

2024-2025

# ***Student's Guide to Financial Aid***

OFFICE OF SCHOLARSHIP AND FINANCIAL AID

[WWW.MNSTATE.EDU/FINANCIAL-AID](http://WWW.MNSTATE.EDU/FINANCIAL-AID)



MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY  
**MOORHEAD**

A member of the Minnesota State system



## MISSION STATEMENT

The Office of Scholarship and Financial Aid operates with integrity, honesty, and confidentiality to promote and distribute financial aid resources in an equitable, accurate, and timely manner. We promote student learning, retention, and success with our colleagues, and we are a resource for the campus and community.

### ***Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid***

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# STUDENT'S GUIDE TO FINANCIAL AID

The Student's Guide to Financial Aid is a tool to help you understand the different types of financial aid, basic eligibility requirements, and how to apply. Use this Guide in addition to financial aid information available from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid ([studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov)) and our website ([www.mnstate.edu/financial-aid/](http://www.mnstate.edu/financial-aid/)). We look forward to guiding you through this process and welcome your questions.

## What is Financial Aid?

Financial aid is funding received by a student due to enrollment in college or university courses to pay educational expenses. Financial aid funds include grants, scholarships, work-study, and student loans. Sources of funding include federal and state governments, the University, and outside agencies.

## Initial Financial Aid Program Eligibility

Students must meet eligibility criteria for each financial aid program. Private scholarships and funds from outside agencies may have their own guidelines for student eligibility. Assistance through the Federal Pell Grant, Minnesota State Grant, and most other federal programs require that students:

1. Demonstrate financial need;
2. Have a high school diploma or GED or pass an independently administered test approved by the Department of Education or standards established by the student's state of residence;
3. Are not in default on federal or state loans; or owe a repayment on federal grants;
4. Are enrolled as a regular student in a degree program;
5. Are a U.S. citizen or an eligible non-citizen;
6. Maintain satisfactory academic progress;
7. Have a valid Social Security number;
8. Receive financial aid at only one school each semester (most types of aid); and
9. Apply annually.

## **Types of Financial Aid**

### **Grants**

Grant funding is gift money and does not need to be repaid. It is available primarily to undergraduate students seeking their first bachelor's degree and is funded through the University, state and federal agencies, or other sources.

#### ***Federal Pell Grant***

The Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant) is awarded to students who demonstrate financial need as determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Funding is limited to undergraduate students seeking their first bachelor's degree and is awarded for up to twelve full time semesters or its equivalent. Payments are based on the number of credits for which the student is enrolled each semester. The Pell Grant pays in full at twelve credits per semester and is prorated for students enrolled less than twelve credits per semester. Payments are based on registration in Pell-eligible classes on the 22nd calendar day of the semester and are not increased for subsequent changes. Adding classes or switching sections of courses after the 22nd calendar day of the semester may reduce Pell Grant eligibility. Submit the FAFSA annually to apply.

#### ***Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant***

The Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) is awarded to Pell-eligible students seeking their first bachelor's degree. Federal requirements specify that FSEOG awards first go to students who demonstrate the greatest need as determined by the FAFSA. Priority is given to Pell Grant recipients. The maximum award is \$1200 for the academic year and is prorated for students enrolled less than twelve credits per semester. Submit the FAFSA annually to apply.

#### ***Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant***

The Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant (IASG) is being phased out due to the Special Rule for Pell Grants as part of the FAFSA Simplification Act. The phase out will begin with the 2024-2025 academic year. Instead of receiving the IASG, students who meet eligibility requirements will receive the maximum Pell Grant regardless of their Student Aid Index.

To receive the maximum Pell Grant based on eligibility under the Special Rule, a student must be:

- ▶ The child of a parent or guardian who died in the line of duty while (a) serving on active duty as a member of the Armed Forces on or after September 11, 2001; or (b) actively serving as and performing duties of a public safety officer; AND
- ▶ Less than 33 years old as of the January 1 prior to the award year for which the applicant is applying.

Students will self-identify their potential eligibility on the FAFSA and MSUM will verify eligibility by collecting supporting documentation.

#### ***Teacher Education Assistance for College & Higher Education Grant***

The Teacher Education Assistance for College & Higher Education (TEACH) Grant is a federal grant that provides up to \$4,000 per year for students admitted to certain undergraduate and graduate programs of study. Recipients agree to serve as a highly qualified full time teacher in high-need subject areas for at least four years within eight years of completing their course of

study. Failure to meet the service requirement results in the TEACH Grant reverting to a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan requiring repayment of the full amount plus accrued interest from date the TEACH Grant was disbursed. The application is available on our website.

### **Minnesota State Grant**

The Minnesota State Grant is funded by the State of Minnesota for Minnesota residents seeking their first bachelor's degree. Students enrolled in 15+ credits per semester receive the full-time maximum amount. The minimum amount is \$100 for the academic year. The grant amount at each credit level will be included on the student's financial aid offer. Effective 2024-2025, eligibility is increasing to 180 credits of grant receipt (previously 120 attempted credits of post secondary enrollment). Students with child support arrears or in default on a SELF Loan are ineligible for the Minnesota State Grant. Submit the FAFSA annually to apply.

### **North Star Promise**

Effective Fall 2024, the North Star Promise provides eligible students with a tuition-free pathway to higher education for Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota residents. For Minnesota residents, the program covers the balance of tuition and fees remaining after other grants, scholarships, stipends, and tuition waivers have been applied. For North Dakota and South Dakota residents, the program covers the balance of tuition remaining after other grants, scholarships, stipends, and tuition waivers have been applied.

New and returning Minnesota resident students will be considered for the North Star Promise. North Dakota and South Dakota resident students must be new first-time or transfer students.

Eligibility is based on the following criteria:

- ▶ The student must be a Minnesota, North Dakota, or South Dakota resident.
- ▶ The family adjusted gross income must be less than \$80,000 as reported on the FAFSA or Minnesota Dream Act application.
- ▶ Minnesota students must be enrolled for at least one credit. North Dakota and South Dakota students must be enrolled full time.
- ▶ The student must meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards.
- ▶ The student must not be in default on a state or federal loan.
- ▶ Minnesota students must be enrolled in a course (courses) that apply to a degree, diploma, or certificate. North Dakota and South Dakota students must be enrolled in a course (courses) that apply to a degree or diploma.
- ▶ The student must not have already earned a four-year (bachelor's) degree or 120 credits, whichever comes first.

Students apply annually by submitting the FAFSA or the Minnesota Dream Act application. Our office will calculate eligibility on a semester-by-semester basis.

### ***Minnesota Fostering Independence Grant***

The Minnesota Fostering Independence Grant seeks to eliminate financial barriers for Minnesota resident students who were in the foster care system. Students under age 27 who were in the Minnesota foster care system at any point after their thirteenth birthday may be eligible. The grant covers the cost of attendance at any eligible Minnesota public or participating private college and university, including MSUM. Students complete the FAFSA or the Minnesota Dream Act application annually for consideration. Both applications include a question about foster care status. The Minnesota Department of Human Services will collaborate with the Minnesota Office of Higher Education to confirm a student's eligibility. If eligible, MSUM will include the Fostering Independence Grant as part of the student's official financial aid offer.

### ***American Indian Scholars Program***

The American Indian Scholars Program provides a first-dollar tuition and fee-free pathway for Minnesotans eligible for resident tuition who are enrolled members or citizens of any federally recognized tribe or Canadian First Nation who attend a Minnesota State institution or the University of Minnesota. Students not eligible for resident tuition who are enrolled members or citizens of a Minnesota Tribal Nation are also eligible. Students must be enrolled in an undergraduate certificate, diploma, or degree program; not have already obtained a bachelors degree; and have fewer than 180 credits attended at the college level. Contact our office for application and additional information.

### ***Minnesota Dream Act***

The Minnesota Dream Act (also known as The Prosperity Act) provides certain benefits to undocumented students who meet certain criteria. Students who meet the criteria are eligible for in-state resident tuition rates at public colleges and universities (including MSUM) and state financial aid to students who meet state residency requirements. Apply annually to the Minnesota Office of Higher Education (800.657.3866).

