



STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE HANDBOOK

The Office of Student Financial Assistance

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INTRODUCTION

“Navigating the world of Financial Aid can be a difficult process. The mission of the Financial Aid Office at Lamar University is to assist students in obtaining financial resources which will enable them to pursue their educational goals and maintain compliance with institutional, state, and federal regulations. We have an experienced staff committed to helping guide students through the process. I invite you to contact our staff by email, telephone, or in person with any questions or concerns about financial aid.”



-Jill Rowley
Director of Student Financial Assistance

USING THE FINANCIAL AID HANDBOOK

The handbook is organized to provide an overview and reference book for the financial aid process. If you have any questions please contact the Office of Student Financial Aid.

FINANCIAL AID OVERVIEW

What is Financial Aid?

Financial aid consists of various federal, state, institutional, and private programs designed to assist you with financing your college education. The majority of federal and state student aid programs are based on the idea that students (and their parents or spouse, if applicable) have the primary responsibility for paying for education expenses. Those expenses or costs of attendance (COA) can include tuition, fees, books, supplies, room, board, personal expenses, transportation, and expenses related to dependent care or care related to a disability. Financial aid is generally intended to meet the gap between your expected family contribution (EFC) and the cost of attending college.

What is an Academic Year?

A period of time schools use to measure a quantity of study. At Lamar the academic year is defined as the fall and spring semesters combined. The summer semester is considered a trailer to the academic year.

What is the Expected Family Contribution (EFC)?

This is the number that's used to determine your eligibility for federal student financial aid and state aid here at Lamar. This number results from the financial information you provide in your FAFSA®, the application for federal student aid. Your EFC is reported to you on your Student Aid Report (SAR).

Who is Eligible for Financial Aid?

Although the majority of financial aid programs are based on financial need, don't assume that you won't qualify for any kind of aid. Almost everyone can qualify for some type of financial aid if they meet the general eligibility requirements listed below.

- A U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen as defined by the U.S. Department of Education.
- Enrolled as a regular student in an eligible degree or certificate program.
- Demonstrate financial need by completing the FAFSA (except for certain loans).
- Register with the Selective Service (males only).

- Enrolled at least half-time (6 credit hours) for the majority of aid programs.
- In good standing in accordance with LU Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards for financial aid.
- Cannot be in default of a student loan.

IMPORTANT DISCLOSURES

All students are encouraged to read the following disclosures. Please contact our office if you have any questions.

Transient Students

Students who attend colleges and/or universities other than Lamar University and enroll for Lamar University summer sessions only, are not eligible for student financial aid assistance.

Students only wanting Federal Aid are not required to submit the Financial Aid Disclosure, (e.g. Pell Grant, Federal Work Study, Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (Teach Grant), Federal Supplemental Educational Grant (FSEOG), and Federal Loans). Students only wanting Federal Aid may express so by providing the Office of Financial Assistance a signed statement including the students name and ID number, in lieu of the Financial Aid Disclosure. Students who would like to be considered for institutional and State of Texas aid (TPEG, Texas Grant, other state grant funds) as well as Federal Aid must submit a Financial Aid Disclosure.

Repeat Coursework

Recent federal regulations require Lamar University Office of Student Financial Aid to track repeated undergraduate coursework. Any reduction in financial aid enrollment status may affect financial aid award amounts.

- As long as students are meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards, there is no limit on the number of times a student can receive aid for a course that the student has only earned an F or U. If a student earns a D or higher in a course, the student may only receive financial aid for the course one more time even if the degree plan requires a “C” or higher.
- Course repetitions required by a degree plan are exempt.
- These tracking requirements do not apply to graduate students.
- Any reduction in enrollment status under these guidelines affects financial aid award amounts. The student’s official enrollment status with the University for reporting, insurance, and student loan deferment purposes will include repeated courses.

Verification

Students selected for verification are encouraged to complete and submit all required paperwork to the Office of Student Financial Assistance in a timely manner. Consequences for not completing paperwork may result in the delay of funding, as well as possible limited, and/or loss of funds.

Award adjustments based on expected hours of enrollment

Direct Loans, Grants, and College Work Study are awarded based on full-time basis (Undergraduates 12 hrs. , Graduates 9hrs.) If you know you will not be enrolled full time and you have not accepted any loan money you can notify our office in writing by sending an email to financialaid@lamar.edu from your LU email address to have your aid adjusted for fewer hours of enrollment. Emails from other addresses will not be accepted. Students in the Academic Partnership programs will be awarded based on their actual hours of enrollment and do not have to notify our office of schedule changes.

Acceptance of grant funds

Grant funds awarded with the exception of the TEACH Grant, are automatically accepted by the Office of Student Financial Assistance. All grant money is awarded based on full time enrollment. It is your responsibility to notify our office if your hours of enrollment changes.

Financial Aid Disbursements

Initial application of a student's financial aid awards that have been accepted are applied to student's account up to 10 days prior to the first day of class. The disbursement of your financial aid could be delayed due to one of the following reasons:

- Not being registered for the number of credit hours for which you were awarded
- Not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress
- Having an outstanding requirement in your self - service banner

For any first time, first year borrower receiving Federal Direct Loans, the first loan disbursement will be delayed 30 days. This means the loan funds will not be disbursed until the student has been attending 30 days.

All Federal Direct Student Loans come in EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer). Student loans will be disbursed in two disbursements, if a student is receiving a student loan for one semester there will be two loan disbursements within that one semester (the student must be meeting the eligibility requirements for the loan on the disbursement date). Grants are usually disbursed once a semester.

Credit Balances

Residual funds will be issued by the Cashier's Office for any credit balances. Refunds are disbursed via the Higher One Card according to the refund preference selected by the student.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students who are not meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards may lose eligibility to receive financial aid. (The SAP Policy is listed below)

Transcript Hold

Transcripts are held until full arrangements are made with the Lamar University Cashiers Office to repay all obligations incurred by the student.

Dependent Care Expenses for COA

Lamar University will consider the amount of Dependent Care Expenses provided for children under 12 years old in my cost of attendance budget. The student must provide the names, ages, relationship, amount paid, and daycare & tax id number for review. Documentation will be required and Lamar University reserves the right to deny any dependent care expense submitted.

Electronic Communication

Students are responsible for activating their Lamar University email account. Financial aid notifications will be sent by email to the LU email account. All first time students are responsible for checking their financial aid account through their Lamar student account (Self Service Banner) until their email account can be activated.

