



Applicant's Guide To Financial Aid

SouthUniversitySM

This is a comprehensive guide to help you look into ways to financially meet your educational goals. While this is only a guide, it provides valuable information that will help you better understand the financial aid process and the steps that must be taken to receive aid. A South University Financial Aid Officer is available to assist you in this process as you make arrangements to pay for your education.

Three Steps to Financial Aid Eligibility

1. We estimate the cost of your education.

Examples of costs include tuition, fees, and some supplies.

2. We add up all of your available resources for educational costs.

These resources include:

- Scholarships
- Federal grants and loans for which you are eligible
- State grants and loans for which you are eligible
- Private loans
- Veterans Administration (VA) benefits
- Work-Study programs
- Other

3. We subtract all of the available resources from the total estimated cost of your education.

The difference is the amount that can be covered through a payment plan.

How to Apply for Financial Aid

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is a standard document used to determine your eligibility for federal student aid. Information you provide on the FAFSA form is used to determine your eligibility for many financial aid programs including:

- Federal grant programs
- Federal loan programs
- Federal Work-Study program
- Some state student assistance programs

To find out about your state financial aid programs, visit the Financial Aid Department or go to www.ed.gov/Programs/bastmp/SHEA.htm on the Web.

Please see the "Types of Financial Aid" section of this guide for more information about individual aid programs.

In general, to receive aid from federal student aid programs, you must meet specific program eligibility requirements and:

- Demonstrate financial need, except for some loan programs.
- Not be in default on a prior educational loan or owe repayment on a prior grant.
- Meet South University admissions criteria, which include possessing a high school diploma or a General Educational Development (GED) certificate.
- Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a regular student working toward a degree or certificate in an eligible program.
- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen.
- Have a valid Social Security Number.
- Make satisfactory academic progress.

Financial Aid is Usually Based on Need

Financial aid programs are designed to supplement the resources of the family. Our Financial Aid Department uses a required formula specified by the U.S. Department of Education. Using that formula, we can determine how much of the estimated cost of education should be financed by the student or family, and how much should be paid for using aid programs.

Most financial aid is based on individual economic circumstances. These are determined by analyzing the financial information you provide on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid form.

- Sign a statement of educational purpose and a certification statement on overpayment and default, both found in the FAFSA.
- Register with the Selective Service, if required.
- Not have been convicted of certain drug violations.

The FAFSA may seem complicated, but you shouldn't have problems if you take it step by step and use the instructions that come with the form. If you're not sure how to answer a particular question, just check the numbered instructions again. If you still can't determine the answer you need, call the Financial Aid Department at the school. We'll be glad to help. You can obtain a paper FAFSA from the school, or you can complete the form online at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>.

Confidentiality

When you apply for financial aid, you are required to give the school detailed financial information. This may include a copy of your and your parents' federal income tax returns.

While this information is necessary to verify application statements, we appreciate the sensitive nature of individual tax returns. We hold all financial information you entrust to us in strictest confidence.

You should also know that each school is bound by the provisions of the Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. This law regulates the release of any personal information.

When to apply for Financial Aid

As soon as you enroll at the school, you should apply for financial aid. To be considered for financial aid, you only have to apply for it. Application forms are available from the school and include the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), other applications and forms, and instructions for completing them.

If you have questions while you are completing the forms, you can call the school's Financial Aid Department.

If all your aid applications and forms have been properly submitted, the school can credit any anticipated aid to your student account. This allows you to defer costs covered by financial aid until the aid is received — and start school on time. You must reestablish your financial aid eligibility (and reapply) each year. Application deadlines are announced yearly — usually in January — when the new FAFSA is distributed. Deadlines are also posted in various locations around the school campus. You may also apply for federal aid through FAFSA on

the Web. A link is available on the school's Web site or you can go directly to <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>.

Completing the FAFSA Form

Find a quiet place and time to complete the form without interruption.

Pull out last year's tax return. If you haven't filed a return yet, do that before you apply for financial aid. If you can't find last year's return, call the Financial Aid Department at the school and we'll help you get your information from the IRS. It is important to keep a copy of your tax return because you may be asked later to prove that the income indicated on the FAFSA is correct.

Get organized. Gather your personal and family financial records. Here's a checklist of records you may need:

- Last year's federal tax returns
- Checkbook stubs
- Savings account and investment statements
- Information relating to income including wages, dividends, Social Security benefits, welfare and other government payments, alimony or child support, Veterans Administration benefits, and disability benefits, etc.

Involve other family members who must provide information. If you're considered a dependent for federal financial aid purposes, your parent(s) may need to complete the form. You do not need to include parental financial information if you are over 24 years old, a veteran, a ward of the court, an orphan, married, or supporting legal dependents other than a spouse.

