steering Borrowers: The institution will not assign a borrower's loan to a particular lender or delay certification of any loan based on the borrower's lender choice.
- Offers of Funds for Private Loans: The institution will not request or accept offers of funds from lenders for private education loans, including funds for opportunity pool loans, in exchange for a promise of loan volume or preferred lender status.

- Advisory Board Compensation: Employees who serve on advisory boards of lenders or guarantors may not receive compensation except for reasonable expenses incurred for that service.
- Lender Call Center or Staffing Assistance: The institution will not permit lenders or servicers to staff or outsource any financial aid office functions.

Financial Aid Employees must:

- Be ethical and conduct themselves with integrity
- Avoid any conflicts of interest and comply with the Code of Conduct
- Provide all students with accurate and complete information
- Keep student information confidential and comply with FERPA as discussed in school catalog
- Comply with all applicable Federal, State and Accreditation regulations and school policies and procedures

Financial Aid Employees must not:

- Ask a prospective, enrolled, or former student for his/her Federal Student Aid ID
- Make statements that contradict the catalog or enrollment agreement
- Discuss financial aid information with anyone except the student unless they provided a FERPA release
- Complete or sign any document on behalf of any prospective, enrolled, or former student, including:
    - Initialing any document on behalf of a student
        - Using white-out or erasing any information on a document
        - Modifying or altering information provided by a student
- Provide inaccurate information about:
    - Availability of financial aid and the terms (accept/reject/repay etc.)
    - Availability of scholarships and how they are applied
    - Whether or not a given charge is the customary charge normally applied
    - Program costs and applicable refund policies
    - Responsibility to repay loans and interest rates
    - Amount of financial aid
    - Eligibility criteria
    - Our programs, facilities, student services and jobs
    - Our graduation and placement rates
    - Transfer credit to or from other schools
    - Credentials or licensing a student may obtain
    - Potential income upon graduation
- Pay the application fee of any student
- Borrow or give money to any student
- Discuss any credit information with a student
- Discuss their own personal financial situation or matters unrelated to financial aid
- Default on their own Federal student loans or repayment agreement for any grant overpayment

Student Financial Assistance:

What is Financial Aid?

Financial aid is funding designed to help students cover the cost of their education when personal or family resources may not be sufficient. This support may include a mix of grants, federal loans, scholarships, employer reimbursement, military education benefits, and other types of assistance.

- Grants and scholarships are considered *gift aid* and do not need to be repaid.
- Loans are borrowed funds that must be repaid, with interest, even if a student withdraws from school or is dissatisfied with their program.

It is encouraged that all students explore non-repayable options first, such as scholarships, grants, employer benefits, or military benefits, before borrowing any loans. If a student is considering taking out loans, the Financial Aid office can help students understand the responsibilities of borrowing and walk them through the differences between federal and private loans.

Eligibility for Federal Title IV Aid:

Basic Eligibility:

All students must meet basic eligibility requirements to be eligible for Federal Student Aid:

- Be enrolled as a regular student
- Be precluded from enrolling in elementary or secondary school
- Have a high school diploma or equivalent
- Must be making satisfactory progress (reference Catalog for SAP policy)
- Must meet enrollment requirements
- Must resolve any drug conviction issues.

Academic Qualifications for Federal Student Aid:

- The student must have a high school diploma or a recognized equivalent such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate or completing a high school education in a homeschool setting approved under state law.
- The student must be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen.
- The student must maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP) standards set by the institution.
- The student must be enrolled at least half-time (6 credits for undergraduate students) to be eligible for Direct Loan Program funds.
- The student must not be in default on a federal student loan and does not have any grant overpayments.
- The student must not have any drug convictions that occurred during a period of enrollment for which the student was receiving Title IV aid.
- The student must only use federal funds for educational purposes.

- The student must demonstrate financial need for Pell Grants and Subsidized Loans.

Students who fail to meet the above requirements cannot receive funds from any Title IV programs.

A person must be enrolled as a regular student in an eligible program to receive Federal Student Aid funds. A regular student is enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an eligible institution for the purpose of obtaining a degree or certificate offered by the Institution.

Documentation of a student's academic qualification is gathered at the time of admission into the program. The documentation is sent to the Registrar's Office to ensure accuracy and compliance.

A student that is enrolled at our institution cannot receive Federal Student Aid funds if they are enrolled in an elementary or secondary school. An adult pursuing a GED, (not a high school diploma), is not considered to be enrolled in a secondary school.

A student is enrolled in a secondary school if:

- The student is pursuing a high school diploma. If the student possesses a foreign high school diploma it must be translated to English and verified as equivalent to a United States high school diploma.
- The student has completed the requirements for a diploma but has not received the diploma and is still enrolled in the secondary school that gives credit for postsecondary course work.
- The student has completed the requirement for a diploma but has not received the diploma and the high school granting the diploma still considers the student to be enrolled.

Home Schooling:

Home-schooled students are not considered to have a high school diploma or equivalent; however, they are eligible to receive Federal Student Aid funds if their secondary school education was in a home school that state law treats as a home or private school. Many states will issue a secondary school completion credential to homeschoolers. If the student's state issues a completion credential, the credential must be provided to the institution prior to the institution disbursing any Federal Student Aid funds.