All financial aid notifications from the Lamar University Office of Financial Assistance will be sent via electronic means. All notifications and disclosures will be sent to the student's Lamar email account. Financial aid notifications may include, but are not limited to: Award Letters, Missing Information Letter (MIL), Award Notifications, Loan Disclosure Notices, Change Form requests, General Application for Summer, Exit Notices due to graduation, Title IV Refund Calculation, Right to Cancel Letter, Entrance Counseling via the U.S. Department of Education and other financial aid business-related notices. Each notice will identify the information required to be disclosed and provide an internet or intranet address where information can be found. Upon request, individuals are entitled to a paper copy of the notice. Request for paper copies must be typed and signed and accompanied with a visible government issued photo I.D. Most financial aid forms may be downloaded by visiting financialaid.lamar.edu/.

Consumer Loan Disclosure

In compliance with federal regulations under HEOA Sec. 489 amended HEA Sec. 485B, the Office of Student Financial Assistance is required to notify students and/or parents who enter into an agreement regarding TIV, HEA loans that the loan will be submitted to the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) and accessible by authorized

agencies, lenders, and institutions determined to be authorized users of the data system as determined by the U.S. Department of Education.

Drop/Add Policy

Lamar University Office of Student Financial Assistance is responsible for reviewing hours of enrollment for students receiving financial aid. On the census date which is typically the 12th class day for a standard fall and spring semester (this date varies if you are enrolled in various Parts of Term), your financial assistance for the semester will be based on credit hours enrolled as of that day.

If you drop credit hours prior to the census date, you may be required to repay some or all of the aid disbursed to you.

If you add credit hours prior to the census date, your financial aid package may be adjusted to reflect your increased level of enrollment.

If you drop credit hours after the census date, your financial aid package will not be adjusted unless you withdraw from all classes. If you drop classes, you may not have sufficient hours to meet renewal requirements for some aid programs. However, adding classes after the census date may allow for further loan eligibility. It is the student's responsibility to contact the Office of Student Financial Assistance to request further aid.

Cost of Attendance (COA) budgets will also be reviewed and adjusted based on the student's enrollment on the 12th class day each fall and spring semester. For the summer semester, hours and budgets will be adjusted after the 4th class day for each part of term. This does not pertain to students who are enrolled in the Academic Partnership Program.

Withdrawals and Return to Title IV (R2T4)

When a Title IV aid recipient withdraws from Lamar University within a payment period in which the student began attendance, the institution must begin the Return of Title IV (R2T4) refund process to determine the student's eligibility for Title IV funds based in accordance with the calculations prescribed by federal regulations.

Title IV funds are awarded to a student under the assumption that he/she will attend school for the entire period for which the assistance was awarded. When a student withdraws (officially or unofficially), or is administratively withdrawn from all of his/ her courses, for any reason including medical withdrawals, he/she may no longer be eligible for the full amount of Title IV funds that he/she was originally scheduled to receive.

Lamar University will determine the earned portions of Title IV aid as of the date the student ceased attendance based on the amount of time the student spent in attendance, excluding breaks of five consecutive days or more.

$$\frac{\text{Number of days complete by student}}{\text{Total number of days in term}}$$

A return calculation will be completed using the Department of Education's online Return of Title IV Aid Web product. Up through the 60% point in each payment period, a pro rata schedule is used to determine the amount of Title IV federal funds the student has earned at the time of withdrawal. After the 60% point in the payment period, a student has earned 100% of the Title IV funds he or she was scheduled to receive during the period. Aid that must be considered when completing an R2T4 calculation include:

- Federal Pell Grant
- Direct Loans
- Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
- Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant
- Perkins Loan

Note: State grants/ scholarships are not part of the calculation.

If a student withdraws prior to the census date and is a recipient of a state awarded grant, the grant will be cancelled and the student may owe Lamar University. The term census date refers to the point at which your enrollment is locked for financial aid purposes. At this point, financial aid for the term is adjusted to reflect the student's official enrolled credits. The census date for Lamar University for the standard full term is the 12th class day, for summer sessions it is either the 4th or 12th class day, depending on which part of term the student is enrolled.

Federal law requires schools to calculate how much federal financial aid a student has earned if that student:

- completely withdraws, or
- stops attending before completing the semester, or
- does not complete all modules (courses which are not scheduled for the entire semester or payment period for which he/she has registered at the time those modules began.)
- fails to earn a passing grade in any course

Determining the Withdrawal Date

For a student that officially withdraws the withdrawal date is either the date the student begins the official withdrawal process or the date the student provides the notification. For circumstances beyond the student's control the withdrawal date is either the midpoint of the payment period or the date the school determines is related to the circumstances beyond the student's control. For an unofficial withdrawal the withdrawal date is either the last date of attendance or the midpoint of the payment period.

Withdrawing from the University

Students wishing to withdraw entirely from the university and drop all courses from the university during a regular semester or summer session must do so by contacting the Records Office. It is the student's responsibility to contact the Records Office if it is his/her intent to withdraw. Financial Aid recipients should also visit with a financial assistance associate. The associate will provide counseling regarding the consequences of withdrawing (i.e., repayment obligations, impact on your satisfactory academic progress, etc.).

Lamar University has its own institutional refund policies, as set forth in the University Comprehensive Catalog under "Drop vs. Withdrawal", which determines the charges that a student will owe after withdrawing; however, these policies are separate from and will not affect the amount of Title IV aid the student has earned under the Return of Title IV (R2T4) funds calculation. Therefore, if the student has not earned enough Title IV funds to cover all institutional charges, then the student may owe a balance directly to Lamar University. Lamar will return all funds made applicable by the R2T4 calculation, no later than the 45th day after the school has determined the student has withdrawn from the University back to its applicable federal program.

Unofficial Withdrawals and All F's

If the student does not officially withdraw but fails to earn a passing grade in at least one course during a semester, he/she is considered to have, for the purpose of federal Title IV funds, unofficially withdrawn from the university. As a result the R2T4 calculation must be performed to determine the amount of Title IV aid that must be returned. The only exception to this rule is when the school can document that the student was academically engaged in at least one class after the 60% point of the semester. This is usually determined by the instructor reporting the last date of attendance. Once grades are posted at the end of each semester, R2T4 is performed on Title IV financial aid recipients who fail to earn a passing grade in at least one course. The student will be processed as an unofficial withdrawal. The withdrawal date used in the calculation is either the last date of attendance as documented by the professor or the 50% point of the term. Students who have all F's in combination with an incomplete (I) and who are given an extension will be reviewed at the end of the following long semester. If the incomplete is changed to a passing grade an R2T4 calculation is not needed, however if the incomplete is changed to an "F", a R2T4 calculation will be completed and the appropriate funds returned to its federal program no later than 30 days after the extension has expired. Students will be notified through email once this return has been completed.

