

Please silence your cell phones!

Thank you for being considerate to the people around you.



Financial Aid 101

Paying for Postsecondary Education



Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency



Amy Sloan Higher Education Access Partner North West Region PA Higher Ed Assistance Agency asloan@pheaa.org



Financial Aid 101

What We'll Cover – Latest Headlines



Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency



- Latest Headlines and Trends
- Financial Aid Basics
- Scholarships
- Forms
- Federal and State Aid
- MySmartBorrowing
- Loans
- Financial Aid Award Letters
- Web Resources & Tips



TROUBLING HEADLINES?

- Student Loan Burden Continues to Grow
- Paying For College Are You and Your Student on the Road to Going Broke Or Into a Lot of Debt?
- Is College Worth the Money?
- U.S. Student Loan Balances Increase 62% Between 2004 and 2012
- When Kids Come Back Home

Choose Your Path

Your situation and circumstances are unique. Set yourself up for financial success NOW!

Financial Aid 101

Financial Aid Basics & Forms



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What Is Financial Aid?

Financial aid consists of funds provided to students and families to help pay for postsecondary educational expenses

- Grants/Scholarships (free money)
- Self-Help (work, savings, etc.)
- Loans



Where Does the Money Come From?

- Federal Government
- State Government
- School/Colleges
- Private Scholarship Sources:
 - » HS counselors
 - » Clubs and organizations
 - » Employers
 - » Internet scholarship searches



Scholarship Search:

- Start early and KEEP LOOKING
- Don't PAY for information
- Criteria varies by school
- Don't fear ESSAYS
- Provide what is asked
- Small scholarships ADD UP
- Activities, Athletics, Family, Hobbies, Participation, Attributes – DO YOUR RESEARCH
- Don't miss <u>DEADLINES</u>

Don't miss out on FREE Money!



- ✓ FastWeb.com
- ✓ EducationPlanner.org
- ✓ Chegg.com
- ✓ FinAid.org
- ✓ Scholarships.com
- ✓ Scholarship-Page.com
- DoSomething.org/Scholars hips
- ✓ Colleges.Niche.com
- StudentScholarships.org
- BigFuture.Collegeboard.org
- ✓ MeritAid.com
- ✓ MORE....

The Two Primary Forms

- **1.** Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- 2. Pennsylvania State Grant Form (PA SGF)

Possible Forms

- College Scholarship Service (CSS) PROFILE form
- College-specific form





Complete the FAFSA as soon as possible after January 1 of the year for which the student is seeking financial aid.

Two ways to complete the FAFSA:

- Online at www.fafsa.gov (highly recommended)
 - safe, secure, fast, skip logic, built-in edits
 - complete FAFSA on the Web Worksheet
 - print the confirmation page when finished
- Paper FAFSA call 1-800-433-3243



When do you file your <u>FAFSA</u> and which tax documents do you use?

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l	Seniors (Class of 2016)	Juniors (Class of 2017)	Sophomores (Class of 2018)	Freshman (Class of 2019)
Initial FAFSA	After January 1, 2016	After October 1, 2016	After October 1, 2017	After October 1, 2018
Which taxes do you use?	2015 tax information (may have to estimate tax information and make correction with the IRS Data Retrieval Tool once taxes are complete)	2015 tax information (will be able to use the IRS Data Retrieval tool first time)	2016 tax information	2017 tax information
Renewal FAFSA	After October 1, 2016	After October 1, 2017	After October 1, 2018	After October 1, 2019
Which taxes do you use?	2015 tax information (will use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool again and moving forward)	2016 tax information	2017 tax information	2018 tax information





About Us

FAFSA[®] Free Application for Federal Student Aid









Get help paying for college

Submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)



New to the FAFSA?

Start A New

FAFSA

Returning User?

- Make a correction
- Add a school
- View your Student Aid Report (SAR), and more...

Login

Deadlines

Information about your deadlines.

School Code Search

Find your college's school code. Also find detailed information about your college.

FAFSA Filing Options

Learn about the other options for filing

Announcements

 Deadline Approaching: 2014-2015 applications must be submitted by midnight Central Time, June 30, 2015, after which the 2014-2015 application will no longer be available. To make this change, *FAFSA on the Web* will be unavailable: Wednesday, July 1, from midnight through 4 a.m. CT.

Thinking About College?



Don't Fear the FAFSA

- The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is a federal form used to determine student eligibility for the following:
 - Federal programs, such as Pell Grants, work-study, and student loans
 - State programs, such as Pennsylvania State Grant, and other special programs
 - School programs, such as need-based grants and scholarships





Know all of your state and school/college deadlines and file the FAFSA by the earliest deadline.