### ***Minnesota Post-Secondary Child Care Grant***

The Minnesota Post-Secondary Child Care Grant provides financial assistance to students who are Minnesota residents with children age twelve and younger (or age 14 or younger if the child is handicapped), are not receiving assistance under the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), have not defaulted on a student loan, and who demonstrate financial need. Funding is limited to ten semesters or the equivalent. The maximum award per eligible child per academic year is based on the income of the applicant and spouse, the number of eligible children within the family who need child care, and the applicant's enrollment level. Applications are available annually in our office and based on the availability of funds.

### ***Minnesota Public Safety Officer's Survivor Grant***

The Minnesota Public Safety Officer's Survivor Grant provides educational benefits to dependent children and the surviving spouse of a public safety officer killed in the line of duty after January 1, 1973. Applicants must be enrolled in an undergraduate degree or certificate program or a graduate program after June 20, 2011, at an eligible Minnesota institution that participates in the Minnesota State Grant program (MSUM is an eligible institution), and not have received the benefits for the maximum of ten full time quarters or 15 full time semesters. Students are eligible for the annual full time tuition and fee maximums for students in a four-year degree or graduate program, prorated for term length and enrollment level. Applicants must apply for

the funds each term and provide a certificate of eligibility to the MSUM Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid. Applicants obtain the certificate of eligibility from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety:

Minnesota Department of Public Safety  
445 N. Minnesota Street, Suite 1000 NCL Tower  
St. Paul, MN 55101 | Phone: 651.201.7164

## **Scholarships**

Scholarships are gift money and do not need to be repaid. They may be funded through the University, state and federal agencies, or external sources.

### **Competitive Scholarships**

MSUM's competitive scholarship is awarded based on academic achievement or talent. New entering freshmen, transfer students, graduate students, and currently enrolled students are eligible to apply. The scholarships are funded through the MSUM Foundation and University resources. The annual application is available online from October 1 – February 1 at [www.mnstate.edu/scholarships](http://www.mnstate.edu/scholarships).

### **Freshman Automatic Scholarships**

The Freshman Automatic Scholarship is awarded at the time of admission based on the students GPA or composite ACT score. The scholarship is renewable for up to three years (or until the student graduates, whichever comes first) with a 3.5 GPA or a 3.0 GPA and participation in student life activities.

### **Transfer Automatic Scholarships**

The Transfer Automatic Scholarships is awarded at the time of admission based on the student's transfer GPA. It is a one-year, non-renewable scholarship. Transfer students are encourage to apply for MSUM's competitive scholarships in subsequent years.

### **External Scholarships**

External, or outside, scholarships are funded by sources other than MSUM. These scholarships differ in eligibility requirements, application deadlines, and award amounts. External scholarships are usually awarded by an agency or organization other than MSUM and are typically disbursed by MSUM. Students are required to report external scholarships to our office.

### **Indian Scholarships**

Indian scholarships are funded by tribal offices or the Minnesota State Indian Scholarship Program for students of Tribal American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut heritage. Award amounts are dependent on the availability of funds and meeting eligibility requirements. Students should contact their tribal office for information on tribal scholarships. Contact the Minnesota Office of Higher Education at 800.657.3866 for information on the Minnesota Indian Scholarship Program.

### ***Military Educational Benefits***

Military educational benefits may be available for active duty members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, or Coast Guard; veterans; National Guard; their dependents; and members of the ROTC. Students must notify our office if they anticipate assistance from any of these sources. Contact the MSUM Veterans Resource Center at 218.477.2080 for more information.

### ***Work Opportunities***

#### ***Federal and State Work-Study***

Work-study is funded by the federal government and the State of Minnesota. Eligibility is determined by our office based on results of the FAFSA. Students must demonstrate financial need and, pending funding, are allocated an amount of money to be earned at an on-campus or approved off-campus community service site. The amount is included in the official financial aid offer.

The maximum work-study award is \$4,000 (\$2,000 per semester). Students must be enrolled for a minimum of six credits for work-study eligibility. If enrollment drops below six credits, students must immediately cease working. Students may work more than one job to earn the maximum allocation.

Work-study positions are posted to Dragon Jobs on the Career Development Center's web page ([www.mnstate.edu/dragonjobs](http://www.mnstate.edu/dragonjobs)). Students are paid every two weeks.

#### ***Institutional Employment (Non Work-Study)***

Institutional or Non Work-Study Employment is available through most University departments and campus offices. Students are not required to submit the FAFSA or demonstrate financial need for these positions. Positions are posted to Dragon Jobs on the Career Development Center's web page ([www.mnstate.edu/dragonjobs](http://www.mnstate.edu/dragonjobs)). Students are paid every two weeks.

#### ***Community Service Work Opportunities***

Community service work opportunities allow students to work for a pre-approved non-profit or government agency in an area related to their major or a special interest. Contact the Career Development Center for additional information.

#### ***America Reads***

The America Reads program provides students the opportunity to work as a reading tutor for elementary children in the local school system. Contact the Career Development Center for additional information.

#### ***Off Campus Employment***

Many students who work off campus in our community utilize Dragon Jobs in their search for employment. Contact the Career Development Center for additional information.



## **Loans**

Student loans are sources of financial aid that typically require repayment at a later time. It is recommended that students borrow from the federal loan program before borrowing a private educational loan since federal student loan interest rates and repayment options are often more favorable. Students who borrow a private educational loan are encouraged to borrow from one private loan program during their entire course of study.

### ***William D. Ford Federal Direct Loans***

The William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan program provides Subsidized and Unsubsidized Direct Loans to eligible students who complete the FAFSA. The money is borrowed from the U.S. government and the Department of Education, not a bank or lender. A cosigner is not required. A Federal Subsidized Direct Loan (if the student is eligible) is offered before an Federal Unsubsidized Direct Loan. Students must be enrolled at least half time (six credits) in an eligible degree program for federal loan eligibility. Federal Direct Loan eligibility ends the last day of a student's enrollment each semester or academic year, or if enrollment drops below six credits. Federal loans cannot be processed after the last day of a semester for prior enrollment and charges.

### **Federal Direct Subsidized Loan**

The Federal Direct Subsidized Loan is available to undergraduate students who demonstrate financial need as determined by the FAFSA. The federal government subsidizes, or pays, the interest on the loan while the student is enrolled at least half time, during the grace period (the first six months after the student graduates, leaves school, or drops below half time enrollment), and during periods of deferment. Repayment of principal and interest begins at the end of the six month grace period.

### **Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan**

The Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan is available to undergraduate and graduate students. Students do not need to demonstrate financial need. Interest is charged to the borrower while in school, during the six month grace period and periods of deferment. Independent students (and students whose parents are ineligible for PLUS Loans) have expanded unsubsidized eligibility. Repayment of principal and interest begins at the end of the six month grace period.

### **Federal Direct Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students**

The Federal Direct Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS Loan) is available to parents of dependent students. The parent is the borrower and bears full responsibility for repayment. The money is borrowed from the U.S. government and the Department of Education, not a bank or lender.

The student is required to submit the FAFSA, and the results received by the University, prior to our office processing a Federal Direct PLUS Loan Request. The student must be enrolled at least half time and meet all financial aid eligibility requirements throughout the application process to receive the loan. The amount borrowed may not exceed the student's cost of attendance minus all other financial assistance (received or estimated).

The Federal Direct PLUS Loan Request Form, available on our website, is processed by our office. The parent borrower completes the Federal PLUS Master Promissory Note at [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov). A separate promissory note must be completed for each dependent student for whom a PLUS Loan is borrowed. It is valid for up to ten years. The PLUS Loan is disbursed electronically to the University. Funds are applied to the student's bill and any remaining balance is sent directly to the student. Parents must contact our office if they want the remaining balance paid to them by paper check. Repayment begins 60 days after the loan is fully disbursed. The parent borrower may request to defer repayment while the student is enrolled and/or during the student's six month grace period.