Withdrawing from modules

For students attending modules (a course that does not span the full length of the term, i.e., Academic Partnership Program), if the student does not complete all the days of the period that he/she was scheduled to complete, this student is considered to have withdrawn for Title IV purposes. If a student is enrolled in later modules prior to the date that the student ceased attendance in a class, the school cannot assume that the student still intends to attend the later module. Unless the student provides written confirmation to the Office of Student Financial Assistance at Lamar University by completing the Notice of Continuation of Enrollment, confirming they intend on attending a later module in the same payment period, the Title IV return applies. Students have 14 days from the day they drop a module to satisfy this requirement. Newly added classes at the time of withdrawal is positive confirmation of future attendance. If the student does not return, R2T4 applies.

Returning Title IV Funds

Once the R2T4 calculation has been completed Lamar University will return all unearned aid the school is responsible for returning back to its federal program. Aid will be returned in the following order:

- Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan
- Federal Direct Subsidized Loan
- Federal Perkins Loan
- Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loan
- Federal Direct Parent PLUS Loan
- Federal Pell Grant
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
- Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant (TEACH)
- Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant

Once this is complete the student will receive an email informing him/her that R2T4 has been performed and that the student may now have a balance owed to Lamar University due to the return. If it is determined that the student owes a federal grant overpayment, a letter will be mailed to the student. Any loan funds that the student (or parent for a PLUS Loan), is responsible for returning must be repaid in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Master Promissory Note.

Overpayment of Federal Grant Funds

Any Federal Grants the student is responsible for returning is called a Federal Overpayment. Federal regulations provide that 50% of the unearned amount of all federal grants is protected by the federal calculation (see steps 9 and 10 of the federal government's repayment worksheet, the link is provided below). Any grant amount subject to repayment will be billed to the student's account as an overpayment. If the amount the student owes is less than \$50, then no repayment is required. Upon receipt of payment from the student, Lamar will return the funds to the appropriate grant program(s) and remove the amount billed to the student's account.

Consequences of Non-Repayment

If a student does not repay the grant funds that are owed to the government within 45 days of the date that the student was notified, the account will be turned over to the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) as an overpayment of federal funds. Students who owe an overpayment of Title IV funds are ineligible for further disbursements from federal financial aid programs at any institution until the overpayment is paid in full or payment arrangements are made with the U.S. Department of Education.

Post Withdrawal Disbursement

If you withdraw before receiving all of the funds you have earned, you may be due a post withdrawal disbursement. Post withdrawal disbursements will be confirmed within 30 calendar days of the date the student withdrew. If your post withdrawal disbursement includes loan funds we must first get you permission in writing before we can disburse these loan funds to you. Failure to receive written notification will result in the cancellation of the loan funds.

The Treatment of Title IV Funds When a Student Withdraws from a Credit-Hour Program worksheet is provided below and may also be downloaded at: <http://www.ifap.ed.gov/aidworksheets/attachments/2010IASGCreditHourFinal.pdf>

Student's Name _____ Social Security Number _____

Date form completed _____ Date of school's determination that student withdrew _____ / _____ / _____

Period used for calculation (check one) Payment period Period of enrollment

Monetary amounts should be in dollars and cents (rounded to the nearest penny).
When calculating percentages, round to three decimal places. (For example, .4468 = .447, or 44.9%)

STEP 1: Student's Title IV Aid Information

Amount Disbursed

1. Pell Grant _____

2. Academic Competitiveness Grant _____

3. National SMART Grant _____

4. FSEOG _____

5. TEACH Grant _____

6. Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant _____

Subtotal _____

Net Amount Disbursed

7. Unsubsidized FFEL/Direct Stafford Loan _____

8. Subsidized FFEL/Direct Stafford Loan _____

9. Perkins Loan _____

10. FFEL/Direct PLUS (Graduate Student) _____

11. FFEL/Direct PLUS (Parent) _____

Subtotal _____

STEP 2: Percentage of Title IV Aid Earned

Start date _____ / _____ / _____ Scheduled end date _____ / _____ / _____ Date of withdrawal _____ / _____ / _____

A school that is not required to take attendance may, for a student who withdraws without notification, enter 50% in Box H and proceed to Step 3. Or, the school may enter the last date of attendance at an academically related activity for the withdrawal date, and proceed with the calculation for the withdrawal date. If the student who officially withdraws, enter the withdrawal date.

H. Percentage of payment period or period of enrollment completed

Completed days _____ + _____ = _____ %

Total days _____

If this percentage is greater than 60%, enter 100% in Box H and proceed to Step 3.

If that percentage is less than or equal to 60%, enter that percentage in Box H, _____ % and proceed to Step 3.

Subtotal _____

STEP 3: Amount of Title IV Aid Earned by the Student

Multiply the percentage of Title IV aid earned (Box H) by the Total Title IV aid disbursed and that could have been disbursed for the period (Box G).

_____ % X _____ = _____

Box H _____ Box G _____

STEP 4: Title IV Aid to be Disbursed or Returned

If the amount in Box I is greater than the amount in Box E, go to item J (Post-withdrawal disbursement).
If the amount in Box I is less than the amount in Box E, go to Title IV aid to be returned (Item K).
If the amounts in Box I and Box E are equal, STOP. No further action is necessary.

J. Post-withdrawal disbursement

From the Amount of Title IV aid earned by the student (Box I) subtract the amount of Title IV aid disbursed for the period (Box E). This is the amount of the post-withdrawal disbursement.

_____ - _____ = _____

Box I _____ Box E _____

Stop here, and enter the amount in "J" in Box 1 on Page 3 (Post-withdrawal disbursement tracking sheet).
Step 4 continued

STEP 5: Amount of Unearned Title IV Aid Due from the School

L. Institutional charges for the period

Tuition _____

Room _____

Board _____

Other _____

Other _____

Total Institutional Charges = L \$ _____

(Add all the charges together)

M. Percentage of unearned Title IV aid

100% - _____ % = _____ %

Box H _____

N. Amount of unearned charges

Multiply institutional charges for the period (Box L) by the percentage of unearned Title IV aid (Box M).

_____ X _____ % = _____

Box L _____ Box M _____

STEP 6: Return of Funds by the School

The school must return the unearned aid for which the school is responsible (Box O) by repaying funds to the following sources, in order, up to the total net amount disbursed from each source, in amount to Return

Title IV Programs

1. Unsubsidized FFEL/Direct Stafford Loan _____

2. Subsidized FFEL/Direct Stafford Loan _____

3. Perkins Loan _____

4. FFEL/Direct PLUS (Graduate Student) _____

5. FFEL/Direct PLUS (Parent) _____

Total loans the school must return = P \$ _____

6. Pell Grant _____

7. Academic Competitiveness Grant _____

8. National SMART Grant _____

9. FSEOG _____

10. TEACH Grant _____

11. Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant _____

STEP 7: Initial Amount of Unearned Title IV Aid Due from the Student

From the amount of Title IV aid to be returned (Box K) subtract the Amount for the school to return (Box O).