U.S. Citizenship or Eligible Noncitizen:

To be eligible for federal student aid, such as the Pell Grant and Direct Loans, the student must be either a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen as defined by federal regulations. This eligibility is determined when the student completes the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Eligible citizenship statuses are:

- A U.S. Citizen, including individuals born in the United States or naturalized
- A U.S. National (includes natives of American Samoa or Swains Island)
- A U.S. permanent resident with a Permanent Resident Card (I-551)
- An eligible noncitizen, such as:
    - Refugee
    - Asylee
    - Cuban-Haitian Entrant
    - Victim of human trafficking
    - Parolee
    - Conditional entrant
    - VAWA self-petitioner

Enrollment Status:

A student must be enrolled at least halftime (6 credits) to receive assistance from the Direct Loan programs. The Pell Grant program is awarded based on the student's enrollment intensity and can vary by semester.

Defaulted Federal Student Loans:

A student who is in default on any Federal Student Aid loans cannot receive any further Federal Student Aid until the defaulted status is resolved. A student who has a loan that is in a defaulted status can resolve that status by:

- Repaying the loan in full
- Pay a settled amount in full
- Successfully consolidating the loan
- Setting up a satisfactory repayment arrangement

If the defaulted loan has been written off, the loan will remain in a defaulted status and the student is not eligible for additional funding.

If a student has met any of the above conditions and the institution receives a FAFSA that shows a loan(s) in default, the student must provide additional documentation stating that the loan(s) are not in default. Once documentation has been provided to the Financial Aid Office, the institution may then disburse Federal Student Aid funds to the student.

Students Conviction of Possession or Sale of Drugs:

Under Section 484(r)(1) of the Higher Education Act (HEA), and in accordance with 34 CFR 668.40, a student will lose eligibility for Title IV federal student aid if they are convicted of a drug offense while receiving federal aid. This includes federal grants (such as Pell and FSEOG), and federal student loans.

The loss of eligibility only applies if the conviction occurs during a period of enrollment for which the student was receiving Title IV aid. Drug convictions prior to receiving aid do not affect eligibility. Only convictions for possession or sale of illegal drugs (not alcohol or other offenses) are considered under this rule. Affected students may regain eligibility early by either:

- Successfully completing an approved drug rehabilitation program, or
- Passing two unannounced drug tests administered by such a program.

Federal Grant Aid

Federal Pell Grant:

A Federal Pell Grant is a need-based award that typically does not have to be repaid if eligibility is maintained. Pell Grants are awarded only to undergraduate students who have not earned a bachelor's degree or professional degree. Awards are determined using the Student Aid Index (SAI), Cost of Attendance (COA) and enrollment intensity. The U.S. Department of Education provides formulas for calculating the amount of a Pell Grant award.

Initial awards may be based upon the full-year projection of the highest enrollment status anticipated. If a student enrolls in more or fewer credits in any semester, the award may be adjusted for that semester. Therefore, please contact the Financial Aid Office before making any enrollment changes.

The amount Federal Pell Grant funds you may receive over your lifetime is limited by federal law to be the equivalent of six years of Pell Grant funding.

Pell Lifetime Eligibility:

The Federal Pell Grant has a lifetime limit on how much a student can receive, known as Lifetime Eligibility Used (LEU). Under federal regulations, students are limited to the equivalent of 6 full-time years (or 600%) of Pell Grant funding over their lifetime. A students Pell Grant usage is measured in percentages, with 100% representing a full award year (usually two full-time terms). Once a student reaches 600%, they are no longer eligible to receive Pell Grant funding at any school—regardless of financial need or program of study.

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG):

The Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) is a need-based federal grant awarded to undergraduate students who demonstrate exceptional financial need. Unlike loans, FSEOG funds do not have to be repaid.

To receive FSEOG, a student must demonstrate financial need and meet all general federal student aid eligibility requirements. Priority for FSEOG awards is given to students with a Student Aid Index (SAI) between -1500 and 0 who are being awarded a Federal Pell Grant for the applicable award year. If FSEOG funds remain after awarding this primary group, the institution may consider awarding FSEOG to students with a SAI higher than 0; starting with students with the lowest SAI score.

State Grant Programs:

State grants are a form of non-repayable gift aid (funds that do not have to be repaid). Each state sets its own eligibility criteria that students must meet to qualify for and maintain state grant funding.
To be considered for state grant programs, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Eligibility is often determined based on financial need, state residency, enrollment status, and submission deadlines.

Below are the State Grant Programs offered:

Pennsylvania State Grant- This is a non-repayable need-based grant. Students apply for the grant by completing the FAFSA, thereby releasing data to the state agency. The deadline for first time applicants is August 1 of the award year and May 1 for continuing students.

The Pennsylvania State Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA), administrators of the state grant program, may send students a status form to complete and return to them. It is critical that this form is completed and returned promptly. If a student receives this form to complete, it is the student's responsibility to notify the Financial Aid Office and provide a copy of the form for the student's financial aid file for documentation purposes. Recipients may not be in default on any educational loan (Federal, State, or Institutional).

Federal Direct Loans

Federal Direct Loans are low-interest student loans provided by the U.S. Department of Education to help eligible students cover the cost of higher education. These loans are part of the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program and must be repaid with interest after a student leaves school or drop below half-time enrollment. All Federal Direct Loan disbursements will be required to pay an origination fee of 1.057% of the Subsidized and/or Unsubsidized loan. All PLUS Direct loans received will be required to pay an origination fee of 4.228% of the PLUS loan. This fee is deducted proportionately from each disbursement of your loan.