Federal Deadline - end of the award year - for 2016-2017, this would be June 30, 2017

PA State Grant deadlines –

- May 1, 2016 If you plan to enroll in a degree program or a college transferable program at a junior college or other college or university (excludes community colleges)
- August 1, 2016 If you plan to enroll in a community college; a business, trade, or technical school; a hospital school of nursing; or a 2-year program that is not transferable to another institution
- Know School Deadlines



Information you need to Complete the FAFSA Form

- Social security numbers
- Federal income tax return (1040, 1040A or 1040EZ)
- W-2 forms from all employers
- Current bank statements (checking and savings)
- Current business and farm records
- Records of any stocks, bonds and other investments, including 529 accounts

- Additional untaxed income tax records may be needed such as: Veteran's non educational benefits, child support paid/received and workers compensation.

The FAFSA <u>does not</u> ask about personal debt – credit card debt, car loans, etc.



Whose Info Goes on the FAFSA?

- Divorced or separated parents (the parent the student lived with the most over the past 12 months. If equal, then the parent who provided more than 50% of student's support)
- Stepparents yes
- Adoptive parents yes
- Foster parents no
- Legal guardians no
- Anyone else the student is living with no



Who Is Independent?

- 24 or older on Jan 1st of award year (January 1, 1993)
- Veteran (includes active duty personnel)
- Working on graduate level degree
- Emancipated minor in legal guardianship
- Orphan, in foster care, or ward of the court at anytime when student was age 13 or older
- Have legal dependents other than spouse
- Student deemed homeless by proper authority
- (PA State Grant status can be different)



Special Circumstances



If things change....

- Divorced or separated parents
- Stepparents
- Adoptive parents
 - Foster parents

- Legal guardians
- Living with others
- Recent death or disability
- ✓ Reduced income



FASFA TIPS



- ✓ Don't mix answers for student and parent information & answer all questions
- Ensure SSN accuracy
- Have federal income taxes and other related income information available
- ✓ It's OK TO ESTIMATE if taxes aren't filed yet
- Carefully review untaxed income
- ✓ 529 Plans are a parent asset
- Review asset questions, do not include your home, retirement or insurance as an asset
- Some families may skip asset questions

IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT)

The IRS Data Retrieval Tool allows students and parents to access IRS tax return information needed to complete the FAFSA. Students and parents may transfer the data directly into their FAFSA.

- IRS Data is available:
 - » After 2 weeks of electronically filing federal tax return
 - » After 8 weeks of filing a paper federal tax return

If use estimated income to complete FAFSA, can go back once taxes are filed and use IRS Data Retrieval Tool.



IRS Data Retrieval Tool – after taxes are filed

- Automatically pulls in IRS Tax info and places data into the FAFSA, or overrides estimates
- REQUIRED!
- ALSO in Student Section, if student is filing taxes



Signing the FAFSA Electronically

- Student and parent sign electronically with an FSA ID
- Apply for an FSA ID at <u>www.studentaid.ed.gov/fsaid</u> (prior to completing the FAFSA form)
- Student/Parent must have separate e-mail addresses
- Can use for future FAFSA filing and parent can use for other children FAFSAs
- Use to sign Federal Direct Student Loan application and Parent PLUS loan application
- Can retrieve your username and/or password if you forget



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	determine the specific types and amounts of student aid					to receive other federal, ts, scholarships, and/or	
	you are eligible to rece	erve.		work-stu			
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		raduation, retention, and tra		schools you sel	ected. Go to the C	College Navigator Web	
	site at www.nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator for complete information.						
		School Name	Graduation Rate	Retention Rate	Transfer Rate		
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Pennsylvania State Grant Form

Link directly to the State Grant Form from the Confirmation Page of your FAFSA!



PA State Grant Form

- Students who click on the link will be automatically moved to the PA State Grant Form and will be presented with the additional questions needed to determine State Grant eligibility
- Printing , signing, and mailing in the State Grant confirmation page is the last step in the process.
- Students will be able to view their status on Account Access available at pheaa.org about three days after completing the FAFSA online.



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Federal and State Aid



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Federal Programs

Pell Grant (2015-16 max award \$5,775) *

Campus-based aid – amounts determined by FAO

- FSEOG..... up to \$4000
- Federal work-study...... FAO determines

For most programs, student must be enrolled at least half-time.

