



Understanding Your 2020-2021 Financial Aid Offer

Thank you for applying for financial aid at the University of Wisconsin – Whitewater. Please review this document for important information regarding your financial aid and your next steps.

Step One: Review/Accept Your Financial Aid

You can access your financial aid award package by following the directions below. The deadline to accept financial aid is May 1 (if you receive your Financial Aid Offer after May 1, you have 3 weeks from the date we send you your Financial Aid Offer to review/accept your financial aid).

- a) Log in to WINS at www.uww.edu/wins. Refer to your Admission letter for your Net-ID & password.
- b) From *Student Home*, click on the *Financial Aid* tile. Click *Continue* when asked to Conduct Business Online.
- c) Once the Financial Aid page opens, click on *Accept/Decline* after ensuring you are on the correct aid year. Note that we will automatically accept any grants you are awarded but you will need to accept or decline other types of aid, including loans and Federal Work-Study.
- d) After clicking on the *Edit* icon (which looks like a pencil), check Accept or Decline in the *Award Decision* column for each award. If you would like to reduce one of your loans, choose accept, check the *Reduce* box, then change the amount in the *Accepted* column (if reducing your loan, note that the amount you put in there will be divided equally between fall and spring semester).
- e) Click Submit!
- f) If you have not already signed the Student Permission Form (explained in Step Three below), it will display. Please select *Grant Permission*, and follow the onscreen directions.

Step Two: Decide Who Has Access to Your Financial Aid Information

FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, sets forth requirements regarding the privacy of student records. FERPA generally prohibits the release of confidential personally identifiable student data without the student's written, signed consent. Parents, guardians, and spouses have no inherent or legal rights to receive information about the student's education records, regardless of the student's age, without the written consent of the student.

If you wish to allow the Financial Aid Office to discuss your financial aid with your parents, guardian, or spouse, please authorize the Release of Information by logging in to WINS, going to *Student Home*, selecting the *Financial Aid* tile, and then clicking on **Release Financial Aid Info**.

For additional information regarding FERPA, please visit <http://www.uww.edu/registrar/ferpa>.

Step Three: Provide Authorization to Pay Miscellaneous Charges

Federal financial aid can only be used to pay for the following charges: tuition, segregated fees, course fees, housing, and meal plans. In order to apply your federal financial aid to other education related charges on your student account, you will need to authorize the University to do so.

If you wish to use your federal financial aid to pay for other charges applied to your account, excluding finance charges and payment plan activation fees, you can do so by logging in to WINS, going to *Student Home*, selecting the *Financial Aid* tile, and then clicking on **Student Permission**.

Step Four: Report Outside Sources of Aid

Students are required to report any sources of aid you will receive which are not included in your financial aid award package, such as private scholarships, DVR, employer paid tuition, Resident Assistant benefits, tuition waivers, or other sources of aid. Please submit a Scholarship Form from www.uww.edu/financialaid/forms to the Financial Aid Office if you are receiving outside sources of aid. If you learn of other resources at a later date, submit a form at that time. Note that receipt of other sources of aid may impact the financial aid you have already been awarded.

Step Five: Complete Loan Requirements

Complete Loan Entrance Counseling, for first-time borrowers

All first-time Federal Direct Loan borrowers must complete Entrance Counseling to receive their loan. Entrance Counseling is an online tutorial which explains important information regarding borrowing a federal student loan and is completed through the Department of Education website: **StudentAid.gov**.

Complete the Master Promissory Note, for first-time borrowers

All first-time Federal Direct Loan borrowers must also complete a Master Promissory Note (MPN) to receive their loan. The MPN is the agreement to repay the loan and is completed through the Department of Education website: **StudentAid.gov**.

Step Six: Estimate Costs and Research Additional Financing Options

Tuition bills will not be sent until late July or early August. Use uwwcost.uww.edu to estimate your costs now. If your financial aid does not cover all of your costs, there are additional options to explore.

Federal Direct PLUS Loan

The Federal Direct Parent PLUS Loan is a loan for parents of dependent students to supplement the financial aid package. The PLUS (Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students) Loan allows a parent to borrow money to cover any educational costs not already covered by the student's other financial aid. A PLUS Loan is the financial responsibility of the parent, not the student.