### **Federal Direct PLUS Loan for Graduate Students**

The Federal Direct PLUS Loan for Graduate Students (Grad PLUS) is available to graduate students. The money is borrowed from the U.S. government and the Department of Education, not a bank or lender. The student is required to submit a FAFSA, and the results received by the University, prior to our office processing a Federal Direct PLUS Loan Request. The student must be enrolled at least half time and meet all financial aid eligibility requirements throughout the application process to receive the loan. The amount borrowed may not exceed the student's cost of attendance minus other financial aid (received or estimated).

The Federal Direct PLUS Loan Request Form, available on our website, is processed by our office. The student completes the Federal PLUS Master Promissory Note at [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov). The Grad PLUS is disbursed electronically to the University. Funds are applied to the student's bill and any remaining balance is sent directly to the student. Repayment begins 60 days after the loan is fully disbursed. The student may request to defer repayment while enrolled and during the six month grace period.

### **Annual Federal Direct Loan Borrowing Limits**

The following table shows annual eligibility for Federal Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans. A student's eligibility may include a subsidized loan, unsubsidized loan, or a combination of both. Borrowing limits are for a twelve month period, August to August. Borrowing the annual maximum during the standard academic year (fall and spring semesters) affects loan eligibility for summer semester.

Loan eligibility for graduating seniors enrolled for one semester of the award year is subject to regulatory loan proration. Full time students are typically limited to one-half of the annual base eligibility. Loan eligibility for students enrolled less than full time is determined by actual credit levels.

Students with a bachelor's degree who are continuing undergraduate enrollment in preparation for graduate study or seeking a second bachelor's degree may be eligible to borrow up to \$7,500 if dependent, or \$12,500 if independent.

<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>Base Eligibility</u>	<u>Additional Unsubsidized Dependent</u>	<u>Additional Unsubsidized Independent</u>
Freshman (0-29 credits)	\$3,500	\$2,000 ----or----	\$6,000
Sophomore (30-59 credits)	\$4,500	\$2,000 ----or----	\$6,000
Junior/Senior (60-89 credits)	\$5,500	\$2,000 ----or----	\$7,000
Graduate/professional (Unsubsidized only)	N/A	\$20,500	*

\*See 'Federal Direct PLUS Loan for Graduate Students'

### Maximum Borrowing

Dependent undergraduate students	\$ 31,000 (no more than \$23,000 subsidized)
Independent undergraduate students	\$ 57,500 (no more than \$23,000 subsidized)
Graduate/professional students	\$ 138,500

### Loan Repayment

Students are encouraged to contact their loan service for repayment options. The following table is an estimated standard repayment plan for a Direct Loan borrowed at the maximum fixed rate of 6.8%. The standard repayment period is 10 years with a minimum monthly payment of \$50. Use a loan repayment calculator to estimate monthly payments at different interest rates and amounts borrowed.

<b>Total Loan Amount</b>	<b>Number of Payments</b>	<b>Monthly Payment</b>	<b>Interest Charges</b>	<b>Total Repaid</b>
\$3,500	90	\$50.00	\$971.06	\$4,471.06
\$7,500	120	\$86.31	\$2,857.24	\$10,357.24
\$10,000	120	\$115.08	\$3,809.66	\$13,809.66
\$15,000	120	\$172.62	\$5,714.49	\$20,714.49
\$23,000	120	\$264.68	\$8,762.42	\$31,762.42

### **Private Educational Loans**

Private educational loans are available from a variety of lenders. A list of reputable, but not exhaustive, loan programs is available at <https://choice.fastproducts.org/FastChoice/home/236700>. Private educational loan eligibility may be displayed on the official financial aid offer, however the student must initiate an application to the selected lender. The amount borrowed in private educational loans plus any other financial aid cannot exceed the cost of students attendance. A student may qualify for Federal Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans that have more favorable terms and conditions than private educational loans.

Some private educational loans allow students to borrow funds for unpaid charges incurred in prior terms of enrollment. If the student has remaining eligibility in their financial aid budget and an outstanding MSUM balance for the loan period requested, the application is reviewed by an Assistant Director or Loan Coordinator. A loan requested within the lender-defined time limits may be approved to pay outstanding prior term University charges (documentation of need may be required).

### **Minnesota Student Educational Loan Fund**

The Minnesota Student Educational Loan Fund (SELF), one of the private educational loans referenced above, is administered by the State of Minnesota. The loan is available to Minnesota residents or non-Minnesota resident students attending eligible institutions in Minnesota, including MSUM. Undergraduate, graduates, and students with a bachelor's degree who are pursuing a second degree are eligible to borrow through the SELF program. Students must be enrolled in an eligible degree program and making satisfactory academic progress. A credit-worthy co-signer is required. Loan eligibility may be reduced if other financial aid is received, but the student is not required to borrow through the Federal Direct Loan program before borrowing with the SELF program. A federal loan default adversely affects SELF eligibility. Annual and cumulative borrowing limits are set by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education. The cumulative borrowing for students in an undergraduate or graduate program is \$140,000.

To apply, students receive an official financial aid offer from MSUM, then complete SELF Entrance Loan Counseling online, followed by the SELF application. If the student will not or cannot complete the FAFSA, contact our office before starting the SELF application. A link to the SELF application is available on our website.

## **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**

### **Application**

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is an annual application available at [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov). The application period begins October 1 prior to the award year. Students are encouraged to apply early to maximize financial aid eligibility. The student and all FAFSA contributors will need a Federal Student Aid Identification (FSA ID) to access U.S. Department of Education websites, including the FAFSA. Students and contributors can create the FSA ID at [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov) prior to submitting the FAFSA.

### **Verification and Documentation**

The student and their contributors, after granting consent, will utilize the Financial Aid Direct Data Exchange within the FAFSA to transfer federal tax information from the IRS to the FAFSA. Students may be selected for verification to confirm certain items on the FAFSA. Documentation may include a signed copy of IRS Form 1040 (with schedules), W-2s, or a signed statement of the student's family size. Students are encouraged to promptly respond to requests for additional information. Failure to comply with requests or complete verification within time limits will delay receipt of the student's official financial aid offer and may result in forfeiture of financial aid eligibility.

### **Tax Extensions**

If a student or parent filed an IRS tax extension, financial aid may be awarded and disbursed for one semester pending documentation.

### **Dependent and Independent Status**

Students who meet one or more of a limited criteria are independent for financial aid purposes. Students are required to document independent status by provide a copy of a marriage license, veteran's identification (DD 214), birth certificate, or other documentation as requested to our office. All other students are considered dependent for financial aid purposes and submit financial information on the FAFSA for themselves and their FAFSA contributors.

An applicant must meet one of the following criteria to be considered independent for financial aid purposes:

- ▶ Age 24 or older by December 31 of the award year
- ▶ Married at the time FAFSA submitted
- ▶ Working on a master's or doctorate degree
- ▶ Currently serving active duty in the U.S. armed forces for purposes other than training
- ▶ Veteran of the U.S. armed forces
- ▶ Have a child or other people (excluding their spouse) who live with the student and receive more than half of their support from the student at the time FAFSA is submitted and between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025
- ▶ An orphan (with no living biological or adoptive parent) at any time since the age of 13
- ▶ A ward of the court at any time since turning the age of 13
- ▶ In foster care at anytime since turning the age 13
- ▶ An emancipated minor as determined by a court in the student's state of legal residence
- ▶ Is or was in a legal guardianship with someone other than their parent or stepparent, as determined by a court in their legal state of residence
- ▶ Student's high school or school district liaison determined the student was an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or self-supporting and at risk of being homeless at any time on or after July 1 of the processing year

- ▶ The director or designee of an emergency transitional shelter, street outreach program, homeless youth drop-in center, or other program serving those experiencing homelessness determined the student was an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or self-supporting and at risk of being homeless at any time on or after July 1 of the processing year
- ▶ The director or designee of a project supported by a federal TRIO or GEAR UP program grant determined the student was an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or self-supporting and at risk of being homeless at any time on or after July 1 of the processing year
- ▶ A Financial Aid Administrator determined the student was an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or self-supporting and at risk of homelessness at any time on or after July 1 of the processing year

### **Cost of Attendance**

Our office establishes an annual Cost of Attendance (COA), that includes the estimated cost of tuition and fees; books, course materials, supplies, and equipment; personal and incidental costs; food and housing; and transportation. Personal and incidental expenses include such things as laundry, personal care items, and loan fees. Students who live at home with parent are required to notify our office for calculation of a reduced cost of attendance.