* Goes to most financially needy students



Other Federal Programs

Please check out this website to see all federal aid sources:



StudentAid.ed.gov/types

Pennsylvania State Grant

- PA State Grant*
 - Full-time, in PA.....up to \$4,340
 - Part time, in PA.....1/2 of the FT award
- Out of state: Up to \$600 in DC, DE, MA, OH, RI, VT, WV
- Amount determined in part by the cost of the school
- * Must be at least half-time to be eligible



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Smart Borrowing



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MySmartBorrowing.org

An interactive, online tool created by PHEAA that helps students and families:

- Estimate career salaries & college tuition
- View the impact of savings on overall cost
- Calculate loan repayment
- Avoid overborrowing



MySmartBorrowing.org

How it Works

MySmartBorrowing guides students and families through four easy sections:







View the Results



Once you input your selections, you can:

- View your potential salary in your new career
- Add & compare college costs
- See if you're borrowing too much
Smart Borrowing Tips

- Research job availability in your chosen field, before selecting your major
- Research your expected salary in your future career, find an affordable school, and borrow realistically.
- Consider all types of financial aid carefully
- Educate yourself on the many loan options available before borrowing





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Federal Loans



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Types of Federal Loans

1. Undergraduate Students

- » Subsidized
- » Unsubsidized
- 2. Graduate Students
 - » Unsubsidized
 - » GradPLUS Loan
- 3. Parents
 - » PLUS Loan





Federal Direct Loan Program

- Available to ALL students REGARDLESS of need
- Additional unsubsidized funds available for Independent & Parent PLUS denials
 - » 4.29% variable/fixed interest rate (AY 15/16), 1.068% fee
 - Rates set every July 1st for the life of that year's loan; fees are deducted from disbursement
- In student's name, no credit check, must sign MPN
- No payments required while attending school & 6-month grace period

StudentLoans.gov & school's website!

Based on FAFSA, students have a combination of:

- Subsidized = govt pays interest in school and grace status
- Unsubsidized = interest accrues in school and grace

Student Loan Borrowing Limits

Dependent Students (excluding students whose parents cannot borrow PLUS)	Base Stafford Loan Amount Subsidized/Unsubsidiz ed	Additional Unsubsidized Stafford Loan Amount	Total Borrowing
Freshmen	\$3,500	\$2,000	\$5,500
Sophomores	\$4,500	\$2,000	\$6,500
Juniors, Seniors	\$5,500	\$2,000	\$7,500
Graduate or Professional	\$8,500	\$12,000	\$20,500

Additional Unsubsidized

Independent Students AND Students Whose Parents Cannot Borrow PLUS	Base Stafford Loan Amount Subsidized/Unsubsidiz ed	Additional Unsubsidized Stafford Loan Amount	Total Borrowing
Freshmen	\$3,500	\$6,000	\$9,500
Sophomores	\$4,500	\$6,000	\$10,500
Juniors, Seniors	\$5,500	\$7,000	\$12,500
Graduate or Professional	\$8,500	\$12,000	\$20,500

Federal Direct PLUS Loan

- For parents of dependent undergrad or graduate level students
- Direct Parent PLUS Loan in parent's name for student costs
 - » 6.84 % variable/fixed interest rate;
 4.272% fees (AY 15/16)
- Rates set every July 1st for the life of that year's loan; fees are deducted from disbursement
- Can borrow up to the Cost of Attendance

- MUST apply each year loan is taken
- No Debt-to-Income test, only lenient credit check
 - » Can have an endorser (co-signer)
 - Principal payment can be deferred while student is in school
 - » Interest will continue to accrue
- IF denied student is eligible for an additional \$4,000 unsubsidized loan
- Must complete a FAFSA to determine any additional aid

Federal Direct PLUS (Parent)

Repayment begins immediately - can defer repayment until 6 months after student graduates or drops below halftime enrollment.

- If defer payment encouraged to make interest payments
- Standard Repayment is 10 years



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Private/Alternative Loans



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Private/Alternative Loans

Consider these ONLY after looking into all other sources of financial aid



Private/Alternative Loans

- Nonfederal loans, made by a *lender* such as a bank, credit union, state agency, or a school.
- Student borrows in his or her own name
- Based on credit scoring and debt-to-income ratio
- Repayment may be deferred until education completed
- Fees, interest rates, loan amounts, and repayment provisions vary by lender
- Co-signers usually required.



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Forms Are Filed – Now What?



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Determining Need-Based Eligibility

- Student submits FAFSA
- Family undergoes Need Analysis
- Expected Family Contribution (EFC) is determined based on:
 - » Parent income and assets
 - » Student income and assets
 - » Family size
 - » Number of children in college
 - » Age of the older parent
- This is NOT necessarily the amount you will pay each year!

How is EFC Calculated?

- In theory, the EFC is a number calculated to measure and compare the general financial strength of all families applying for aid - it is NOT the amount you are expected to pay.
- EFC formula considers a family's taxed & untaxed income, assets, size, how many will be attending college, and age of oldest parent!
- NOT AN ASSET: Home, personal property, qualified retirement funds, and value of life insurance is excluded from assets
- Asset Protection Allowance is applied against parent's reported assets
 - » EFC calculation roughly uses 6% of parent asset contribution and 20% of student contribution
 - **»** Student income contribution used in the calculation: 50% of amounts over \$6,410
 - » Parent contribution divided by number of children in college at the same time

COA (Cost) <u>- EFC</u> = NEED

What Happens Next?