_____ - _____ = Q \$ _____

Box K _____ Box O _____

STEP 8: Repayment of the Student's loans

From the Net loans disbursed to the student (Box B) subtract the Total loans the school must return (Box P) to find the amount of Title IV loans the student is still responsible for repaying (Box R). These loans consist of loans the student has earned, or unearned loan funds the school is not responsible for repaying. They are repaid to the loan holders according to the terms of the borrower's promissory note.

_____ - _____ = R \$ _____

Box B _____ Box P _____

If Box Q is less than or equal to Box R, STOP. The only action a school must take is to notify the holders of the loans of the student's withdrawal date.
If Box Q is greater than Box R, proceed to Step 9.

STEP 9: Grant Funds to be Returned

S. Initial amount of Title IV grants for student to return

From the initial amount of unearned Title IV aid due from the student (Box Q) subtract the amount of loans to be repaid by the student (Box R).

_____ - _____ = S \$ _____

Box Q _____ Box R _____

T. Amount of Title IV grant protection

Multiply the total of Title IV grant aid that was disbursed and that could have been disbursed for the period (Box F) by 50%.

_____ X 50% = T \$ _____

Box F _____

U. Title IV grant funds for student to return

From the initial amount of Title IV grants for student to return (Box S) subtract the Amount of Title IV grant protection (Box T).

_____ - _____ = U \$ _____

Box S _____ Box T _____

If Box U is less than or equal to zero, STOP. If not, go to Step 10.

STEP 10: Return of Grant Funds by the Student

Except as noted below, the student must return the unearned grant funds for which he or she is responsible (Box U). The grant funds returned by the student are applied in order as indicated, up to the amount disbursed from that grant program minus any grant funds the school is responsible for returning to that program in Step 6.

Note that the student is not responsible for returning funds to the school if the student owes \$50.00 or less.

Title IV Grant Programs

1. Pell Grant _____

2. Academic Competitiveness Grant _____

3. National SMART Grant _____

4. FSEOG _____

5. TEACH Grant _____

6. Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant _____

Amount to Return _____

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

Eligibility for Financial Aid

Lamar University will measure your academic progress annually after the spring semester. Failure to meet all three of the Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards (for all terms enrolled, not just those terms that aid was received) may result in loss of financial aid eligibility.

All three of the following Satisfactory Academic Progress standards must be met:

1. Qualitative Component – Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA)

- Undergraduate students must maintain at least a 2.0 cumulative GPA. Texas Grant and Be On Time recipients must maintain at least a 2.5 GPA. Graduate students must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA.

2. Quantitative Component – Pace (Minimum Completion Rate for Attempted Credit Hours)

- A student must earn credit for at least 75% of all semester credit hours attempted (total earned hours divided by total attempted hours). A student who is not progressing toward graduation at the defined Pace will not receive financial aid regardless of his/her GPA.
 - You do not earn hours for the following grades: U, Q, F, W, NG or I.
 - Transfer credit hours posted to the official transcript record and all courses removed through the Academic Fresh Start process will be counted as attempted credit hours, whether or not they are applicable to the student's current degree.

3. Quantitative Component - Degree Completion within 150% of the average length of the Program

- Students must earn their degree within 150% of the number of hours that are required.
 - Attempted credit hours are used for the 150% calculation.
 - A student pursuing a double major or degree must earn his/her first bachelor's or graduate degree within the 150 percent maximum time frame standard.
 - Transfer credit hours posted to the official transcript record and all courses removed through the Academic Fresh Start process will be counted as attempted credit hours, whether or not they are applicable to the student's current degree.

Financial Aid Suspension

A student who fails to maintain the quantitative and/or qualitative standards will lose his/her eligibility for student financial aid and will be placed on financial aid suspension. This suspension will continue until you complete at least 6 hours in your major with a 2.25 semester GPA or better for undergraduates and a 3.25 semester GPA for graduates (if more hours are taken, all credit hours must be completed with a passing grade) over a long semester at Lamar University, and all classes must be paid in full. Once these conditions are met, you need to notify our office in writing to have your eligibility reviewed.

Appeal Process

Students interested in appealing the suspension of their financial aid must first submit a FAFSA to the U.S. Department of Education and have the information sent to Lamar University. Once the FAFSA has been received the student can submit an Appeal for Satisfactory Academic Progress available in the Financial Aid Office or online at www.lamar.edu/financialaid under the forms link.

A student wishing to appeal Financial Aid Suspension may submit an appeal letter for the following reasons:

- Injury or illness to the student
- Death of an immediate relative
- Other Special Circumstances (beyond the control of the student)

Appeals that do not provide ample justification, are incomplete, or are illegible will be denied.

Appeals will be reviewed by a Specialist Sr. and/or the Director. The appeal may be forwarded to the financial aid appeal committee. The appeal committee meets on predetermined dates published on the financial aid website and students' whose appeals go before the committee may have their aid or processing delayed due to the meeting dates of the committee.

Letters must be received at least 5 business days before each meeting or the letter will be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting date. Students are responsible for making arrangements with the Cashier while waiting on a decision or their classes may be dropped. **DO NOT** miss class while waiting for a decision. Appeals can take up to 7-10 business days to review during peak times.

- If your appeal is approved your Self Service Banner account will be updated under Financial Aid/Eligibility/Academic Progress to reflect probationary/academic plan status. Federal regulations allow the Financial Aid Office to require students to fulfill specific terms and conditions, such as taking a reduced course load or enrolling in specific courses. You may be required to agree and sign additional Academic Plan requirements before your aid can be processed any further. Under a Financial Aid Academic Plan you will be allowed to receive aid for ONE SEMESTER and your eligibility for future semesters will be reviewed after grades post each payment period.
- If you are unable to appeal your suspension for one of the 3 reasons allowed by Federal Regulations, your aid will remain suspended until you complete the requirements to regain eligibility. If your appeal is denied, you will be notified by email, your academic progress listed under your eligibility will change to "D-All" in your Self Service Banner Account, and any aid already awarded will be cancelled. This suspension will continue until you complete at least 6 hours in your major with a 2.25 semester GPA or better for undergraduates and a 3.25 semester GPA for graduates (if more hours are taken, all credit hours must be completed with a passing grade) over a long semester at Lamar University, and all classes must be paid in full. Once these conditions are met, you need to notify our office in writing to have your eligibility reviewed.

ANY STUDENT, WHO WITHDRAWS DURING THE FIRST 60% OF THE SEMESTER, WILL OWE GRANT AND/OR LOAN FUNDS NOT ONLY TO LAMAR UNIVERSITY BUT POSSIBLY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. THERE IS NO EXCEPTION TO THIS RULE AND YOU CANNOT APPEAL THIS DECISION TO LAMAR UNIVERSITY.

TYPES OF FINANCIAL AID

The majority of federal and state student aid programs are based on the idea that students (and their parents or spouse, if applicable) have the primary responsibility for paying for education expenses.