Some students have additional expenses affecting the cost of education. Examples of additional expenses include a commute of more than 40 miles round trip daily and students with child care and dependent care costs for individuals supported by the student. Contact our office for more information.

### **Student Aid Index**

The Student Aid Index (SAI) is an eligibility index number, derived from FAFSA data, used to determine how much federal student aid a student will receive. The SAI replaces the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) that was previously used to calculate a student's financial need.

The SAI is the sum of the student's available income and assets plus (for dependent students) the parents' available income. The SAI calculation can result in students receiving more financial aid than with the EFC calculation because while the minimum EFC was zero, the SAI can be as low as -1500. The SAI allows students to demonstrate a higher financial need.

### **Financial Need**

Once the student's Cost of Attendance and Student Aid Index are determined, aid eligibility is reviewed and an official financial aid offer is packaged. The formula used to determine aid is:

$$\text{Cost of Attendance} - \text{Student Aid Index} = \text{Financial Need}$$

Our office will meet as much of a student's financial need as possible, pending funding and eligibility requirements.

### **Official Financial Aid Offer Notification**

Students receive an email notification to their mnstate.edu account when the official financial aid offer is available in eServices. The official financial aid offer lists expected types and amounts of aid.

Financial aid offers are based on full time enrollment. Undergraduate full time enrollment is 12+ credits per semester, three-quarter time is 9-11 credits per semester, and half time is 6-8 credits per semester. Graduate full time enrollment is 8+ credits per semester, three-quarter time is 7 credits per semester, and half time is 6 credits per semester. Students enrolled for less than an academic year or less than full time may have their cost of attendance and financial aid offer adjusted.

Grants are automatically accepted; no action is needed by the student. Federal Direct Loans are processed when the student accepts the loan(s) in eServices. Students can accept the full loan offer, a reduced amount, or decline the entire Federal Direct Loan. Declined Federal Direct Loans may be reinstated by contacting our office. Loans not accepted by the student and certified by our office prior to the student's last day of enrollment are forfeited. Loans cannot be processed after the end of a loan period (academic year, semester, or summer term).

Students and PLUS Loan borrowers have the right to cancel all or a portion of any loan by submitting a written cancellation request to our office within 14 calendar days after disbursement. The signed and dated request must include the borrower's name and Dragon ID or STAR ID, the type of loan, and the amount to be cancelled. Cancellations processed after the loan is disbursement may result in a bill owed to the University.

### **College Financial Plan**

The federally required College Financing Plan is available in eServices. The College Financing Plan is intended to compare costs and other school profile data. It is not an official offer of financial aid.

### **Loan Counseling**

Students borrowing through the Federal Direct Loan, SELF Loan, or other private loan programs are required to complete loan counseling at [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov). Transfer students are encouraged to complete loan counseling even if it was completed at a previous school. In-person loan counseling may be scheduled with our office for those unable to complete the session online. Loans are not released until loan counseling is complete. This applies to only the first loan disbursed.

Students who drop below six credits, graduate or withdraw are strongly encouraged to complete Exit Counseling at [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov).

### **Master Promissory Note**

Students borrowing through the Federal Direct Loan program are also required to complete the Master Promissory Note at [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov). Loans are not released until the Master Promissory Note is complete. A paper Master Promissory Note is available for those unable to complete the online process.

### **Federal Perkins Loans**

Federal Perkins loan borrowers complete Federal Perkins Loan exit counseling at <https://heartland.ecsi.net/>

### **Financial Aid Offer Revisions**

Federal and state regulations do not allow students to receive financial assistance that exceeds their cost of attendance. If a student receives additional assistance not included in the original financial aid offer, a portion of the financial aid offer may be revised. When available, other resources such as state veterans benefits, rehabilitation services assistance, resident assistant compensation, or housing and tuition waivers meet a portion of the cost of attendance and aid is adjusted accordingly. If additional assistance results in the student receiving aid in excess of the cost of attendance, the financial aid offer will be revised and the student notified of any changes. In some cases, students may need to repay money they already received. Students are encouraged to keep a copy of their original official financial aid offer and notify our office immediately if other funding is made available.

### **Full & Part Time Enrollment and Prorated Financial Aid**

Full time enrollment for undergraduate students is 12+ credits per semester, three-quarter time is 9-11 credits per semester, and half time is 6-8 credits per semester. Full time enrollment for graduate students is 8+ credits per semester, three-quarter time is 7 credits per semester, and half time is 6 credits per semester. Financial aid programs may prorate awards at specific credit levels or on a credit-by-credit basis. Proration may also reduce eligibility to zero.

## **Billing**

### **Tuition & Fee Statements/Bills**

Tuition & fee statements are available on eServices under the 'Bills and Payments' tab. Bills are not mailed.

### **Financial Commitment Date**

The financial commitment date is 15 business days prior to the start of the semester. By this date, students must complete ONE of the following action items to prevent semester class cancellation:

- ▶ Domestic students: make a minimum payment of \$300 toward tuition and fees; Returning international students: confirm the minimum payment toward tuition and fees amount with Business Services, OR
- ▶ Release financial information by submitting the FAFSA with MSUM's Federal School Code (002367), OR
- ▶ Enroll in a payment plan with Nelnet Business Solutions to pay the semester bill in monthly installments, OR
- ▶ Provide a Third-Party Authorization to Business Services (vocational rehabilitation, military assistance, employer assistance, tuition waiver, etc.)



### ***Charging Books and Supplies***

Books and required supplies purchased through the MSUM Bookstore may be added to the student's bill. When the student authorize MSUM to use Title IV (federal) financial aid funds, including the Pell Grant, toward Bookstore and miscellaneous charges. Students complete this authorization in eServices. Students can charge up \$600 for fall and spring semesters and up to \$400 for summer term.

### **Financial Aid Disbursement**

Financial aid is disbursed each semester after the five day drop/add period, but no more than ten days prior to the student's earliest course start date. Disbursements are based on registered credits at that time or the date funds are released. Disbursement schedules may be altered if applications are submitted later in the semester or attendance is for a portion of the academic year.

Excess financial aid is issued to the student as an overage disbursement by direct deposit or paper check. If financial aid is applied to the bill and an outstanding balance remains, the student must be prepared to pay that amount with a personal check, credit card, or other sources.

Business Services will assess a late fee to all accounts not paid in full by the due date and a registration hold will be placed on the student's account. Students must make arrangements with Business Services if scheduled payments will not arrive in time. Payment dates are available at [www.mnstate.edu/cost-aid/tuition-fees/payment-dates/](http://www.mnstate.edu/cost-aid/tuition-fees/payment-dates/).

### **Enrollment Elsewhere**

#### ***Seamless Enrollment***

Credits enrolled at other Minnesota State System schools are referred to as Seamless Enrollment credits. These credits count toward the student's total credits for financial aid eligibility if the credits are applicable to the student's MSUM degree requirements. No additional paperwork is required. Students apply for and receive a financial aid offer from MSUM and financial aid is applied to the student's bill at MSUM. Any remaining funds are disbursed to the student and it is the student's responsibility to pay the tuition and fee balance at the other Minnesota State System school. If there is no excess financial aid remaining the student responsible to make payment arrangements with the other Minnesota State System school.