A parent who wishes to apply for the loan needs to complete the PLUS Request Process online at **StudentAid.gov** after determining the amount to borrow. The application will become available at the end of **May 2020**. To ensure the funds are received before the fall tuition due date, we recommend the PLUS application be completed no later than **August 1, 2020**.

Additional information is available at: www.uww.edu/financialaid/types-of-aid/loans/parent.

Private Loans

Private Loans (also referred to as Alternative Loans) are used to help bridge the gap between the cost of your education and the amount available from state and federal financial aid programs. Private Loans may carry higher interest rates, require a co-signer, and/or offer different repayment options than federal loans. Each loan program will differ, so it is important that you know the terms and conditions

of the loan, as well as your rights and responsibilities as a borrower. It is recommended that students borrow wisely. Before you look at private loans, please make sure that you have exhausted all possible federal and state financial aid funds available through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid or FAFSA process. To ensure the funds are received before the fall tuition due date, we recommend the private loan application be completed no later than **August 1, 2020**.

Additional information is available at: www.uww.edu/financialaid/types-of-aid/loans/private.

Payment Plan

Students registered for classes with UW-Whitewater have already completed the terms and conditions, which includes the payment plan. All eligible charges not paid by the term due date will automatically be placed on the payment plan.

For additional information, contact Student Accounts at 262-472-1373 or visit www.uww.edu/adminaffairs/finance/sfs.

Step Seven: Learn More about Federal Work-Study and Student Employment

Federal Work-Study (FWS) is a need-based aid program that is awarded to students who have submitted their FAFSA by January 1, 2020, have indicated on the FAFSA they are interested in FWS, and have demonstrated financial need. FWS earnings are considered taxable income and treated just like any other employment when completing tax returns. However, FWS earnings are not considered as income when you re-apply for financial aid.

FWS employment is performed on campus (except for America Reads) with work schedules set up around classes. Students who receive FWS as a part of the financial aid package are eligible to apply for FWS jobs, but are not guaranteed employment. Students can earn up to the amount listed on their Financial Aid Offer. These funds can be earned at any time during the academic year. Jobs can be found by accessing UW-Whitewater's online job board, **Handshake**.

Earnings from FWS employment are paid with funds directly deposited to the student's savings or checking account based on the number of hours worked and are not automatically subtracted from the student's UW-W bill.

For students who are not eligible for FWS, Regular Student Payroll positions are available. These positions can also be found on Handshake.

For additional information regarding student employment and to access Handshake, please visit www.uww.edu/financialaid/employment.

Step Eight: Review Requirements to Receive your Financial Aid

Most financial aid will pay directly to your student bill. However, based on the type of aid you are receiving, there are different conditions that must be met in order for your aid to disburse to your student account. Regardless of the type of aid, all students must meet the following conditions:

- Be enrolled at least half time (only exception is the Federal Pell Grant)
- Maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress
- Enrollment level must match award level
- Must not have any outstanding required documentation

Scholarships

Scholarship checks that have been mailed to the UW-Whitewater Cashier's Office may need to be endorsed by the student before the funds can be applied to the student's account. UW-Whitewater and UW-W Foundation scholarships will automatically credit to the student's account (as long as our office has been notified of the scholarship.) Note that receipt of scholarships may impact the other financial aid you have already been awarded.

Loans

As mentioned above, first-time loan borrowers in the Federal Direct Loan program must complete the first-time borrower requirements in order for their loans to disburse. These requirements are to ensure that students understand their rights and responsibilities when borrowing federal loan funds. Parents who are first-time borrowers in the Federal Direct PLUS Loan program must also sign a PLUS Master Promissory Note. Beginning in May, all borrowers must complete the Informed Borrower Tool.

Refunds

If the amount of financial aid exceeds the charges on the student's bill, the student or parent will receive a refund. We encourage all students to sign up for direct deposit of refunds as this allows for faster processing of refunds. Students who do not have direct deposit will receive a check in the mail. Parents cannot sign up for direct deposit for PLUS Loan refunds. For more information, contact the Cashier's Office at 262-472-1373.

For additional information, please visit <http://www.uww.edu/financialaid/process/eligibility>.

Step Nine: Review Financial Aid Policies

Students receiving financial aid need to be aware of the policies regarding eligibility for financial aid. While we provide a brief overview of many of these policies below, please visit www.uww.edu/financialaid/policies for full description of these policies.