- Student Aid Report or Acknowledgment sent to student (review and make necessary corrections)
- Information is sent to PHEAA. Student must complete State Grant Form (SGF). Can link to this directly from the FAFSA.
- Account Access (PHEAA) Create an account at <u>PHEAA.org</u> to view PA State Grant
- Information is sent to schools/colleges. Send to all schools being considered.



What School Cost Are Considered?

The Financial Aid Office will include the direct costs in determining the student's annual cost of attendance at that school:

Direct College Costs:

- Tuition
- Required Fees
- Room
- Meals
- Books and Supplies

Indirect College Costs:

- Transportation
- Personal Expenses
- Dependent Care Expenses
- Dorm Furnishings

Calculating Financial Need

Schools/colleges receive financial aid information and calculate financial need

 Financial Aid Office (FAO) "packages" student based on financial need and available funding (varies from school to school)

School cost	\$26,000
EFC	- \$3,000
Financial Need	\$23,000

• Financial aid award letter sent to student



Financial Aid Award Letter

- Official notification from school about financial aid, terms, and conditions.
- Lists the type and amount of each award to be received
- Describes what must be done to accept or reject any award.
- Discloses students rights, responsibilities, and academic requirements.



Reviewing the Financial Aid Package

- After reviewing their packages, students should be sure they know and understand the following:
 - **»** How much of the financial aid is free money?
 - » Which awards are based on need, and which are based on merit?
 - » Are there any conditions on the free money; in particular, is there a GPA requirement?
 - » Will awards change from year to year?
 - » Will institutional awards increase as tuition increases?
 - » Will loans be needed? If so, how much?

Comparing Packages

<u>Cost</u>	\$20,000	\$25 <i>,</i> 000	\$45 <i>,</i> 000
EFC	\$ 3,000	\$ 3 <i>,</i> 000	\$ 3,000
Need	\$17,000	\$22,000	\$42,000
Free Money	\$ 7,500	\$ 8,000	\$18,000
Loans	\$ 5,500	\$ 7,000	\$ 8,000
Work	\$ 0	\$ 2,000	\$ 3,000
<u>Total Aid</u>	\$13,000	\$17,000	\$29,000
Gap (Cost – Aid)	\$ 7,000	\$ 8,000	\$16,000
Actual Cont.			
(Cost – Free Money)	\$ 12,500	\$ 17,000	\$27,000



How To Cover Unmet Financial Need

- Savings Family
- 529 Plans Family
- Scholarships Various Sources
- Grants Federal and State
- Tuition Payment Plans School
- Federal Student Loans Department of Education
- Institutional Loans School
- Private Education Loans Bank
- Home Equity Loans Bank



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Final Thoughts/Wrap-Up



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Have a Plan

- Narrow down career choices
- Research and apply to several schools
- Work hard on scholarship search
- Don't fear the FAFSA (do the State Grant app, too)
- Release your info to several schools
- Compare estimated financial aid award letters
- Think of the future
- Finish on time

Ways to Reduce the Need for Financial Aid

- Graduate on Time by taking enough credits every semester
- Research and find the right school and major
- Earn college credits while in high school through AP courses, Vo-Tech, and dual enrollment
- Consider options for cutting costs (commute, take summer classes, buy used books, make smart meal plan choices
- 2 + 2 Strategy (2 years at a Community College then transfer credits to a 4 year school)
- 3 + 2 (Master's Degree)



What You Can Be Doing Now

- Student and parent apply for an FSA ID at: www.studentaid.ed.gov/fsaid
- Explore scholarship opportunities locally, regionally and nationally
- Use Net Price Calculator at schools interested in attending to get an estimate of your "net price" to attend. Net Price calculator available on each school's website.
- Use the FAFSA4caster to estimate EFC and eligibility for federal financial aid
 - Free online tool, available at www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov



Keep Your In-School Costs Low

If you want to live like a doctor while you're a student, you will probably have to live like a student when you are a doctor.

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Resources



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Use Your Resources

- PHEAA.org
- EducationPlanner.org & MySmartBorrowing.org
- YouCanDealWithIt.com
- MyFedLoan.org
- PHEAA toll free: 800.692.7392
- Federal Student Aid Info Center 800.433.3243
- FASFA.gov
- StudentAid.gov general financial aid info
- StudentLoans.gov information on federal loans



THANK YOU & GOOD LUCK!

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