Follow the instructions that come with the form. If completing the paper form, fill it out using a pen with dark ink, preferably black. The form instructions explain how to correct mistakes.

How Financial Aid is paid

Financial aid payments are usually made in equal installments for each term in each academic year, according to your enrollment status (full time, half time, etc.)

When you complete the Federal Stafford and FPLUS Loan applications and authorize transfer of funds electronically, your student account is automatically credited with your loan proceeds.

Some loan programs carry origination and insurance fees that the lender deducts from the amount borrowed.

Mark answers to questions only in the spaces provided. Be specific; a range of figures such as \$200 – \$300 will not be accepted. You should feel free to call the school if you are unsure how to answer specific questions on the form.

Remember to sign the form. A parent must also sign if he or she contributed information to the form.

If applying online, you (and your parent) can create and use a personal identification number (PIN) at www.pin.ed.gov to "e-sign" the form.

We appreciate the sensitive nature of your financial records. All financial information you entrust to us is held in the strictest confidence.

Non-Discrimination Policy

South University does not discriminate on the basis of age, creed, ancestry, religion, sex, disability, sexual orientation, race, color, or national or ethnic origin in any of its programs or services.

This includes scholarship and loan programs, as well as administrative, educational, and admissions policies. It also includes counseling, financial assistance, and student employment services.

Questions about this policy, which is governed by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and subsequent regulations, should be directed to the school or to the Director of the Office for Civil Rights of the Department of Education in Washington, D.C.

Maintaining Financial Aid Eligibility

When you enroll at the school and accept financial aid, you agree to take on specific responsibilities and retain certain rights. Here are some pointers to help maintain your eligibility for financial aid:

1. Take the full load of classes that are scheduled for you. Aid may be reduced or canceled if your class schedule is reduced.
2. Keep copies of tax returns and other records. Federal regulations require random verification of financial aid applications, so you and/or your parents may be asked to provide copies of your tax returns or demonstrate that you were not required to file.
3. Maintain satisfactory academic progress toward your educational goal as defined in the school catalog.
4. Notify the Financial Aid Department if you receive any financial assistance that was not previously reported. This includes any outside scholarships and private loans.

5. Be aware that when you apply for financial aid, the assistance offered is subject to final funding authorization established by the U.S. Congress and state legislatures.
6. Reapply on time and accurately, and complete any applications and forms that are requested.
7. Understand that regulatory changes may bring about new rules and eligibility for financial aid, which could change your awards.

Tuition Refunds

If you withdraw from school for any reason, you may be entitled to a partial refund of tuition and fees. The refund policy, outlined in the school catalog, determines whether any refund is due.

If you receive financial aid and you withdraw from school with the intention of returning, you must notify the Financial Aid Department in order to request financial assistance for future terms.

The Federal Stafford and Federal PLUS Loan Forms

Federal Stafford Form

To apply for a Federal Stafford Loan, you must use the Master Promissory Note (MPN) for Federal Stafford Loans (Subsidized/ Unsubsidized). You can complete the MPN online at <http://studentloans.gov>. Our Financial Aid Department will determine how large a loan you are eligible for after reviewing your completed FAFSA form. After you complete the MPN, notify the Financial Aid Department at the school. If you already have a valid MPN on file with Direct Loans notify us and we will verify that it can be used at South University.

The Federal Parent Loan for Undergraduates

Students (FPLUS) Application Form

An eligible parent qualifies for FPLUS Loans while a dependent son or daughter attends school. To apply for an FPLUS Loan, your parent (only one need apply) must complete the Promissory Note for Federal Plus Loans at <http://studentloans.gov>. The Financial Aid Department will recommend an amount based on eligibility and the amount needed to pay for school.

Carefully read the instructions and general information before you complete the form.

Read the Promissory Note before you e-sign and date it. It is a legal document requiring you to pay back the money you borrow.

Types of Financial Aid

Federal Pell Grant

Description: Federal Pell Grants are “gifts” of assistance to students who meet financial standards set by the federal government. They are available to students who demonstrate financial need, based on a federal formula, and who have not already received a bachelor’s degree. The amount available varies from year to year based on Congressional appropriations. Recent grants for full-time, eligible students ranged from \$400 to \$5,550 per academic year. Part-time students who are eligible for grants receive smaller amounts. Please contact the Financial Aid Department for current Pell Grant ranges and your eligibility for that grant. Grants do not have to be repaid.