Delivery of the first disbursement of Direct Loan funds is dependent on timely completion of your financial aid file. Submission of all required financial aid documents must be complete prior to the first day of classes.

Each year, the terms, interest rates, and fees assessed for Direct Loans may change. For more information on current rates, please visit https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans/interest-rates.

The following table provides the fixed interest rates for new Direct Loans first disbursed **on or after July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026**. These rates will apply to new Direct Subsidized Loans, Direct Unsubsidized Loans, and Direct PLUS Loans made during this time.

Loan	Interest Rate
Direct Subsidized Loans (Undergraduates)	6.52%
Direct Unsubsidized Loans (Undergraduates)	6.52%
Direct PLUS Loans (Parents)	9.07%

The following table provides the fixed interest rates for new Direct Loans first disbursed **on or after July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027**. These rates will apply to new Direct Subsidized Loans, Direct Unsubsidized Loans, and Direct PLUS Loans made during this time.

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Direct Unsubsidized Loans (Undergraduates)	6.52%
Direct PLUS Loans (Parents)	9.07%

Rights and Responsibilities:

Students have specific rights and responsibilities as a borrower of a Federal Student Loan. Understanding both is essential to managing loans successfully and avoiding repayment issues.

As a federal loan borrower, students have the right to:

- Receive a copy of their Master Promissory Note (MPN) and know the terms of their loan
- Receive a disclosure statement with information on their amount, interest rate, fees, and repayment terms
- Cancel all or part of their loan before it disburses or within a certain timeframe afterward
- Use their loan funds only for educational expenses
- Be notified when their loan is transferred to a loan servicer
- Choose a repayment plan that fits their financial situation
- Request a deferment or forbearance if a student qualifies and cannot make payments temporarily
- Prepay their loan at any time without penalty
- Receive loan forgiveness, discharge, or cancellation if the student meets specific criteria (e.g., public service, school closure, total disability)
- Receive exit counseling when the student leaves school or drops below half-time enrollment

When a student borrows a federal student loan, they are agreeing to:

- Repay their loan, with interest, even if the student doesn't complete the program, don't find a job, or aren't satisfied with your education
- Keep their contact information up to date with their loan servicer
- Make on-time monthly payments after their grace period ends
- Notify their servicer if they experience financial hardship or may miss a payment
- Complete entrance and exit counseling to ensure they understand their borrowing and repayment obligations
- Keep records of all loan documents and communication with their servicer

Federal Direct Loan Types:

Subsidized Direct Loan:

A Subsidized Direct Loan is a federal student loan awarded to undergraduate students who demonstrate financial need based on information submitted through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This loan is called "subsidized" because the U.S. Department of Education pays the interest on the loan:

- While the student is enrolled in school at least half-time,
- During the six-month grace period after leaving school or dropping below half-time enrollment, and,
- During any approved deferment periods.

To qualify for a Subsidized Direct Loan, students must:

- Be enrolled at least half-time in an eligible undergraduate program,
- Demonstrate financial need based on the information provided on the FAFSA,
- Meet Title IV eligibility requirements, including citizenship or eligible noncitizen status, and,
- Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) as defined by the institution (refer to catalog).

Annual and lifetime loan limits are set by the federal government and depend on the student's academic year and dependent/independent status (see section below called "Annual Limits for Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans").

Note: A student's eligibility may be less than the maximum if other financial aid is received that covers a portion of your cost of attendance. *Students have the right to decline any or all of their financial aid awards.

Unsubsidized Direct Loans:

An Unsubsidized Direct Loan is a federal student loan available to both undergraduate and graduate students, regardless of financial need. Unlike Subsidized Loans, interest begins accruing immediately once the loan is disbursed while in school.

Although. repayment of the loan does not begin until after the student graduates or drops below half-time enrollment, the student is responsible for all interest that accrues from the moment the loan is disbursed to

the institution. A student can choose to pay interest while in school or allow it to accumulate and be capitalized (added to the student's principal balance), which increases the total cost of the loan.

To qualify for an Unsubsidized Direct Loan, students must:

- Be enrolled at least half-time in an eligible undergraduate, graduate, or professional program,
- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen, and
- Meet general Title IV eligibility criteria, including maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).

A student does not need to have "Financial need" to receive this loan. The amount a student can borrow depends on the grade level, dependency status, and Cost of Attendance (COA) minus other financial aid assistance (see section below called "Annual Limits for Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans").

Note: The actual loan amount offered may be less than the annual maximum based on the student's other financial aid assistance and cost of attendance. Students have the right to decline any or all of their financial aid award.

Annual Limits for Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans:

Annual limits refer to the amount of federal loan money a student may borrow each academic year. Aggregate limits refer to the total lifetime amount a student may borrow. If a student reaches their aggregate limit while in school, they may regain eligibility by paying off some of their outstanding loans. A student may never have more than the aggregate amount outstanding.

Please see the table below for loan limits.

Annual Limits for Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans	Subsidized	Subsidized and Unsubsidized Total
Dependent Undergrads		
First Year – (Grade Level 1)	$3,500	$5,500
Second Year – (Grade Level 2)	$4,500	$6,500
Third Year and beyond – (Grade Level 3)	$5,500	$7,500
Independent Undergrads & Dependent students whose parents cannot get PLUS		
First Year – (Grade Level 1)	$3,500	$9,500
Second Year – (Grade Level 2)	$4,500	$10,500
Third Year and beyond – (Grade Level 3)	$5,500	$12,500
Aggregate Limits for Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans	Subsidized	Subsidized and Unsubsidized Total
Dependent Undergrads	$23,000	$31,000
Independent Undergrads and Dependent students whose parents cannot get PLUS	$23,000	$57,500

2026–27 Direct Loan Schedule of Reductions (SOR)
Beginning with loan periods that start on or after July 1, 2026, federal Direct Subsidized and Direct Unsubsidized Loan amounts may be reduced if a student is enrolled less than full-time during the academic year. This reduction is referred to as the Schedule of Reductions (SOR).