Lamar University offers a wide range of financial aid, which consists of various state, institutional, and private programs designed to assist you and your family with financing your college education. Your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is your application for most federal and state aid here at Lamar University. Once your FAFSA is received you will need to log onto the Self Service Banner to see what other student requirements are listed. You must complete all requirements listed before you are awarded a financial aid package. Students will not be

awarded a financial aid package that exceeds their Cost of Attendance (COA). Students must meet the general eligibility requirements outlined at the beginning of this document, be enrolled in an eligible program of study, and meet Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards to receive financial assistance. For most federal aid, with the exception of the Federal Pell Grant, students must be enrolled half-time. Some financial aid is based on financial need, a student must demonstrate financial need to be eligible for Need-Based financial aid. Non-Need-Based aid does not require the demonstration of financial need.

Need-based aid includes:

- Federal Pell Grant
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
- Direct Subsidized Loan
- Federal Perkins Loan
- Federal/State Work Study
- Texas Public Education Grant (TPEG)/State HB Grant (TUGBUG)
- Lamar Promise
- Texas Grant

Calculating your financial need for need-based financial aid:

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{Cost of Attendance (COA)} \\ - \text{Expected Family Contribution (EFC)} \\ \hline = \text{Financial Need} \end{array}$$

Non-need-based aid includes:

- Direct Unsubsidized Loan
- Federal PLUS Loan
- Teacher Education Access for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant
- B-On Time Loan

Calculating your non-need based aid:

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{Cost of Attendance (COA)} \\ - \text{Financial aid awarded so far*} \\ \hline = \text{Eligibility for Non-Need Based Aid} \end{array}$$

Below are types of aid you may be eligible to receive while attending Lamar University:

GRANTS are need-based federal and state funds that do not have to be repaid. Grants are available to eligible students based on financial need and level of enrollment. With the exception of the Federal Pell Grant, grants are allocated to colleges in yearly, limited amounts, so a student may show eligibility, but funds may be exhausted. Students should complete the FAFSA and complete all other student requirements listed on the Self Service Banner no later than March 31st of each year.

Federal Pell Grant Program - Pell Grants are awarded only to undergraduate students who have not earned a bachelor's or professional degree based on their Expected Family Contribution (EFC). For many students, Pell Grants provide a foundation of financial aid to which other aid may be added.

Continued eligibility in this program requires you to renew your FAFSA, meet Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards and continue to demonstrate financial need. Recent regulatory changes affect the lifetime amount of Pell Grant funds you may receive. These changes limit your Pell Lifetime Eligibility (LEU) to 600%, the equivalent of 6 years. You may login to National Student Loan Data System (www.NSLDS.ed.gov) using your FSA ID to view your Pell LEU.

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) - This grant is for undergraduates with exceptional financial need, and gives priority to students who receive Federal Pell Grants. This grant is awarded on a first come, first serve basis to eligible students.

Continued eligibility in this program requires you to renew your FAFSA, meet Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards, be enrolled at least half-time, and continue to demonstrate financial need. Remember these funds are limited and are awarded on a first come, first serve basis. Your receipt of funds in a prior school year does not mean you will continue to receive this grant in subsequent years.

The TEACH (Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education)- The TEACH Grant provides grants to undergraduate and graduate students who are completing or plan to complete course work needed to begin a career teaching full-time in high-need subject areas for at least four years at schools that serve students from low-income families. If you do not complete your service obligation the grant will be converted into an unsubsidized loan.

You **must** be enrolled in a program of study designated as TEACH Grant-eligible, as determined by the school. If you are enrolled in the Teacher Certification non-degree program you are ineligible. Eligible programs are those that prepare a student to teach in a high-need area in their state of residence. High-need fields are determined by the Department of Education for each state per award year. Department of Education high need field information can be found online at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/pol/tsa.doc>. Graduate programs that are eligible have to lead to a teaching certification.

Students must also meet one of the following academic achievement requirements:

- Score above the 75th percentile on a college admissions test (e.g. SAT or ACT) or
- Graduate from high school with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.25 (on a 4.0 scale) to receive a grant as a freshman, or
- Have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.25 (on a 4.0 scale) on your college coursework to receive a grant for each subsequent term;

Once you complete the FAFSA complete the TEACH Entrance Counseling at <https://teach-ats.ed.gov/ats/index.action>. Once we receive the entrance counseling your eligibility for the grant will be reviewed and if eligible you will be awarded. You must then accept your award and complete the TEACH Agreement to serve at <https://teach-ats.ed.gov/ats/index.action>.

Continued eligibility in this program requires you to renew your FAFSA, meet Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards, maintain a 3.25 GPA or higher, and be enrolled in an eligible program.

Texas Public Education Grant (TPEG)/ State HB Grant (TUGBUG) - provides limited state funds for undergraduate and graduate students with exceptional financial need. To qualify, students must be enrolled for a minimum of 6 credit hours per semester. Annual award amounts range from \$200 to \$4000. Funds are available on a first come, first serve basis so you should complete your FAFSA and all other student requirements listed on the Self Service Banner no later than March 31st.

Continued eligibility in this program requires you to renew your FAFSA, meet Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards, be enrolled at least half-time in an eligible program, and continue to demonstrate financial need. Remember these funds are limited and are awarded on a first come, first serve basis. Your receipt of funds in a prior school year does not mean you will continue to receive this grant in subsequent years.

Texas Grant - The Texas Grant will pay for your tuition and fees at a public college or university in Texas. To find out more about the Texas Grant, you can visit the web site www.CollegeForTexans.com. Basic eligibility requirements include:

- ★ Be a Texas resident
- ★ Complete the Recommended, or Distinguished High School Program
- ★ Complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to determine your financial need
- ★ Apply and be accepted by a non-profit Texas college or university of your choice
- ★ Enroll at least three quarter time in an undergraduate degree or certificate program within 16 months of your high school graduation, and
- ★ Have not been convicted of a felony or a crime involving a controlled substance.

Academic Requirements for Continuing in the Texas Grant Program

- ★ At the end of the first year, a student entering the program must be meeting the school's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements.
- ★ At the end of the second year in the program or later years, you must have an overall college grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale and complete at least 24 semester credit hours per year. Prior to the 2014-2015 school year, all students must complete at least 75% of the hours attempted in the prior academic year (Fall + Spring).

WORK STUDY (Federal & State)

Work Study provides part-time employment opportunities on campus or designated off-campus site to undergraduate and graduate students with need to help meet the costs of postsecondary education. Students must complete a FAFSA to determine financial need. Not all students with financial need are guaranteed to receive work-study. Students are generally awarded work-study based on availability of funding, on a first-come, first-serve basis to students enrolled at least six hours and who demonstrate financial need. Students are allowed to work up to 19.5 hours per week. Working hours are arranged with your supervisor around your classes. Salaries are reviewed on a yearly basis. A work-study award does not guarantee the student has a job or that they will actually earn the amount listed.

