

Financial Aid Basics Graduate Programs

American University

Financial Aid Topics

- Types of Aid
- Application Process
- Awarding Strategies

Types of Financial Aid

- Need and Non- Need Based Aid
 - Loans
 - Federal Work Study
- Merit-Based Aid
 - Fellowships/ Grant

Application process for Federal Aid

- Students complete a government financial aid application - Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
 - Standardizes the calculation of need
 - Provides schools with basic student income data
 - Eligibility is limited to US citizens and Permanent residents

Awarding Federal Aid

- Government submits results to the schools designated by the student
 - Government uses students' financial data to calculate Expected Family Contribution (EFC)
- School determines a standard Cost of Attendance (COA) for students.
- Schools use the government EFC calculation to determine the student's eligibility for federal aid

Federal Need and Non- Need Based Aid

- Loans
 - Loans are monies awarded to students to defray their educational expenses.
 - These funds must be repaid.
 - Loans may be awarded through the Federal Government (or through private lenders)
 - These funds in combination with other types of aid may not exceed the cost of attendance for the period of enrollment
- Federal Work Study (FWS)
 - A form of federal funding awarded to students who seek on campus employment

Types of Federal Loans

- Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan
 - Up to \$20,500 per year
 - 6.8 Fixed Interest Rate
 - In-school deferment contingent upon half time enrollment
 - Interest bearing from the date of disbursement
 - A number of Federal repayment options

Types of Federal Loan cont.

- Graduate PLUS Loan
 - Up to Cost of Attendance less any other aid received
 - Credit based loan
 - 7.9 Fixed Interest Rate
 - In-school deferment contingent upon half time enrollment
 - Interest bearing from the date of disbursement
 - A number of Federal repayment options

Types of Federal Loans cont.

- Federal Perkins Loan
 - Need-based
 - Contingent upon limited campus based funding
 - 5.0% fixed interest rate
 - 9 month grace period
 - Award amount varies from \$3000 to \$5000

Federal Work Study (FWS)

- Federal Need-based Employment program
- Awarded to graduate students who complete the FAFSA and demonstrate need
- Limited campus based funding
- Awards varies from \$2,000- \$7,500

Merit Based Aid

- Fellowship is the sum of money/ compensation that a fellow receives to pursue his or her studies. Fellowships are typically, a post-baccalaureate award.
- Fellowships may be awarded through Federal, Institutional or Private sources

Federal Fellowships/ Grant

- Federal Fellowships/ Grant include:
 - Federal Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant
 - Dr. James A. Ferguson Emerging Infectious Disease Fellowship Program
 - U.S. Department of Energy Computational Sciences Graduate Fellowships
 - U.S. Department of Education Jacob K. Javits Fellowships
 - U.S. Department of Homeland Security Graduate Fellowship Program
 - U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration Harriett G. Jenkins Predoctoral Graduate Fellowships
 - U.S. National Institutes of Health Predoctoral Graduate Fellowship Awards for Minority Students
 - U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) Minority Postdoctoral Research Fellowships

AU Fellowships

- Awarded by academic units
- Vary in amount from 1 credit to full tuition
- May be renewable as determined by the graduate unit
- AU also offers stipends as a form of (non-FWS) part-time on campus employment
- Stipend awards vary from \$5,000- \$10,000

Awarding Institutional Merit-Based Aid

- Schools receive admissions applications.
- Students are evaluated based on their academic achievements
- Schools select recipients
- Schools notify the financial aid office of the fellowship recipients and coordinate notification of the student

Awarding Institutional Merit-Based Aid

- Task force
 - AU formed a task force to look at graduate admissions practices
 - Several subcommittees to include:
 - Recruitment
 - Marketing
 - Financial Aid
 - Technology

Financial Aid Awarding Strategies

- Institutional aid as a recruitment tool
 - Awarding to the mean
 - Amounts
 - Tuition based vs. cocktail awards
 - Need assessment
 - Strategic use of metrics

Helpful Links

- [HTTP://WWW.FAFSA.ED.GOV](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)
- [HTTP://STUDENTAID.ED.GOV](http://studentaid.ed.gov)
- [HTTP://FASTWEB.COM](http://fastweb.com)