#### ***Consortium Agreements***

Financial aid is available for attendance at accredited, non-Minnesota State System schools through an approved consortium or contractual agreement. Credits are registered at MSUM as exchange credits and allow the student to receive most forms of financial aid for those courses. A consortium agreement must be submitted to our office a minimum of one month prior to the semester start date. Students are responsible for obtaining an official transcript with final grades and credits to validate disbursements.

### **Study Abroad**

Financial aid is available for many study abroad programs. Students must be enrolled in an approved program of study through MSUM, a program formed through affiliation with another school, or a study abroad organization such as Knowledge Exchange Institute (KEI), International Studies Abroad (ISA), University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC), or Sol Education Abroad. Contact the Center for Global Engagement or our office for more information.

### **National Student Exchange**

National Student Exchange (NSE) allows undergraduate students to study at participating colleges and universities in the United States, Canada, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Financial aid (with the exception of work-study) is available for students participating in NSE for tuition and fees; food and housing; books, course materials, supplies, and equipment; travel; and personal expenses. Contact the Center for Global Engagement for more information.

## **Tuition & Fee Refunds**

### **Dropped Courses**

MSUM will fully refund tuition and fees for individually dropped courses if the drop occurs within the first five business days of the semester.

### **Withdraws**

If a student completely withdraws from the University, MSUM will refund a percentage of tuition and fees to the student and/or the student's financial aid funding source(s) according to the following schedule as established by the Minnesota State System Board of Trustees and the University:

Fall and Spring Semesters

- ▶ 1st through 5th business day of semester 100%
- ▶ 6th through 10th business day of semester 75%
- ▶ 11th through 15th business day of semester 50%
- ▶ 16th through 20th business day of semester 25%
- ▶ After the 20th business day of semester 0%

Summer and other terms with at least 15 days of instruction

- ▶ 1st through 5th business day of term 100%
- ▶ 6th through 10th business day of term 50%
- ▶ After the 10th business day of term 0%

Summer and other terms with less than 15 days of instruction

- ▶ 1st business day of term 100%
- ▶ 2nd and 3rd business day of term 50%
- ▶ After 3rd business day of term 0%

### ***Return to Title IV and Minnesota State Financial Aid***

The procedures for refunding institutional charges to students receiving Title IV and Minnesota State financial aid are established by the Minnesota State System Board, the Minnesota Office of Higher Education, federal statutory refund policy, and the University. Charges will be repaid, up to the initial award amount received, to those sources in the order directed by the Department of Education and Minnesota Office of Higher Education. Refunds will be disbursed to the student. No refunds will be granted for less than \$1.00.

Federal regulations require repayment of 'unearned' financial aid for students who withdraw or cease attendance any time prior to the 60th percentile date of the semester. The 'unearned' Federal Title IV aid funds for the semester will be repaid to the source in the following order: Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan, Federal Direct Subsidized Loan, Direct Graduate PLUS, Direct Parent PLUS, Pell Grant, FSEOG, and TEACH Grant.

The calculation to determine how much aid a student enrolled in all full semester courses has 'earned' and is not required to repay is below. The amount the student must repay is the remaining percentage or 'unearned' percentage.

$$\text{Calendar Days Attended} \div \text{Total Calendar Days in the Semester} = \text{Percentage of Aid 'Earned'}$$

Example: Student withdraws after attending 28 calendar days out of a 112 day semester

$$28 \text{ calendar days attended} \div 112 \text{ calendar days in the semester} = 25\%$$

The student earned 25% of the federal aid and 75% must be repaid.

The calculation for students enrolled in modules (courses that are shorter in duration than the full semester) will take into account the class schedule, number of calendar days in the module, how many days the student attended, whether the module course was completed with a passing grade, and whether or not the student is graduating in the same semester.

Funds are not disbursed after a total withdrawal except for grant funds that were awarded prior to withdrawal, and federal loans that were originated prior to withdrawal for which promissory notes have been signed prior to completion of the R2T4 calculation. The withdrawal date will be the date the University is notified of withdrawal (official) or either the last reported date of academic activity or the midpoint of the enrollment period (unofficial). Return of federal funds will be completed no more than 45 days after determination of withdrawal. Failure to repay may result in a hold on diplomas, future registration, and/or release of official transcripts.

Private loan funds are excluded from immediate student repayment on the assumption the student will follow loan repayment according to the terms of the private loan promissory note(s).

Students who receive Minnesota State aid (Minnesota State Grant, Minnesota Post-Secondary Child Care Grant, Minnesota GI Bill Grant, Minnesota Indian Scholarship Program and North Star Promise):

- ▶ If the calculation made according the Office of Higher Education Refund Calculation Worksheet results in a refund of institutional charges and, after the institution's share of any required refund to Title IV programs has been made, a proportional share of any remaining refund must be returned to state financial aid programs (not to exceed the amount of the payment the student initially received from a Minnesota State aid program).
- ▶ Regulations stipulate the student's repayment choices:
  - ▷ Repay to the University the 'unearned' aid amount in full within 45 days of the schools' notification of a repayment requirement.
  - ▷ Make Title IV financial aid program repayment arrangements with the Department of Education via the National Student Loan Data System (800.621.3115).

Students can appeal the refund policies and/or percentages used for determining the refund amounts by submitting a Tuition Refund Appeal to MSUM Business Services. No refunds will be granted for less than \$1.00.

If withdrawing for military reasons, see the University Military Withdrawal Policy and contact the Registrar's Office for additional information.

Residence hall refunds are based on the number of days remaining in the semester. A \$50.00 administrative charge will be deducted from the refund. Contact Housing and Residential Life for more information.

### **Refundable Drops**

If a student receives financial aid, then drops a class and receives a refund, financial aid may be adjusted. Students may be required to repay previously disbursed financial aid.

### **Last Day of Attendance**

Our office reviews financial aid eligibility for financial aid recipients who unofficially withdraw from the University and receive grades of F, FN, I, NC, or W. For these students, financial aid eligibility is based on the last day the student attended class or class participation can be documented. If the last date of attendance or class participation is beyond 60% of the scheduled attendance, no refund is due. If attendance or participation is prior to 60% of the scheduled attendance, or in cases of attendance in modules (less than full semesters courses), any unearned financial aid is returned to the appropriate financial aid program. This may result in a bill to the University.

## **Remedial (Developmental) Courses**

Remedial courses with content less than high school level are not eligible for financial aid.

## **Audited Courses**

Classes taken for audit are not eligible for financial aid. If a class is switched to audit grading after financial aid is disbursed, repayment of funds may be required.

## **Summer Financial Aid**

Summer is considered a third semester in the academic year. Financial aid eligibility is based on the FAFSA used the previous fall and spring semesters. A separate application is not required. Summer financial aid offers are posted to eServices. Summer registration must be completed prior to the end of the drop/add period for each class. Financial aid is disbursed starting in June based on all registered credits.

Students who do not maintain satisfactory academic progress are subject to financial aid suspension for summer semester. Notification of financial aid suspension may occur after the start of summer classes. Students on financial aid warning or probation during the spring semester may receive a summer financial aid offer, however the financial aid may be cancelled if the student is placed on financial aid suspension once grades are posted.

Dropping class registration and receiving a tuition refund, withdrawing from a course, or not beginning attendance in one or more registered courses may require repayment of financial aid funds.

Example: A student registered for six summer credits – a three credit course in an early summer session and a three credit course in a later session. The student drops the later session course and the result is three total credits for summer. This may result in the student being required to immediately repay summer financial aid already disbursed.

## **Summer Federal Direct Loan and SELF Loan**

Eligibility is determined by grade level and is limited to one annual maximum per year (fall-spring-summer).

## **Summer Pell Grant**

Eligibility for summer Pell Grant is limited to the unused portion of the student's scheduled award from the previous fall and spring semesters. Additional Pell Grant may be awarded if the student is enrolled in six or more summer credits. Pell Grant payments are based on registered credits as of the 22nd calendar day of the semester. Adding or withdrawing from courses after that date does not increase or decrease the Pell Grant payment (some exceptions apply).