How to apply: Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). South University will receive an Institutional Student Information Report (ISIR) from the Federal Financial Aid Processor when you indicate the school as a choice on your FAFSA. The ISIR establishes your eligibility for the Federal Pell Grant and authorizes the school to credit your tuition account with Federal Pell Grant payments. If you bring or mail the FAFSA to the school, we can tell you if you will be eligible for a Pell Grant and the approximate amount that you will receive. Your actual Pell Grant amount will be given to you on your award letter.

How payments are made: If we have a valid ISIR for you, we can receive your Pell Grant funds directly from the federal government. Your account is then credited with your Pell Grant funds at the beginning of each term of eligibility. The credit is automatic as long as your financial paperwork is complete each year, you remain eligible for aid, and you officially register for and attend classes each term.

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)

Description: FSEOGs are “gifts” of assistance to students. They are available to students who demonstrate exceptional financial need and who have not already received a bachelor’s degree. The amount available varies and program funds are limited. Eligible students generally receive an award for each academic year (three quarters or two semesters). Grants through this program do not have to be repaid.

How to apply: Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The school will receive an Institutional Student Information Report (ISIR) from the Federal Financial Aid Processor when you indicate the school as a choice on your FAFSA. The school will use the information from the ISIR to determine whether you are eligible for an FSEOG. If you bring or mail the FAFSA to the school, we can tell you if you will be eligible for an FSEOG and the approximate amount that you will receive.

How payments are made: If we have a valid ISIR for you, we can receive your FSEOG funds directly from the federal government. Your account is then credited with your grant funds each term. The credit is automatic as long as your financial paperwork is complete each year, you remain eligible for aid, and you officially register for classes each term.

Federal Stafford Student Loan

Description: Subsidized and Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Student Loans carry a variable interest rate (adjusted annually each July 1) that will not exceed 8.25 percent. Contact the Financial Aid Department for the most current interest rates. The program is funded through banks, savings and loan associations, credit unions, and other lending institutions. Eligibility is based on financial need. If you are eligible, you may borrow once per academic year as long as all of the required paperwork has been completed. The federal government pays the interest on a Subsidized Federal Stafford Loan while you attend school, during the grace period, and during periods of deferment. As a student, you are responsible for interest on an Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loan.

Amount: Dependent students may borrow combinations of Subsidized and Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans up to a maximum of \$5,500 during the first grade level, \$6500 during the second grade level, and \$7500 for the third and fourth grade levels. Independent students and dependent students whose parents cannot borrow under the Federal PLUS Loan program (see next section) may borrow the maximum annual amounts stated above, plus an annual maximum of \$4,000 in Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans for the first and second grade levels, and \$5,000 in Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans for the third and fourth grade levels. A variable origination fee (up to 3 percent) and a

variable insurance fee (up to 1 percent) are deducted from the amount borrowed for both Subsidized and Unsubsidized Stafford Loans. Maximum loan amounts may be reduced for loan periods less than an academic year and if the student has previous loans. Graduate students may borrow \$18,500 for each year of study.

Repayment for subsidized loans: Repayment begins six months after you leave school or drop below half-time status. While you are in school in at least a half-time status and during the six-month grace period, the interest is “subsidized” by the federal government.

Repayment for unsubsidized loans: Your first payment of principal is due six months after you leave school or drop below half-time status. Interest can be paid quarterly while you are attending school or can be accrued during the in-school and six-month grace periods. If it accrues, it is added to the principal when you begin to repay the loan.

See your Student Financial Aid Officer to obtain a sample loan repayment schedule.

How payments are made: Federal Stafford Loans are usually sent directly to the school from the lender electronically. This process is called Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). The EFT loan funds are usually automatically credited to your tuition account at the beginning of each term. Contact the Financial Aid Department for details. If your loan funds have not been received when you start class, we will defer payment of the school charges until the funds are received, as long as all of the paperwork has been completed.

Federal Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (FPLUS)

Description: These loans are made to parents of dependent students by participating lenders. FPLUS loans have a variable interest rate (adjusted annually each July 1) that will not exceed 9 percent. Contact the Financial Aid Department for the most current interest rates. Lenders will require a credit evaluation to determine the parent’s eligibility for this loan. A parent may borrow up to the difference between the student’s educational costs and other financial aid the student receives for each academic year. A variable insurance fee (up to 1 percent) and a variable origination fee (up to 3 percent) are deducted from the amount borrowed.

Repayment: Repayment begins within 60 days after the loan is fully disbursed. See your Student Financial Aid Officer to obtain a sample repayment plan.

How payments are made: Most lenders will electronically transmit the loan funds to the school by a process called Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). The loan proceeds will automatically be transferred to the student’s account; this usually occurs prior to the beginning of each term. See your Student Financial Aid Officer for more details.