The amount a student may borrow is based, in part, on their enrollment level throughout the loan period. If a student is enrolled less than full-time in one or more terms, their annual Direct Loan eligibility may be reduced based on their overall enrollment.

Students must remain enrolled at least half-time to receive a Direct Loan disbursement. Enrollment is reviewed before loan funds are disbursed, and changes in enrollment may result in an adjustment to remaining loan eligibility or future disbursements.

The SOR requirement applies to Direct Subsidized and Direct Unsubsidized Loans. Parent PLUS Loans are not subject to the SOR reduction.

Students should contact the Financial Aid Office before changing their enrollment to understand how the change may affect their federal student loan eligibility.

Parent Plus Loans

A parent of a dependent student can take out a loan to supplement their student's Financial Aid package. The Federal Direct PLUS Loan for Undergraduate Students allows parents to borrow money to cover any costs not already covered by the student's financial aid package, up to the full cost of attendance.

PLUS loans are the financial responsibility of the parents, not the student.

Repayment on a PLUS Loan begins 60 days after the final loan disbursement for the academic year. However, payments may be deferred while the student is enrolled at least half-time. The parent may choose to pay the interest while their student is in school or have it capitalized. If the parent chooses to have the interest capitalized, it will be added to the principal amount of their loan and additional interest will be based upon the higher amount. This will increase the amount that must be repaid.

Note: Students have the right to decline any or all of their financial aid award. Parents that want to request a different loan amount than what was applied for must send the Financial Aid office a statement indicating the amount they wish to borrow.

2026–27 Parent PLUS Loan Limits
Beginning with the 2026–27 award year, Parent PLUS Loans are subject to new federal borrowing limits.

A parent may borrow up to $20,000 per academic year for each dependent student, or the student's remaining Cost of Attendance after other financial assistance is applied, whichever is less. The annual limit applies per student, not per parent.

The total Parent PLUS Loan limit is $65,000 per dependent student. This lifetime limit includes Parent PLUS amounts previously borrowed for that student, even if those loans have been repaid, forgiven, canceled, or otherwise discharged. Once the $65,000 limit is reached, additional Parent PLUS Loans generally cannot be borrowed for that student.

Students and parents should contact the Financial Aid Office to determine their remaining Parent PLUS Loan eligibility and discuss other available funding options.

Student Request for Less than Maximum Eligibility of Direct Loans:

If a student requests to receive less than their maximum Direct Loan eligibility, the institution must notify the student of:

- Their maximum Direct Loan eligibility
- The loan interest rate for Direct Loans and Direct PLUS
- The grace periods and repayment time frame of Direct and Direct PLUS
- Give the student the opportunity to request the maximum amount of Direct Loans for which the student is eligible.

The institution may refuse to request a Subsidized, Unsubsidized, or PLUS Loan or may reduce the borrower's determination of need for the loan if the reason for that action is documented and provided to the borrower in writing, and only if:

- The determination is made on a case-by-case basis
- The documentation supporting the determination is retained in the student's file
- The institution does not engage in any pattern or practice that results in a denial of a borrower's access to Direct Loans because of the borrower's race, gender, color, religion, national origin, age, disability status, or income.

How to Apply for Federal Student Aid:

Applying for federal student aid is a crucial first step in making college affordable. The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is a form used to determine a student's eligibility for federal grants and loans.

Create a Student Aid Account:

Before starting the FAFSA, every contributor (including the student, parent(s), or spouse) must create their own StudentAid.gov account (formerly FSA ID):

- Go to www.studentaid.gov/fsa-id
- Contributors without a Social Security Number (SSN) can still create an account and verify identity through other means.
- Allow 3–5 business days for identity verification to process, especially for first-time users.

Start and Complete the FAFSA:

Login to www.studentaid.gov to begin the FAFSA form:

- Choose the correct award year (e.g., 2026–27 for enrollment starting fall 2026).
- The student will invite contributors (e.g., parent or spouse), who will receive a secure link to complete their sections.
- Each contributor must log in separately to enter their information and consent to data sharing with the IRS.

Consent to IRS Data Retrieval:

The FAFSA requires explicit consent from each contributor to use the FA-DDX (Future Act Direct Data Exchange), which transfers federal tax information directly from the IRS.

- If any contributor does not give consent, the Student Aid Index (SAI) cannot be calculated and the FAFSA will be considered incomplete.

Review and Submit FAFSA:

Once all sections are complete and all contributors have signed:

- Any contributor (including the student) may submit the FAFSA.
- The student will receive a FAFSA Submission Summary once the form is processed.
- Processing usually takes 1–3 business days for online forms.

Entrance Counseling:

Entrance counseling is required before a student receives their first Direct Subsidized Loan or Direct Unsubsidized Loan funds.