### **Summer Work-Study**

Students enrolled in the previous fall and spring semesters who were ineligible for work-study may be eligible for work-study in the summer if registered for at least six summer credits. If eligible, work-study will be included in the student's summer financial aid offer.

### **Financial Aid after Receiving a Bachelor's Degree**

When students receive their first bachelor's degree, subsequent financial aid eligibility is limited to loans and work-study. Students pursuing an approved graduate licensure, some certificate programs, and those taking prerequisite courses for admission to a graduate program may be eligible for financial aid. These students submit the Degree Certification form available on our website and, if approved, funding may be available through the Federal Direct Subsidized or Unsubsidized Loan program, PLUS Loan, SELF Loan, private loan programs, or federal or state work-study. Students pursuing additional majors or minors may be eligible for private loans.

### **Graduate Student Financial Aid**

Graduate students admitted as degree-seeking candidates in an eligible graduate program are eligible for graduate-level federal student aid, including Work-Study, Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans, Grad PLUS, private educational loans, and the Minnesota Post-Secondary Child Care Grant. Students enrolled for six or more credits per semester who are in loan repayment are encouraged to contact their loan servicer regarding in-school deferment of their loan payments.

### **Graduate Assistantships**

Graduate assistantships provide real-world experience in the student's academic discipline, strengthen the academic experience, and develop professional skills. An assistantship may include scholarly research, program administration, or student support services.

There are two types of graduate assistantships. The first, federal or state work assistantships, require financial need as determined by FAFSA. The second, institutional assistantships, do not require financial need. A nominal amount of assistantships provide a tuition waiver. Contact Graduate Studies ([www.mnstate.edu/admission/graduate](http://www.mnstate.edu/admission/graduate)) about available positions and review job listings posted with the Career Development Center ([www.mnstate.edu/dragonjobs](http://www.mnstate.edu/dragonjobs)).

### **Professional Judgment Appeal**

Students have the option to pursue adjustments to their financial aid application through a professional judgment appeal. There are two types of appeals: special circumstances and unusual circumstances.

#### **Special Circumstances**

These appeals refer to changes to a FAFSA contributor's financial circumstance after the FAFSA was filed. Examples include an involuntary loss of employment or pay reduction, one-time income received, death of a parent or spouse, or divorce or

separation. Appeals require a signed statement explaining the special circumstance and supporting documentation. The Special Circumstance Appeal form is available on our website.

### **Unusual Circumstances**

These appeals refer to conditions that justify changes to a student's dependency status based on a unique situation such as human trafficking, parental abandonment, or incarceration. These circumstances are more commonly referred to as a dependency override. Students experiencing unusual circumstances are encouraged to contact our office for more information.

## **Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy Standards**

Federal and state regulations require all students make satisfactory academic progress toward completion of degree, certificate or licensure requirements to receive student financial aid. All terms of attempted enrollment are considered in determining satisfactory academic progress regardless of whether aid was awarded for the term.

Failure to meet satisfactory academic progress standards results in ineligibility for state and federal aid programs (including all grants, loans, campus Work Study, Vocational Rehabilitation, Post-Secondary Childcare, Indian Scholarships, and University Scholarships).

**Quantitative Standard (Pace):** Completion percentage financial aid standards require students to satisfactorily complete a minimum of 66.667% of their total cumulative attempted MSUM credits with a minimum grade of "D" (or "P" or "S" if enrolled on a pass/fail or satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis). Transfer credits accepted and applied to the student's program requirements count as credits attempted and completed for calculation of cumulative completion percentage.

**Quantitative Standard: Maximum Credits Attempted:** Credits attempted to complete a degree and receive financial aid cannot exceed 150% of the credits required to complete the degree program.

Undergraduate students become ineligible to receive financial aid funding after they have attempted 180 total semester credits at MSUM, including any transfer credits accepted and applied toward the student's general education, program or degree requirements. Grades of Failed (F), Failure for Non-Attendance (FN), Unsatisfactory (U), Incomplete (I), No Credit (NC), In Progress (IP), Withdrawn (W) and blank (Z) for courses taken at MSUM count as credits attempted but not completed.

Students who are enrolled in an undergraduate program and seeking a second bachelor's degree, teacher certification or licensure are limited to 60 attempted semester credits in an approved degree plan.

Graduate students are limited to 52 attempted semester credits.

Students seeking a specialist degree are limited to 53 attempted semester credits beyond their first graduate degree. Students who have completed only a bachelor's degree are limited to 105 attempted graduate semester credits if seeking a specialist degree.

### **Qualitative Standard: Grade Point Average**

**Undergraduate:** Attempted credits include all courses on student records after the fifth class day, including withdrawals, incompletes, repeats, non-credit and remedial courses. Undergraduate students are required to achieve the following cumulative grade point average at the points indicated: 0 - 29 attempted credits: 1.8 30 – 59 attempted credits: 1.9 60 or more attempted credits: 2.0

**Graduate:** Beginning with the first attempted credit, graduate students must maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA.

**Evaluation Period:** Monitoring satisfactory academic progress begins with the first credit attempted and is done at the end of every semester (fall, spring and summer).

### **Failure to Meet Standards:**

#### **Quantitative: Completion Percentage**

If at the end of a semester a student fails to meet MSUM Satisfactory Academic Progress completion percentage standards, MSUM will allow that student to retain his or her financial aid eligibility under a warning status for one semester. If at the end of the warning semester a student meets MSUM's cumulative quantitative standards, MSUM will end the student's warning status. If at the end of the warning semester a student fails to meet MSUM's cumulative quantitative standards, the student will be placed on financial aid suspension.

#### **Quantitative: Maximum Credits Attempted**

Financial aid eligibility is limited to 150% of the credits required to complete the student's academic program. If at the end of a semester a student exceeds the maximum credits attempted standard, the student is suspended from financial aid eligibility.

Programs that require longer than the maximum credits attempted limits must have individual approval from the Office of Scholarship and Financial Aid through an appeal process. Students must submit for review a signed statement explaining why the program has not been completed within the allowable maximum time frame; an academic plan approved and signed by their advisor indicating the semesters remaining for degree completion; a course plan for each remaining semesters; and projected graduation date. Appeals for credits in excess of 150% solely to improve GPA are not approved unless the course is part of an approved academic plan. Submission of an appeal does not indicate automatic approval of the academic plan. Each appeal is reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

**Qualitative:** Students who are in good standing at the beginning of the term but fall below the minimum cumulative GPA at the end of the term will be placed on warning for one term. Students on warning at the beginning of a term who do not meet the minimum cumulative GPA at the end of the term will be suspended. Students may immediately be suspended from financial aid eligibility in the event of extraordinary circumstances where it becomes readily apparent that a student has not maintained satisfactory academic progress.



Suspension for Not Maintaining Qualitative Standards: Students who are suspended the first time for insufficient GPA may not return to MSUM for one semester (not including summer term). Second and subsequent suspensions last one calendar year.

**Other Factors:** If at the end of a semester a student fails to meet MSUM's completion percentage standards (quantitative) and/or cumulative GPA standards (qualitative) the student will be placed on warning for one semester. If at the end of a warning period a student does not meet MSUM's completion percentage and/or cumulative GPA standards, the student will be placed on suspension from class enrollment and financial aid eligibility.

If MSUM determines it is not possible for the student to raise his or her GPA or course completion percentage to meet MSUM's cumulative standards before the student reaches 150% of the program length for which he or she is receiving financial aid, MSUM will suspend the student from financial aid eligibility immediately upon completion of the evaluation.

It is possible for students to be placed on financial aid suspension for failure to meet more than one type of Satisfactory Academic Progress standard.

Students who have not received financial aid in the past are immediately subject to standards when they apply for financial aid.

**Notification:** Students who fail to meet the minimum standards will be notified by email when they are placed on warning or suspension.