Federal Work-Study

Description: Through the Federal Work-Study program, you have the opportunity to meet part of your expenses by working part time on or off campus. A limited number of jobs are available, with priority given to students with the greatest need. Our Financial Aid Department has more details. The maximum a student can earn through this program is the amount of unmet need (the difference between expenses and all resources). Wages from this program may be paid directly to you as you earn them or as a credit to your school account. As with any job, several weeks may pass before you receive your first paycheck, so you will need to cover your own expenses initially.

Alternative Loan Programs

South University participates in alternative loan programs. Interest rates, processing fees, eligibility requirements, and repayment terms differ for each program. Alternative loans are through private lenders and usually require a credit check and/or a cosigner. Staff at the Financial Aid Department can discuss these programs with you in more detail. Program availability and terms are subject to change. You can use alternative loans if you are eligible and need assistance beyond that available through traditional aid programs. Contact the Financial Aid Department for application and eligibility requirements and a sample loan repayment schedule.

State Student Assistance Programs

Description: Some states offer educational grants and scholarship programs funded by individual state legislatures to help students obtain higher education. The eligibility criteria, amounts, and loan repayment obligations vary according to state regulations.

The Financial Aid Department can help you apply for the program in your state.

Veterans Education Act

The Veterans Education Act provides varying levels of assistance to eligible veterans, disabled veterans, and their dependents. If you are a veteran or the dependent of a veteran, contact your local Veterans Administration for more information.

Vocational Rehabilitation Programs

Every state has programs to help people with physical disabilities. Some states offer retraining programs for people who have been out of the job market for a length of time. Eligibility criteria and amounts vary according to state regulations. For more information, contact your local vocational rehabilitation office, unemployment office, or your state department of human resources.

The American Opportunity and Lifetime Learning Tax credits are available. A student or the parents of a dependent student can claim a credit of up to \$2,500 per year. This credit is subject to certain tax laws.

Awards, Grants, and Scholarships

South University offers various scholarships, awards, and grants every year to new and continuing students. Offers may be based on program of study, attendance, financial need, academic achievement, and community service credentials. Contact the Admissions Department to find out how to apply for these and other available regional and local scholarships, awards, and grants.

VICA Skills USA Championship: Students who belong to VICA may compete in local, state, and national championships. Winners at the national level are awarded a variety of scholarships. Information about the VICA Skills USA Championships may be obtained from your local VICA chapter.

Technology Student Association Competition: Members of the Technical Student Association who win first place at the national championships in various high school categories may be eligible for a South University scholarship.

The following information is available to all students

- 1. Institutional:** Information regarding costs, refund policies, programs of study, transfer of credits, accrediting, approvals, licensing, special facilities and services for students with disabilities, and other information is available through the Admissions Office, in the school catalog, and Enrollment Agreement.
- 2. Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):** This act explains your rights and procedures regarding inspection and review of your education records, correction of inaccurate or misleading information, consent to disclose information, institutional criteria for identifying school officials, what constitutes a legitimate educational interest, and filing complaints with the Department of Education. Information is available through the Admissions Office, in the school catalog, and in the Student Handbook; it is also available on request to your parent, if he and/or she meet the definition of a parent under FERPA.
- 3. Financial assistance information:** A description of financial assistance programs available to students is available in the Admissions and Student Financial Services Offices. The information includes eligibility requirements, application procedures, forms and deadlines, criteria for receiving and continuing to receive financial assistance, students rights and responsibilities, criteria for satisfactory academic progress, terms of loans, terms of employment, the frequency and the method by which aid is disbursed, entrance and exit counseling, and terms of any loan repayment deferments for service.
- 4. Institutional security policies and crime statistics (also called "Crime Report"):** This information is available through the Admissions Office. It includes a breakdown of crimes occurring on campus reported to local police agencies or to campus security. It also includes school policies and programs for reporting crimes, law enforcement and security on campus, drug and alcohol offenses, prevention of sex crimes, and other information related to campus crime and security.
- 5. Information on completion rates:** Information for first-time students is available through the Admissions Office. These rates are calculated according to guidelines in the "Student Right to Know" Act.
- 6. Drug and alcohol abuse prevention:** Information is available in the Student Handbook and through the Student Services Office.
- 7. A student who is convicted for any offense, during a period of enrollment for which the student was receiving Federal Title IV, HEA program funds, under any Federal or State law involving the possession or sale of illegal drugs will result in the loss of eligibility for any Federal Title IV, HEA grant, loan, or work-study assistance.**
- 8. Data about all Federal Loans is submitted to the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS), and will be accessible by student loan guaranty agencies, student loan lenders, and post-secondary institutions determined to be authorized users of the data system.**