Entrance Counseling ensures students they understand the terms and conditions of a Subsidized or Unsubsidized Loans, including their rights and responsibilities.
To complete Entrance Counseling, follow the steps below:

- Visit www.studentaid.gov/entrance-counseling
- Log in using account credentials
- Select the student's level of education for the program (undergraduate or graduate/professional)
- Follow the prompts to complete all required learning modules

- Submit the counseling session electronically

Exit Counseling:

Exit Counseling is required when a student graduates, leaves school, or drops below half-time enrollment. Exit Counseling provides important information to prepare a student for repaying their Federal Student loans.

To complete Entrance Counseling, follow the steps below:

- Visit www.studentaid.gov/exit-counseling
- Log in using account credentials
- Choose undergraduate or graduate
- Follow the step-by-step modules

Alternatives to Federal TIV Aid:

Other Sources of Aid:

Veteran's Education Benefits

Students who are eligible to receive Veterans Benefits - such as the Montgomery GI Bill Chapter 30, Chapter 33, Selected Reserves Chapter 1606, Eligible Dependents of Veterans Chapter 35, etc. - must complete the appropriate VA paperwork in order to receive their benefits. Students who served in the armed forces and were discharged under eligible characterizations may be eligible for these benefits. Apply at https://www.va.gov/education/how-to-apply/.

Chapter 30 – Montgomery GI Bill® (MGIB-AD):
Chapter 30, known as the Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (MGIB-AD), is a VA education benefit program for veterans who served on active duty. It provides financial assistance for college, technical, or vocational courses, as well as flight training, licensing and certification, and some apprenticeship/on-the-job training programs.

Chapter 33 – Post-9/11 GI Bill®:
The Post-9/11 GI Bill® (Chapter 33) is a federal education benefit program administered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). It provides financial support for tuition and fees**,** a monthly housing allowance**,** and a books and supplies stipend to eligible veterans, service members, and their qualified dependents.

Yellow Ribbon Program
The Yellow Ribbon Program helps bridge the gap between the institution's tuition and mandatory fees and the maximum annual amount covered by the Post-9/11 GI Bill®. It is a collaborative agreement between participating

colleges and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide additional financial support to eligible students.

Campuses participating in Yellow Ribbon:

- Aviation Institute of Maintenance, Indianapolis
- Aviation Institute of Maintenance, Atlanta
- Centura College, Chesepeake

Students do not need to be enrolled in a degree program to qualify for Yellow Ribbon; however, they must be 100% eligible under Chapter 33 of the Post-9/11 GI Bill®. Students using Yellow Ribbon benefits are strongly encouraged to avoid borrowing federal or private student loans, as doing so may result in unnecessary debt that must be repaid.

Please note:

- Only original tuition and mandatory fees are covered under this program
- The Yellow Ribbon Program does not cover books, supplies, or housing costs
- It does not cover repeated or additional course charges beyond the original enrollment—any such costs are the student's responsibility

VA Education Benefits: Chapter 1606 – Montgomery GI Bill® – Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR):
Chapter 1606 provides education and training benefits to members of the Selected Reserve, including the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard Reserve, as well as the Army and Air National Guard. It is designed to support reservists as they pursue college degrees, vocational training, certifications, or other eligible programs while fulfilling their service obligations.

VA Education Benefits: Chapter 35 – Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA):
Chapter 35 provides education benefits to eligible dependents (spouses and children) of veterans who are permanently and totally disabled due to a service-connected condition, or who died on active duty or as a result of a service-connected condition.

Veteran Readiness and Employment (VR&E) (Chapter 31):
VR&E (Chapter 31) is a benefit program offered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for veterans with service-connected disabilities. If education is part of the veteran's approved rehabilitation plan, the program may cover tuition, fees, books, supplies, and provide a monthly subsistence allowance. To use Chapter 31 benefits, students must apply through the VA, work with a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) to develop a training plan and ensure that the VA sends Form 28-1905 to the school. The institution will bill the VA directly for all approved costs. Students must maintain satisfactory academic progress and comply with their training plan to remain eligible.

Rehabilitative Services

Our institution is approved to train qualified clients of the Department of Vocational Rehabilitative Services. The amount of financial assistance is dependent upon the counselor's recommendations. If the student has a disability, which may limit the normal pursuance of any position, the student may be eligible under this program.

College Financing Plan

In accordance with Executive Order 13607 and the Principles of Excellence, institutions are required to provide veterans and students using military education benefits with a standardized College Financing Plan (formerly known as the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet). Developed by the U.S. Department of Education, this tool offers a consistent and easy-to-understand overview of a student's cost of attendance, financial aid, and estimated net costs, allowing for clear comparisons across institutions.

Private/Alternative Education Loans:

Private banks and outside lenders may offer educational loans to students whose federal financial aid does not cover the entire cost of attendance. We strongly urge students to thoroughly explore all federal sources, scholarships, etc. before taking on additional loan debt. If federal programs do not meet a student's borrowing needs, lenders offer a variety of supplemental borrowing programs known as Private/Alternative Educational Loans.

Model Disclosure Form

Students who choose to borrow a private/alternative education loan should understand the full terms and conditions before accepting the loan. In compliance with federal regulations (34 CFR § 601.30), our institution provides students and families with a Model Disclosure Form for any lender with whom we maintain a preferred lender arrangement. This Model Disclosure Form outlines important details about the private loan, including:

- Interest rates and how they are determined (fixed or variable)
- Loan fees and total cost
- Repayment terms and options
- Student's right to cancel the loan without penalty
- Student's ability to compare loan offers

The purpose of this disclosure is to provide transparent, standardized information so students can make informed borrowing decisions and compare loans across lenders. The form is provided at the time of application and before disbursement.