Enrollment

Financial aid awards are based on actual enrollment for the term in which the aid is awarded. If you are not yet enrolled at the time the award is made, the award is based on full-time status. In order for funds to disburse, you must be registered for the same number of credits for which you were awarded aid. Most financial aid programs require at least half-time enrollment. It is your responsibility to notify the Financial Aid Office of any changes to enrollment.

On the 10th class day of the term, your financial aid will be revised based on the enrollment which is captured on that day. This includes any aid which you have already received. In these cases, students may be required to repay a portion of their refund. If it is later reported that you never attended a

course, we will also have to revise your aid and you may be required to pay back aid received for that course.

If you have not enrolled as of the 10th day, aid will be cancelled. If you are enrolled for less than half time status, aid programs which require half-time enrollment will be cancelled.

If you drop an individual class after the 10th day, aid which has disbursed will not be revised; however, aid which has not disbursed may be subject to cancellation. Financial aid will **not** be adjusted for any classes added after the 10th class day of the term.

For details of enrollment requirements, please visit
<http://www.uww.edu/financialaid/policies/enrollment>.

Withdrawals/Return of Title IV Funds

Withdrawing from classes may have serious consequences on your financial aid award.

If you withdraw from all courses during a semester, the Financial Aid Office must calculate the amount of financial aid you did not earn. This is determined based on the number of days you attended for the semester. The date of withdrawal used in the calculation is based on the date you submit your intent to withdraw to the Registrar's Office or the last date of an academically-related activity, if this is known to be different (examples: medical withdrawals, active duty military call-up). Unearned funds must be returned to federal, state, and institutional financial aid programs, and in many cases, this will cause you to owe a balance to the university. Once you have completed more than 60% of the semester, you have earned all financial aid for that semester. Your aid eligibility may also have to be recalculated if you stop attending all courses without completing the official withdrawal process.

For full details of how withdrawing from courses impacts your financial aid, please visit
<http://www.uww.edu/financialaid/policies/withdrawals>.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

We are required by federal regulations to monitor that all students are making Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) towards completion of their degree. In order to receive financial aid, students must comply with the three eligibility standards of satisfactory progress:

1. Minimum cumulative grade point average
 - a. 1.5 for undergraduate students with 1-36 attempted credits
 - b. 2.0 for all other undergraduate students, including transfer students
 - c. 3.0 for graduate students
2. Minimum number of successfully completed attempted credits
 - a. All students are required to successfully complete at least 67% of their attempted credits.
3. Maximum timeframe to completion
 - a. All students are only eligible for financial aid for 150% of the published length of their academic program.

Students who fail to meet these standards will not be eligible for federal, state, and most institutional financial aid. SAP is monitored at the end of each spring semester and summer term.

For full details of the requirements for all three components and the appeal process, please visit <http://www.uww.edu/financialaid/policies/academic-progress>.

Special Circumstances

The federal government makes every effort to capture the family's financial situation using the FAFSA. However, some families may be experiencing a hardship or unusual circumstance which is not reflected on the FAFSA. The Financial Aid Office can review these circumstances on a case by case basis to determine if it changes the student's eligibility for aid:

- Loss of employment
- Significant change in income
- Loss of untaxed benefits (i.e., child support)
- Divorce
- Death
- Unusual medical expenses not covered by insurance

To report a special circumstance, please complete the Special Circumstances Form available at <http://www.uww.edu/financialaid/forms>.

Cost of Attendance

The cost of attending UW-Whitewater varies based on individual student circumstances. The Financial Aid Office bases the award package on an estimated budget, which includes expenses directly billed by the university (tuition, residence hall, meal plan) and non-billed education expenses (transportation and miscellaneous personal expenses). The Cost of Attendance is only used for financial aid purposes and will not necessarily reflect actual charges.

For full details on Cost of Attendance, please visit your WINS account or <http://www.uww.edu/financialaid/costs/cost-of-attendance>.

Contact Information

We understand this document contains a lot of information to understand and retain. If you have any questions regarding financial aid, please do not hesitate to contact us:

Address: Financial Aid Office
University of Wisconsin – Whitewater
Hyer Hall 130
800 West Main Street
Whitewater, WI 53190

Phone: 262-472-1130
Fax: 262-472-5655
Email: uwwfao@uww.edu
Website: www.uww.edu/financialaid

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