Continued eligibility in this program requires you to renew your FAFSA, meet Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards, be enrolled at least a half-time, and continue to demonstrate financial need.

Current Work-Study positions are listed on the Career and Testing website, <http://dept.lamar.edu/careerandtestingcenter>.

SCHOLARSHIPS are awarded based on academic excellence in a specific activity, such as music, or on other criteria established by the donor. Although scholarships do not have to be repaid, they require a separate application other than the FAFSA. The Scholarship Office handles all scholarships and can be contacted at 409-880-8888.

LOANS – a loan is money you borrow and must pay back with interest. If you decide to borrow loans, make sure you know the terms and conditions of the loan. A loan payment calculator is available at, <http://www.finaid.org/calculators/loanpayments.phtml> if you would like to get an estimate of what your monthly payments may be before accepting any loan money. All student loans will be disbursed in two (2) separate disbursements (if you are receiving a loan for one semester, you will receive two disbursements within that semester).

Federal Direct Student Loans - The Department of Education (DOE), is your lender for all Federal Direct Student Loans. These are low-interest loans that must be repaid at a future date, usually beginning six months after you graduate, leave school, or are no longer enrolled as a half-time student. For more information regarding repayment, please visit <http://direct.ed.gov/RepayCalc/dlindex2.html>. The DOE charges an origination fee of the total amount borrowed per loan. This means the money you receive will be less than the amount you actually borrow. You're responsible for repaying the entire amount you borrowed plus any interest accrued, and not just the amount you received. The interest rate varies depending on the loan type and for most federal student loans, the first disbursement date. Current interest rates are available for viewing at

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/loans>. Listed below are the different types of Direct Loans you may receive while attending Lamar University:

- Direct Subsidized Loan – A need-based loan made to eligible undergraduate students
- Direct Unsubsidized Loan- This loan is not based on financial need and is made to eligible undergraduate and graduate students
- Direct PLUS Loan – This loan is made to graduate or professional students and parents of dependent undergraduate students (Parent PLUS Loan)

These loans may be used for education-related expenses such as tuition, fees, books, living costs, transportation, etc. Lamar University requires students who wish to borrow to submit a FAFSA application and submit all other required paperwork requested on the Self Service Banner to the Office of Student Financial Assistance. Once awarded you will have to accept your award on the Self Service Banner, complete Entrance Counseling, and sign a Master Promissory Note (MPN). You must complete both an Entrance Counseling and sign a Master Promissory Note (MPN) at www.studentloans.gov. Entrance counseling is an orientation to student loans that explains the loan process, provides insight on managing your education expenses, and explains your rights and responsibilities. The MPN is a legal document in which you promise to repay your loan(s) and any accrued fees to the U.S. Department of Education. You must be enrolled at least half-time in an eligible program as well as be meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to be eligible for loans.

- The Direct Subsidized Loan is available to undergraduate students with financial need, we will determine the amount you can borrow based on that need. The Department of Education pays the interest on this loan while you're enrolled at least half-time and during authorized periods of deferment. Repayment on this loan begins six months after you graduate, leave school, or drop below half-time enrollment. You are required to complete an Exit Counseling any time one of the three previously mentioned scenarios occur at www.studentloans.gov. If you are a first time borrower on or after July 1, 2013, there is a limit on the maximum period of time you may receive Direct Subsidized Loans. If this limit applies to you, you may not receive Direct Subsidized loans for more than 150% of the published length of your program.

Continued eligibility in this program requires you to renew your FAFSA, meet Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards, be enrolled at least half-time, and continue to demonstrate financial need.

- The Direct Unsubsidized Loan is not based on financial need and may be awarded to both undergraduate and graduate students. Like subsidized loans, the Office of Student Financial Aid will determine the amount you can borrow. Repayment on this loan begins six months after you graduate, leave school, or drop below half-time enrollment. You are required to complete an Exit Counseling any time one of the three previously mentioned scenarios occur at www.studentloans.gov. Unlike a subsidized loan, interest accrues (accumulates) on an unsubsidized loan from the time it's first paid out. You can pay the interest while you are in school and during grace periods and deferment or forbearance periods, or you can allow it to accrue and be capitalized (that is, added to the principal amount of your loan). If you choose not to pay the interest as it accrues, this will increase the total amount you have to repay because you will be charged interest on a higher principal amount.

Continued eligibility in this program requires you to renew your FAFSA, meet Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards, and be enrolled at least half-time in an eligible program.

- Direct PLUS Loan
 - The Grad PLUS Loan is available to graduate and professional students to help pay for education expenses up to the cost of attendance minus all other financial assistance. You may apply for a Grad PLUS Loan at www.studentloans.gov, please note that this loan is subject to a credit check of "adverse" credit history by the U.S. Department of Education. Once the school receives an approval you will be awarded funding based on your eligibility, at this time you will go to the Self Service Banner to accept the award.

Continued eligibility in this program requires you to renew your FAFSA, apply for a PLUS Loan at www.studentloans.gov, meet Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards, and be enrolled at least half-time in an eligible program.

- **The Parent PLUS Loan** is an unsubsidized loan for the parents of dependent students. PLUS loans help pay for education expenses up to the estimated cost of attendance (COA) minus all other financial assistance. The borrower must be the student’s biological, adoptive, or stepparent. The child must be a dependent student enrolled at least half-time. Plus loan borrowers cannot have adverse credit history (a credit check will be done). In addition, parents and their dependents must be U.S. citizens or eligible noncitizens, must not be in default on any federal education loans or owe an overpayment on a federal education grant. To apply for a Parent PLUS Loan follow the instructions below:
 1. Open your web browser to www.studentloans.gov
 2. A **Parent** signs in using the parent FSA username and password
 3. Complete the PLUS Loan Application

If the parent receives a loan approval from the Department of Education and would like the Financial Assistance Office to originate a PLUS Loan; the following must be completed:

- ★ A PLUS Loan Master Promissory Note must be completed at www.studentloans.gov

If the parent receives a denial from the Department of Education, the student may request additional unsubsidized loan money issued under the student’s name. The request is made by turning in an Additional Loan Request Worksheet (available in the Financial Assistance Office or online at www.lamar.edu/financialaid under the “Forms” link). The Additional Loan Request must be received by the Financial Assistance Office before any loan is originated and funds released.

Processing the Additional Loan Request takes 7-10 business days. Students should talk to the Cashier’s Office to ensure arrangements have been met so the student’s classes are not dropped.

Continued eligibility in this program requires students to renew the FAFSA, parents should apply for the Parent Plus Loan at www.studentloans.gov, the student must meet Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards, and be enrolled at least half-time in an eligible program.