Note: Private loans are not federally guaranteed and may carry higher interest rates, fewer borrower protections, and stricter credit requirements. Exhaust all federal loan and grant options before applying for a private loan.

Private Loan Disclosures

If a student chooses to apply for a private education loan, federal law requires lenders to provide a series of disclosure forms to help students clearly understand the terms and conditions of the loan. These are required under the Truth in Lending Act (TILA) and are designed to ensure student's make an informed borrowing decision.

Student's will receive the following disclosures from their lender:

- Application Disclosure – outlines basic loan terms (interest rate, fees, repayment options) before a student formally applies
- Approval Disclosure – issued after the loan is conditionally approved, showing a student's specific rates and total costs
- Final Disclosure – issued once the student accepts the loan, confirming the final terms and giving student's a 3-day right to cancel

Note: These disclosures are separate from federal loan information and are not issued by the school. Always review them carefully before accepting a private loan.

Institutional Payment Options:

Students who are unable to cover their remaining balance after financial aid may request an Extended Payment Plan through the Bursar's Office. However, certain conditions must be met before this option is offered:

1. Dependent students must first have their parent apply for a Federal Direct Parent PLUS Loan.
    - If the Parent PLUS Loan is denied, the student may then explore alternative options, including a private education loan.
    - If the parent refuses to apply, documentation must be provided.
2. If the student is not eligible for a PLUS Loan or is independent, they must apply for a private education loan before an extended payment plan will be considered.
3. Once all loan options have been reviewed or exhausted, the student may be offered an Extended Payment Plan, subject to approval.
4. Students approved for the payment plan must also enroll in automatic payments (autopay) through the Bursar's Office.

Note: The Extended Payment Plan is intended as a last-resort option after all other financial aid resources have been evaluated.

- Failure to apply for applicable loan options may result in denial of the payment plan.
- All required documentation must be submitted before the plan can be approved.

Institutional Programs:

Scholarships:

A Scholarship is a non-repayable form of aid. Some reliable scholarship websites are Fastweb, Student Scholarship Search, and College Board Scholarship. International students may also want to check International Scholarships. Contact the Financial Aid Office for more sites and search the Internet regularly. While scholarships can be a great way to fund a student's education, it is important to know that students should never have to pay money to apply for a legitimate scholarship.

Scholarship Match Grant

The Scholarship Match Program provides eligible students with the opportunity to maximize the value of their private/external scholarships through a dollar-for-dollar institutional match, up to 10% of total program charges. This includes tuition, books, and fees. The match is applied as a tuition reduction and cannot exceed:

- 10% of the total charges for the student's program, or
- The amount of a student's remaining balance after all other aid has been applied

To qualify for the Scholarship Match Program, a student must:

- Be officially accepted for admission
- Submit official documentation of their private/external scholarship award(s)
- Complete and submit the Scholarship Match Application to the Financial Aid Office

To remain eligible for the institutional match, student's must:

- Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)
- Stay current on all in-school payment obligations
- Maintain good attendance
- Remain in good standing under the student code of conduct
- Demonstrate professionalism and serve as a positive role model for their chosen industry

Federal Aid Verification:

Verification is a process required by the U.S. Department of Education to confirm the accuracy of information provided on a student's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Additional documentation from the student may be needed to confirm a student's eligibility for federal student aid. Students may be selected for verification:

- Randomly by the U.S. Department of Education,
- Due to incomplete or conflicting information on the FAFSA,

- Or by the school if information needs further clarification.

If a student is selected for verification:

1. The Financial Aid Office will contact the student and will be asked to submit additional documentation which may include the following:
    - Tax return transcripts or signed/dated 1040 U.S. Individual Tax Returns
    - W-2 forms
    - Verification Worksheets
    - Documentation of household size or number in college
    - Identity and Statement of Educational Purpose
2. A student's aid eligibility cannot be finalized until all requested documents are received, reviewed, and resolved.

Conflicting Information:

Conflicting data occurs when inconsistent or contradictory information is found in a student's financial aid file, FAFSA, or between different documents submitted to the school. Federal regulations require the Financial Aid Office to resolve all conflicting information before disbursing or finalizing any federal student aid.

Conflicting information can come from a student's FAFSA, tax documents, verification paperwork, institutional forms, or communications with other departments (such as Admissions or Registrar).

The U.S. Department of Education requires schools to identify and resolve all conflicting data before:

- Finalizing a student's Student Aid Index (SAI)
- Confirming a student's financial aid eligibility
- Processing any federal aid disbursements or loan certifications

If a conflict is not resolved, a student's financial aid may be delayed, reduced, or canceled.

Unusual Enrollment History

The U.S. Department of Education may flag a student's FAFSA with an Unusual Enrollment History (UEH) indicator if there is a pattern of attending multiple institutions and receiving federal aid (Pell Grants or Direct Loans) over several academic years without earning academic credit.

If a student is flagged for UEH, the Financial Aid Office is required to review the student's academic history and request transcripts or grade reports from previously attended institutions.

Student's may be required to:

- Submit official or unofficial transcripts from the past four award years
- Provide a written explanation of your enrollment history
- Submit supporting documentation (e.g., medical records, military service, or family emergencies)

A student's federal aid eligibility may be denied if the review reveals a pattern of aid abuse or lack of academic progress without valid justification. If denied, students have the right to appeal with supporting evidence.