**Appeals:** Quantitative financial aid suspension (completion percentage or maximum credits attempted) may be appealed to the Office of Scholarship and Financial Aid. Appeals are based on extraordinary or mitigating circumstances (including but not limited to major illness, death in the family, serious accident, etc.), or the successful completion of additional coursework. The appeal must state why the student failed to make satisfactory academic progress and what has changed in the student's situation that would allow the student to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress at the end of the semester. Each case is reviewed individually. The Office of Scholarship and Financial Aid informs the student in writing within seven business days of its decision, provided adequate documentation was submitted by the student.

If the appeal is approved, financial aid eligibility is reinstated on a probation status with an academic plan for one term. Written notification will include the standards the student is expected to meet.

Progress is evaluated at the end of the next term of attendance. If at the end of a probationary term the student meets MSUM's probationary term academic plan requirements (minimum 2.01 GPA and 100% completion of credits attempted that semester, or other student specific requirements for the academic plan) but has not met MSUM's cumulative quantitative standards, MSUM will permit the student to retain financial aid eligibility as long as the student continues to meet the academic plan requirements. The student's academic progress is monitored each term.

If a student fails to meet MSUM's cumulative quantitative standards or the academic plan requirements, MSUM will suspend the student from financial aid eligibility.

If an appeal is denied, written notification will state the reason(s) for the denial and the process for appealing the denial.

If a student is not satisfied with the reason for denial of the appeal, subsequent appeals are submitted to the University Financial Aid & Suspension Appeals Committee.

Qualitative suspension (insufficient grade point average) is appealed directly to the University Financial Aid and Suspension Appeals Committee. Students who are readmitted after academic suspension will be placed on academic probation and may also need to submit an appeal for financial aid reinstatement consideration.

Students who are subject to quantitative suspension may appeal their status directly to the University Financial Aid and Suspension Appeals Committee.

**Probation:** If a student's academic suspension appeal is granted, they will be on probation for their next term of attendance and placed on an academic plan. At the end of the probation term students who have met the minimum semester standards or terms of the academic plan will be allowed to enroll and be eligible for financial aid the next term.

Re-establishing Eligibility after Financial Aid Suspension: Students whose financial aid eligibility has been suspended may regain eligibility only through MSUM's appeal process or when they meet the institution's satisfactory academic progress quantitative standards. If Incomplete (I) credits are a factor in failure to maintain satisfactory progress, subsequent successful completion of these credits may be used to re-establish eligibility for financial aid. Paying for classes out of pocket or sitting out a period of time in and of itself is not sufficient to re-establish a student's financial aid eligibility.

#### **Additional Elements**

**Academic Forgiveness:** Credits for courses previously taken, for which academic forgiveness is granted, count in calculating percentage completion and maximum credits attempted for financial aid satisfactory academic progress.

**Academic Plan:** A student who successfully appeals for reinstatement of financial aid eligibility is placed on probation and may be required to complete specific requirements contained in an academic plan developed for that student by the university.

**Academic Year:** The period from August to May (fall and spring semesters). Summer is a semester trailing the academic year.

**Audit Courses:** Courses taken for audit are not funded by financial aid, are not used in calculating Satisfactory Academic Progress and do not count as credits attempted or earned for purposes of financial aid.

**Calendar Year:** The period from January through December.

**Consortium Agreements, Tri-College, Credits Enrolled at Other Minnesota State Schools, Study Abroad, State University Common Market, ISEP, NSE and other travel programs:** Credits attempted and earned while participating in these programs are included in calculating satisfactory academic progress.

**Evaluation Period:** Satisfactory Academic Progress is measured at the end of each term.

**Financial Aid Suspension:** A student on financial aid suspension is not eligible to receive financial aid.

**Maximum Time Frame:** The maximum number of cumulative attempted credits within which a student must complete his or her academic program.

**Probation Status:** A student successfully appealed a financial aid suspension and regains his or her financial aid eligibility for one evaluation period (one semester). At the conclusion of the semester he or she must meet the university's cumulative GPA (see Qualitative Standards) and Completion Percentage standards (66.667% cumulative completion); or have successfully completed the probationary term requirements set by the university (2.01 semester GPA and 100% semester course completion); or met the first term requirements of their individual academic plan.

**Qualitative Measure:** The Grade Point Average (GPA) a student must maintain in order to retain financial aid eligibility.

**Quantitative Measure:** The "pace" at which a student must progress through his or her program in order to retain financial aid eligibility.

**Remedial/Developmental Credits:** Identifies credits attempted for courses numbered less than 100. By Minnesota State policy, up to 30 remedial credits are excluded in calculating maximum credits attempted but included in grade point average and completion percentage calculations.

**Repeated Courses:** Students who repeat a course may receive financial assistance more than once for enrollment in the same course. MSUM's academic policy states when a course is repeated, each enrollment is included in calculating the percentage of successfully completed credits, and the total number of attempted credits is used to determine length of eligibility. For example, a student enrolls in a three credit course, fails it and the following semester re-enrolls in the same course and earns a C. That student would have enrolled in six credits but successfully completed only three credits. Repeating a course more than once results in removal of only one previous grade for the same course from the GPA calculation. Once a student receives a passing grade, the course may not be retaken again for a higher grade unless the student's program of study requires a specific minimum grade. A student cannot receive financial aid for more than one repetition of a previously passed course.

**Required Completion Percentage:** The percentage of cumulative attempted credits that a student must successfully complete in order to retain financial aid eligibility.

**Transfer Credits:** Transfer credits accepted by and applied by MSUM toward a student's general education, program or degree requirements apply toward the percent completion and maximum credits attempted calculations. Grades associated with these credits are not used in calculating MSUM's cumulative GPA.

**Treatment of Grades:**

Credits attempted: the number of credit hours for which a student is officially enrolled at the end of the free drop/add period each semester. Credits with grades of F, FN, I, W, IP, NC and Z count as credits attempted.

**Credits earned:** grades designated as A, B, C, D (including pluses and minuses), or P and S. Credits with grades of F, FN, I, W, IP, NC and Z do not count as credits earned.

**Percentage completion is calculated by dividing the number of earned credits by the number of attempted credits:**  $\text{Earned credits} \div \text{Attempted credits} = \text{percentage completion}$

**GPA calculation:** includes grades of A, B, C, D, F, FN, and pluses and minuses associated with a letter grade.

**Warning Status:** A status under which a student shall continue to retain her or his financial aid eligibility for one evaluation period despite a determination that she or he has not met an institution's grade point average standard, completion percentage standard or both.

**Withdrawals:** If a student withdraws from MSUM before eligible financial aid awards are disbursed, the student may be eligible for a post-withdrawal disbursement of financial aid earned; or may forfeit financial aid, as defined by Federal and State program regulations. If a student withdraws from all enrolled courses for any reason during the semester after financial aid has been disbursed, the University refund policy will be followed.

## **Financial Aid and Taxes**

### **Reporting Student Aid as Income**

Federal tax laws require that students pay taxes on grant and scholarship aid that is not directly used to pay tuition, fees, required books, supplies, and equipment. This does not include student loans. Save receipts and document all school expenses. IRS Form 1098-T displays allowable tuition and fee charges and total grant and scholarship assistance the student received the previous calendar year. IRS Form 1098-T is, available annually in January in eServices. Contact a tax preparer for more information.

### **Education Tax Credits**

Education tax credits are tax credits based on net tuition and fees paid in a calendar year and help reduce the amount of federal tax owed. Contact a tax preparer for more information.

### **Release of Student Information**

MSUM asks that students complete the Release of Student Information (ROSI). The ROSI allows the student to grant permission for designated persons (such as parents or a spouse) to access financial aid information or to suppress release of information. Financial aid application, offers, and disbursement information will not be released unless the student authorizes release. Our office may exchange information within the University and with outside agencies that require information regarding your financial aid eligibility. The University may disclose student records to other schools where the student is or was enrolled, as requested by the other school.

The ROSI also allows students to release or suppress release of information from the MSUM Registrar's Office, Business Services, and Student Conduct & Resolution. The ROSI is available on our website.

### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords student certain rights with respect to their education records, including the right to inspect their education records, request an amendment of the records that the student believes are inaccurate, and the right to control disclosures of their records except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. Educational records are defined as those records directly related to students that are maintained by the university or by a person acting for the university. See MSUM's FERPA Guidelines for more information ([www.mnstate.edu/registrar/data-privacy](http://www.mnstate.edu/registrar/data-privacy)).

### **Use of Social Security Numbers**

Students and their FAFSA contributors must provide a Social Security number to apply for Federal Student Aid. This is authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA)(20 U.S.C.. 1070 et seq.) and Executive Order 9397, as amended by Executive Order 13478 (November 18, 2008).

### **Rights and Responsibilities**

These are highlights of the rights and responsibilities of a financial aid recipient.

Financial aid recipients have the right to:

- ▶ Know that financial assistance is available including all federal, state and institutional aid programs, and what policies and regulations govern these programs.

- ▶ Apply for additional assistance when increased financial need can be demonstrated.
- ▶ View all information provided on their FAFSA by obtaining an unredacted copy of their Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR).
- ▶ Pursue adjustments to their financial aid through a professional judgement appeal.
- ▶ Request review of their aid eligibility at any time.
- ▶ Receive complete confidentiality regarding their financial aid and the use of the application data.
- ▶ Information on the aid packaging procedures used by the University.
- ▶ Accept all or a portion of their financial aid offer, and understand that the reduction of one portion will not necessarily be a basis for an increase in another portion and may affect the type of aid received.
- ▶ Know that financial aid is awarded by semester for a period of up to one academic year; they have the right to reapply for aid for subsequent years; and that aid offers may change to reflect changing financial need, eligibility, or satisfactory academic progress.
- ▶ Cancel all or any portion of a student loan (or PLUS Loan) within 14 days of the Notice of Disbursement.

Financial aid recipients have the responsibility to:

- ▶ Regularly read and respond to emails sent to their mnstate.edu account.
- ▶ Complete all application forms accurately and thoroughly.
- ▶ Be familiar with financial aid deadlines.
- ▶ Understand financial aid disbursement and bill payment policies and procedures according to information provided in print form and at [www.mnstate.edu](http://www.mnstate.edu).
- ▶ Use financial aid funds for educational purposes only.
- ▶ Know and comply with enrollment requirements related to financial aid eligibility.
- ▶ Plan for moderate spending and to contribute to the cost of their education through employment and personal resources.
- ▶ Notify the Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid if they:
  - ▷ Receive a loan, grant, scholarship, or other aid that is not included on their official financial aid offer; or
  - ▷ Change their marital status, permanent address, state of residency, name, degree status, tuition status; or
  - ▷ Withdraw from the University.

- ▶ Maintain satisfactory academic progress.
- ▶ Accept responsibility for all agreements they sign.
- ▶ Understand the terms of the Master Promissory Note.
- ▶ Begin the repayment of Federal Subsidized and Unsubsidized Stafford or Federal Direct Student loans at the applicable interest rate six months after they are no longer enrolled on at least a half time basis.
- ▶ Repay private educational loans under the terms of their promissory note.

### **Financial Aid and University Communication**

Email is the official means of University business communication. Our office uses email to notify students of requests for information and notification of financial aid eligibility. Email communication to students will be sent to their mnstate.edu account. Students are expected to receive, read, and act in a timely manner.

### **Student Loan Records**

The following information will help students maintain a complete record of student loan borrowing:

- ▶ Create online access once notified of their loan servicer.
- ▶ Keep copies of loan applications, promissory notes, disclosure statements, and correspondence to and from the loan servicer.
- ▶ Keep a cumulative record of borrowing so the total borrowed from all sources is known at any given time.
- ▶ Compare records with cumulative MSUM borrowing information sent upon graduation or withdrawal.
- ▶ Inform each lender/loan servicer of changes in name, permanent address, enrollment status, and/or schools.

### **Office of the Ombudsman**

The Office of the Ombudsman is a final resource for individuals looking for help through other customer service avenues. Before contacting the Ombudsman, current students concerned about student loans should contact our office. All other borrowers should contact their loan holder or visit the Office of the Ombudsman's website (see below).

When contacting the Ombudsman, be ready to:

- ▶ Identify the problem and the reason behind it,
- ▶ Define expectations,
- ▶ Describe actions already taken to resolve the problem, AND
- ▶ Supply documentation to support your position.

The easiest way to contact the Ombudsman is to file an online assistance request (<https://studentaid.gov/feedback-ombudsman/disputes/prepare>). Other contact options are:

Mail: U. S. Department of Education  
Office of Federal Student Aid  
P.O. Box 1854  
Monticello, KY 42633

Phone: 1.877.557.2575

Website: <https://studentaid.gov/feedback-center/>

### **Reporting of False Application Information**

Our office is required to refer to the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Inspector General any instance in which its review of Title IV aid applications discovers information indicating that an applicant may have engaged in fraud or other criminal misconduct in connection with the application. Purposely giving false or misleading information may result in a fine, imprisonment, or both. The following examples are given in the regulations as instances that should be referred to the appropriate authorities:

- ▶ False claims of independent student status
- ▶ False claims of citizenship
- ▶ Use of false identities
- ▶ Forgery of signature or certifications
- ▶ False statements of income

## **Consumer Information**

### **Loan Deferments for Community Service**

Students who received student loans may qualify for a deferment of payment based on community service activities. Serving as a full time volunteer in the Peace Corps, ACTION or in a tax-exempt organization (comparable to volunteer service in the Peace Corps or ACTION), or as an active duty member of the armed forces qualifies for loan deferment on Federal Direct and Federal Stafford loans. In each case, the deferment form must be certified by a commanding officer or an agency official, as appropriate.

### **Study Abroad**

Financial aid is available for students participating in approved study abroad programs. This includes funding through the Pell Grant, campus based aid (other than work-study), as well as federal and private student loans. Enrollment and number of credits must be documented to MSUM prior to release of financial aid funds.



### **Employment of Citizens and Authorized Aliens**

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 requires that all employers attest to their employees' immigration status and makes it illegal to knowingly hire or recruit unauthorized immigrants. To meet this federal requirement, MSUM requires identification and verification of all new employees, including student employees. The identification documentation is a valid passport or a combination of current picture identification, driver's license, and birth certificate; or original Social Security card. Contact Student Payroll for more information.

### **Accreditation**

MSUM's undergraduate and graduate accrediting and licensing organizations are available at [www.mnstate.edu/about/accreditation/program/accreditation/](http://www.mnstate.edu/about/accreditation/program/accreditation/). A complete list of programs and degrees offered, course descriptions, and student services are included.

### **Drug Free Work Place**

Minnesota State University Moorhead provides information regarding University policies for alcohol and drug use on the campus in the class schedule and the Annual Security and Fire Safety Report at [www.mnstate.edu/student-life/public-safety/campus-reports/](http://www.mnstate.edu/student-life/public-safety/campus-reports/). This information is provided in compliance with the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988 and the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989. The report includes:

- ▶ Campus policies regarding alcohol and drug use
- ▶ Campus sanctions for possession/consumption of alcohol or illicit drugs
- ▶ Legal penalties for possession/consumption of alcohol or illicit drugs
- ▶ Health risks associated with use of illicit drugs and alcohol

Contact MSUM Counseling Services for more information.

### **Job Placement**

Contact the Career Development Center for information on job placement for MSUM graduates.

### **Students Right to Know/Campus Security**

Information required to be compiled and distributed under the Student Right-to-Know legislation (campus security data, graduation data and athletic graduation data) is released annually to all students, faculty, staff, and upon request, to prospective students. View MSUM Annual Security and Fire Safety Reports at [www.mnstate.edu/student-life/public-safety/campus-reports/](http://www.mnstate.edu/student-life/public-safety/campus-reports/).

### **American's with Disabilities Act**

This office is committed to ensuring accessibility as mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act, Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. In accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, we do not discriminate against individuals with disabilities in our services, programs, or activities. Publications distributed by this office are available in an alternate format upon request. Contact Accessibility Resources for more information.



MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY  
**MOORHEAD**

***Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid***

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