Maximum Academic Year Loan Amounts (without PLUS Denial)				
	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior, Senior, Post-Baccalaureate, Pre-Graduate	Graduate or Higher
DEPENDENT	\$5,500	\$6,500	\$7,500	
INDEPENDENT	\$9,500	\$10,500	\$12,500	\$20,500

Federal Perkins Loan - A Federal Perkins Loan is a low-interest (5 percent) loan for both undergraduate and graduate students with exceptional financial need. The school is your lender and the loan is made with government funds. You will not be charged interest on this loan while you are enrolled at least half-time or during authorized grace or deferment periods. You must accept the loan on the Self Service Banner. You will then need to complete entrance counseling at <https://www.fc.campusoncall.com/cgi-bin/home.pl?campus=lamar>. A Master Promissory Note and Truth and Lending Disclosure Statement must be signed at the Office of Student Financial Assistance. You must repay this loan to the school, repayment begins nine months after you graduate, stop attending, or drop below half-time status. You will be required to complete exit counseling anytime one of the three scenarios previously mentioned occurs. Due to

recent regulatory changes, beginning with the Fall 2015 semester, the Office of Student Financial Assistance will not be awarding any new Federal Perkins Loan recipients.

Continued eligibility in this program requires you to renew your FAFSA, meet Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards, be enrolled at least half-time in an eligible program, and continue to demonstrate financial need.

B-On-Time Loan Program - At this time the B-On-Time Loan Program is a “need” based loan program providing non-interest bearing loans with a provision for loan forgiveness if the student meets defined criteria. The B-On-Time loan program is designed for students qualifying for the TEXAS Grant when schools do not have enough funds to be able to provide these students a TEXAS Grant. Because of this guideline Lamar University will not award a B-On-Time Loan until ALL Texas Grant funds have been awarded and disbursed for the current academic year. You can find information about this loan program at www.hhloans.com.

- ★ Each eligible student will be contacted by Lamar University’s Office of Student Financial Assistance and directed as to what steps need to be taken if they choose to accept a B-On-Time Loan once it has been awarded to them.
- ★ Per State of Texas regulations, Lamar University is required to provide loan repayment and default prevention counseling for all Be On-Time (BOT) loan recipients. This pertains to students receiving loans on or after January 1, 2015. Students should visit <http://www.aie.org/pay-for-college/learn-about-student-loans/BOT-module/index.cfm> to complete the counseling, this link will also be provided to students via self service banner. Students should print the Certificate of Completion and write his/her name in the space provided and present to the Office of Student Financial Assistance. The BOT loan will not be certified and sent to the State until this has been completed and received.
- ★ Funds are limited, and as a “need based program funds are awarded first to students having the greatest need.

Beginning Fall 2015 there will no longer be awards for Initial Texas B-On-Time program. Renewals are still eligible as long as they meet eligibility requirements.

EXEMPTIONS/WAIVERS Tuition exemptions for certain Texas Students, certain students who are not Texas residents and information on Hazlewood: www.collegefortexans.com

LAMAR PROMISE Lamar University is pleased to announce that beginning in the 2009-2010 academic year, the university will provide grant assistance to cover all fall and spring in-state tuition and fees for undergraduate Texas residents who have a household Adjusted Gross Income level of \$25,000 or less, are Pell Grant eligible, are admitted to Lamar University and have completed the financial aid application process(including the submission of all required forms by March 31st) After March 31st, students who have met the required conditions will awarded grant assistance on a funds-available basis. To cover additional expenses, such as textbooks and room and board, students may be eligible for additional funds through loans and Federal Work Study Program. To participate in the Lamar Promise Program, the following criteria must be met by the student applicant:

- ★ Complete and submit all Financial Aid application forms to the Financial Assistance Office by March 31st.
- ★ Be a degree-seeking, in-state, undergraduate student eligible for Texas in-state tuition.
- ★ Be a dependent student per Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Dependency Requirements.
- ★ Have a Household Adjusted Gross Income (per IRS regulations) of no more than \$25,000.
- ★ Be a full-time Lamar University student (12 or more semester credit hours).
- ★ Be within the program eligibility limit of four academic years (or three years, if a transfer student).

The Lamar University Promise Program will provide grant assistance to students to cover only the cost of tuition and fees to students who meet the above criteria and are working toward a degree. The Lamar University Promise Program is available to all undergraduate Lamar University students who are enrolled in full-time (12 hours or more). Students must meet all requirements set forth by Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements to maintain and continue the Lamar Promise Program. New Freshman are eligible for the Lamar Promise Program for up to four years and new transfer students are eligible for up to three years.

Entrance Counseling

You may be required to complete Entrance counseling for a Federal Direct Loan and the Federal Perkins Loan and B On-Time Loan counseling. If this is a requirement you will be notified through your Self-Service Banner.

Entrance counseling for a Federal Direct Loan may be completed at:

www.studentloans.gov

Entrance counseling for a Federal Perkins Loan may be completed at:

<https://www.fc.campusoncall.com/cgi-bin/home.pl?campus=lamar>

Loan Repayment and Entrance Counseling for a Texas B On-Time Loan may be completed at:

<http://www.aie.org/pay-for-college/learn-about-student-loans/BOT-module/index.cfm>

Exit Counseling

If you have received Federal Loans you are required to complete Exit Counseling anytime you withdraw, stop attending, or drop below half-time status.

Exit Counseling for the Federal Perkins Loan may be completed at:

<https://www.fc.campusoncall.com/cgi-bin/home.pl?campus=lamar>

Exit Counseling for any Federal Direct Loan may be completed at:

<https://studentloans.gov/myDirectLoan/index.action>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Financial Aid?

Lamar University offers many financial aid options to help you pay for college costs. Financial aid is any grant, scholarship, loan, or work-study offered to help a student meet his/her college expenses. Financial aid is comprised of federal, state, institutional and private fund(s). The amount of financial aid a student received is determined through federal, state and institutional guidelines. Grants are aid that does not have to be repaid; loans must be repaid. Interest rates and repayment terms for loans vary by program. Work-study is aid based on an hourly rate for work performed.

How do I apply for aid at Lamar University?

All it takes at Lamar University to apply for aid is the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) and a University Application for Financial Aid. Certain types of aid, usually loans, require additional paperwork.

What records will I need to apply for financial aid?

Useful documents include your tax return from the previous year, as well as your parents' tax return if dependent, or your spouse's return, if applicable. Other records such as W-2 forms, business/farm records, and bank statements are also very useful. Please make sure that the school has received all required documents such as grade or financial aid transcripts if you are a transfer student.

How long does the awarding process take?

It usually takes 4 -6 weeks from the time your FAFSA is complete and all additional required documentation is submitted to the Financial Aid Office to the time the award occurs. If you haven't heard anything from us after that time period, please check with us to make sure we have everything that is needed.