We encourage students to respond promptly to any requests for UEH documentation to avoid delays in processing financial aid.

Special Circumstances:

Special circumstances refer to unusual financial situations that may not accurately reflect on a student's FAFSA. These circumstances may impact the student or their family's ability to contribute to the cost of education.

If a student experiences a significant change in income, family status, or expenses after filing the FAFSA, the student may request a professional judgment review by the Financial Aid Office. This process allows the school to adjust data on the student's FAFSA to better reflect their current financial situation.

Examples of Special Circumstances:

- Loss of employment or reduction in income
- Separation, divorce, or death of a parent or spouse
- Unusual medical or dental expenses not covered by insurance
- One-time income (e.g., severance, inheritance, legal settlement)
- Parent attending college
- Change in household size or dependency status
- Private school tuition for siblings
- Loss of child support, Social Security benefits, or other untaxed income
- Natural disaster or other emergency expenses

How to Request a Review:

1. Contact the Financial Aid Office to discuss the significant change.
2. Student's will be asked to complete a Special Circumstances Request Form.
3. Submit supporting documentation, which may include:
    a. Recent pay stubs or termination letters
    b. Amended tax documents or W-2s

    c. Medical bills or insurance statements
    d. Divorce or separation paperwork
    e. Letters from third-party professionals (if applicable)
4. The Financial Aid Office will review the student's request and notify them of the outcome.
    a. If approved, the FAFSA will be updated, and the student may receive an updated financial aid offer.
    b. If additional documentation is required, the student will be contacted.

Unusual Circumstances:

Unusual circumstances refer to conditions that may warrant a student being considered independent for federal financial aid purposes, even if they do not meet the standard dependency criteria on the FAFSA. These situations typically involve a breakdown in the student-parent relationship that makes it inappropriate, unsafe, or impossible to obtain parental information. When granted, an unusual circumstances appeal allows the Financial Aid Office to perform a dependency override, meaning the student can be treated as an independent student and not be required to provide parental information on the FAFSA.

Common Examples of Unusual Circumstances:

- Abandonment by parents
- Parental incarceration
- Abuse or neglect (emotional, physical, or sexual)
- Parent location is unknown or contact is not possible
- Homelessness or risk of homelessness (unaccompanied youth)
- Human trafficking or refugee/asylee situations
- Legal removal from the parent's home (e.g., foster care)

Scenarios <u>not</u> considered unusual circumstances:

- Parents do not claim the student on their taxes
- Parents refuse to provide financial information or support
- Parents refusal to complete their portion of the FAFSA
- The student is self-supporting, or they live on their own
- The student disagrees with their parents or are estranged without documentation

How to Request a Review:

1. Contact the Financial Aid Office and request an Unusual Circumstances Appeal or Dependency Override.
2. Submit the required form and documentation, which may include:
    a. A signed personal statement from the student explaining their situation
    b. Third-party letters (from a counselor, clergy, teacher, case worker, attorney, or other professional)
    c. Legal or court documents (if applicable)

3. The Financial Aid Office will review the student's request and may follow up with additional questions or request additional documentation.

How Eligibility for Federal Student Aid is Determined:

Understanding how a student's federal financial aid eligibility is calculated can help students make informed decisions about their college financing options. Eligibility for federal student aid is determined primarily by the information the student submits on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

The FAFSA collects the students (and their family's) financial and demographic information to assess how much federal aid the student may qualify for.

Student's must complete a new FAFSA each award year to remain eligible for aid.

Student Aid Index (SAI):

The SAI is a number that is calculated using income, assets, family size, and other factors.
It is used to measure a student's financial need.

Dependency Status and Contributors:

A student's dependency status determines whether their parents' financial information is required on the FAFSA:

- Dependent students must include parent(s) as contributors unless they meet specific criteria (e.g., age 24+, married, veteran, etc.).
- Contributors must consent to IRS tax data sharing for the FAFSA to be processed.

Estimated Cost of Attendance (COA):

The Cost of Attendance (COA) is an estimated total of a student's educational expenses for the academic year. It includes both direct costs (charges billed by the school) and indirect costs (expenses a student may incur while enrolled, even if not paid directly to the institution). Each school calculates Cost of Attendance (COA), which includes:

- Tuition and fees
- Books and supplies
- Housing and meals
- Transportation
- Personal expenses
- Loan Fees

A students COA may vary based on:

- **Enrollment status** (full-time, part-time)
- **Program of study**
- **Living situation** (on-campus, off-campus, or with parents)

A student's financial aid package (grants and loans) cannot exceed a student's COA. The COA helps students understand the actual cost of attending and help make informed decisions about budgeting, borrowing, and scholarship opportunities.

Below are some example Cost of Attendance estimates for the 2025-26 Award Year:

2025-26 COA Estimate (1st Academic Year) - Welding				
Cost Category	**Independent *Living with Parent***	**Independent *Not Living with Parent***	**Dependent *Living with Parent***	**Dependent *Not Living with Parent***
Tuition and Fees [1]	$19,399	$19,399	$19,399	$19,399
Books, Course Materials, Supplies [2]	$205	$205	$205	$205
Transportation	$1,547	$2,309	$1,547	$2,309
Living Expenses	$14,209	$18,895	$12,661	$21,205
Loan Fees [3]	$98	$98	$46	$46
Total Estimated COA	**$35,458**	**$40,906**	**$33,858**	**$43,164**

2025-26 COA Estimate (1st Academic Year) – Medical Assisting				
Cost Category	**Independent *Living with Parent***	**Independent *Not Living with Parent***	**Dependent *Living with Parent***	**Dependent *Not Living with Parent***
Tuition and Fees [1]	$14,172	$14,172	$14,172	$14,172
Books, Course Materials, Supplies [2]	$4,025	$4,025	$4,025	$4,025
Transportation	$1,547	$2,309	$1,547	$2,309
Living Expenses	$14,209	$18,895	$12,661	$21,205
Loan Fees [3]	$98	$98	$46	$46
Total Estimated COA	**$34,051**	**$39,499**	**$32,451**	**$41,757**

2025-26 COA Estimate (1st Academic Year) – Dental Assisting				
Cost Category	**Independent *Living with Parent***	**Independent *Not Living with Parent***	**Dependent *Living with Parent***	**Dependent *Not Living with Parent***
Tuition and Fees [1]	$19,252	$19,252	$19,252	$19,252
Books, Course Materials, Supplies [2]	$998	$998	$998	$998
Transportation	$1,547	$2,309	$1,547	$2,309
Living Expenses	$14,209	$18,895	$12,661	$21,205
Loan Fees [3]	$98	$98	$46	$46
Total Estimated COA	**$36,104**	**$41,552**	**$34,504**	**$43,810**

2025-26 COA Estimate (1st Academic Year) – Aviation Maintenance Technician				
Cost Category	**Independent *Living with Parent***	**Independent *Not Living with Parent***	**Dependent *Living with Parent***	**Dependent *Not Living with Parent***
Tuition and Fees [1]	$17,072	$17,072	$17,072	$17,072
Books, Course Materials, Supplies [2]	$1,050	$1,050	$1,050	$1,050
Transportation	$1,547	$2,309	$1,547	$2,309
Living Expenses	$14,209	$18,895	$12,661	$21,205
Loan Fees [3]	$98	$98	$46	$46
Total Estimated COA	**$33,976**	**$39,424**	**$32,376**	**$41,682**

[1] Actual cost varies by student, credit load, and program of study.

[2] Actual costs for books, course materials and supplies may vary.

[3] Loan Fees are estimated amounts based on full annual loan limits.

Cost of Attendance Adjustments:

If a student incurs extraordinary or educationally related expenses not already included in their standard COA budget, a COA adjustment through the Financial Aid Office may be requested.

Reasons a Student May Request a COA Adjustment:

- Higher-than-average housing or food costs (e.g., off-campus rent above standard allowance)
- Childcare or dependent care expenses necessary for school attendance
- Disability-related expenses not covered by other resources
- Computer purchase or required technology

- Transportation for commuting or clinical rotations
- Costs for licensure, certification, or board exams required for your program
- Unusually high course-related supplies or equipment costs

What Cannot Be Considered for a COA Adjustment:

- Credit card or consumer debt
- Car payments or auto loans
- Moving expenses unrelated to academic needs
- Lifestyle choices not required by your educational program
- Costs already covered by another source (scholarship, employer reimbursement, etc.)

How to Request a COA Adjustment:

1. Contact the Financial Aid Office and request a COA Adjustment
2. Provide a detailed explanation of the expense and why it is essential to your education.
3. Submit supporting documentation, such as (but not limited to):
    - Receipts, invoices, or rental agreements
    - Childcare provider statements
    - Proof of required certification or testing fees
4. Documentation of disability-related needs

<u>Financial Need Calculation:</u>

Financial need is the difference between the cost of attending college and what a student (and their family) are expected to contribute toward those costs. It is used to determine a student's eligibility for need-based federal, state, and institutional financial aid such as the Pell Grant and Subsidized Direct Loans. Financial need is calculated as:

Awarding by Title IV Program	Awarding Equation
Awarding Direct Subsidized Loans	COA - SAI - EFA = NEED
Awarding Direct Unsubsidized Loans	COA - EFA = Unsub Loan Eligibility
Awarding Direct PLUS Loans	COA - EFA = Parent PLUS Loan eligibility

At a minimum, the Cost of Attendance (COA) used for determining Federal Student Aid eligibility will be evaluated every year in preparation for the new award year. If the cost of tuition changes prior to the annual re-evaluation, the COA will be reviewed and updated accordingly.

Consumer Information:

Constitution Day

In accordance with Public Law 108-447, Section 111, all educational institutions receiving federal funding are required to hold an educational program each year on September 17 to commemorate the signing of the United States Constitution in 1787. This annual observance, known as Constitution Day, provides an opportunity for students and citizens alike to reflect on the foundational principles of American democracy.

At our institution, Constitution Day may be observed through a range of educational activities such as guest speakers, panel discussions, film screenings, classroom presentations, and digital resources. These events are designed to promote civic engagement and encourage students to explore the significance of the Constitution, its historical context, and its continued relevance in American law, governance, and civil rights.

Voter Registration

In compliance with the Higher Education Act of 1965, institutions that participate in Title IV federal student aid programs are required to provide students with information on voter registration.

If you are a U.S. citizen and will be 18 years of age or older by the next election, you are eligible to vote and encouraged to participate in the democratic process. Each state has its own voter registration deadlines. To ensure your eligibility, check your state's deadlines and requirements at https://www.nass.org/Can-I-Vote.

National Voting Information:

- www.vote.gov
- https://www.eac.gov/
- https://www.fvap.gov/