What are your office hours?

Our office in Wimberly Building room 200 is open Monday - Friday: 8am - 5pm. If you are unable to visit the office you can email us at financialaid@lamar.edu or call 409-880-7011 to speak with a Financial Assistance Specialist.

Why is it when I try calling your office I can never get through?

During peak times, our phone lines often stay busy. You can email your questions to financialaid@lamar.edu, send us a fax at (409) 880-8934, or stop by our office in Room 200 of the Wimberly Building for assistance.

How do I find out what documents am I missing to complete my financial aid application?

Missing student requirements are listed in the Self Service Banner Account under "Student Requirements".

My parents did not claim me on their tax returns this year - can I file my FAFSA as an independent student?

The Department of Education defines an independent student as someone who fits into one or more of 12 specific categories. Answering "yes" to any one of the 12 questions on the FAFSA will result in the student becoming independent. Unfortunately, none of the following individually or in combination with one another will merit a dependency override. Those circumstances are:

Parents refusing to contribute to the student's education

Parents unwilling to provide information on the application or for verification

Parents not claiming the students as a dependent for income tax purposes

Student demonstrating total self-sufficiency.

(Please note that students receiving a dependency over-ride at one school is not binding at another institution.

If any student feels that they have unusual circumstances, they may contact the Financial Assistance Office to discuss their situation.)

How do I accept my awards?

Award packages are offered electronically in your Self Service Banner Account.

What happens if I "decline" the financial aid that was awarded to me and I didn't mean to, or I have changed my mind?

Notify the Financial Assistance Office immediately in writing. Include a detailed description of exactly what you wish to change; additional forms may be required after review of your request. A delay in contacting the office could result in the loss of grant or loan funds.

Should I send in my tax forms and other paperwork before you ask for it?

You should not submit tax forms and/or other paperwork unless we specifically ask for these documents. After your FAFSA has loaded in our system, you will receive an email stating you have outstanding requirements. The documents needed are listed in your Self Service Banner Account.

My SAR indicates that I was selected for "Verification". What does this mean?

This indicates that the Financial Assistance Office must verify the information you provided on your FAFSA when you applied for aid. You will need to submit the verification worksheet and a tax return transcript including corresponding W-2's for the previous work year, and other required documents for the Financial Assistance Office.

If I am selected for verification and I do not complete the required paperwork in a timely manner, what are the consequences?

Consequences may include the delay of funds, as well as limited, and/or loss of funds.

How can I obtain Texas residency status for tuition purposes?

There are several pieces of information that are reviewed before awarding a previously out-of-state student resident status. If you are an incoming freshman or a returning student and have questions about whether you can be considered for in-state tuition rates, please contact the Admissions Office at 409-880-8888.

How many hours do you need to enroll to receive financial aid?

A minimum of six hours for any Federal or State aid (Pell Grant is the only Federal Aid that can be awarded for students enrolled for less than three hours - if they qualify).

If my financial aid is more than the amount that I owe, when will I receive the balance?

If you have a credit balance, residual funds are transferred to your Cardinal One Debit Card by the Cashier's Office. For Cardinal One Card questions, please contact the Cashier's Office at 409-880-8390.

Why is my financial aid not credited to my account?

There are several things that could cause this to happen. If you have an outstanding Student Requirement aid will not disburse or if you are enrolled in less than full time we may have to adjust your budget before we can disburse your funds. If you were awarded prior to the end of a long semester or summer term and did not maintain satisfactory academic progress during that semester/term, the aid would not disburse since you may no longer be eligible.

How much can I expect to receive in grant monies?

Financial aid grant money is based on the number of hours a student is enrolled for, the Cost of Attendance (COA), and your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). Your true and correct FASFA is your application for grants and loans.

How will my Federal Stafford Loan be credited to my bill?

The Master Promissory Note you completed when applying for your loan will allow the loan proceeds to be sent electronically to LU by means of EFT, which stands for Electronic Funds Transfer. Funds received will be credited to your bill and a residual refunds generated if there is a credit balance.

I am an incoming freshman student and the Direct Stafford Loan I was awarded is not showing up on my bill. Why?

As a first time borrower on the Federal Direct Stafford Loan Program, we are required to delay the first disbursement of your loan for 30 class days. Since these funds will not be available at the time your bill is due, it will not appear on your bill. If the Federal Stafford Loan is needed to help pay for tuition and fees, you may contact the Cashier's Office about the possibility of obtaining an institution emergency loan.

Why is the amount I received from my Federal Direct Stafford Loan different than the amount that shows on my bill?

As you are aware, the Federal Direct Stafford Loan is a federal program funded through the Department of Education (DOE). The structure of the program allows the DOE to extract a percentage from the loan for processing and insurance against default. This information as well as the net amount of your loan should be reflected on the disclosure statement you received from the DOE. Typically, this fee amounts to 1%. To calculate the net amount, multiply the gross amount of your loan by 1% and then subtract this amount from the gross amount of the loan. This would be the same on all loans made under the Family Federal Education Loan Program - including Federal Stafford Loans (subsidized and unsubsidized) and Parent Loans.

My parents applied for a Federal Parent Loan. How will this be applied to my bill?

The Federal Parent Loan (PLUS) works similarly to the Federal Direct Stafford Loan except that it is a loan made to your parent instead of to you. The PLUS Loan will be applied as a credit to your bill. Any residual balance will be generated in the form of a refund to your Cardinal One card or a check to your parent depending on the instructions given on the Parent PLUS Loan Application.

I am eligible for Hazlewood, what do I need?

You must be sure that the VA office has qualified first. The Veterans Affairs office at Lamar University is separate from the Financial Assistance Office and we encourage students with questions about VA to contact the VA Office directly. The Veterans Affairs Office is located in Room 101 of the Wimberly Building to aid veterans in obtaining their educational benefits. For more information including benefit programs and contact information visit [The Office of Veterans Affairs](#).

How do I request a tax transcript?

You can obtain a free transcript on the IRS.gov Website (www.irs.gov) by clicking Order a Transcript under the Online Services option, or by calling 800-908-9946 and following the prompts in the recorded message, or by completing and mailing a 4506-T request for a transcript to the address listed on the 4506-T form.

If I drop a course(s) prior to the census date will financial aid be adjusted?

Yes, if you drop a course before the census date your financial aid may be adjusted and/or cancelled. If you are enrolled in Modules/Part of Term (POT), you must stay enrolled past the census date of the last POT for which you have been awarded financial aid, or your awards may be adjusted and/or cancelled.

For example:

If you are enrolled in 3 hours in POT 1 which spans from August 24th – October 15th and 3 hours in POT 2, which spans from October 16th-December 9th, you must stay enrolled past the census date of POT 2, or your financial aid will be affected. This is independent of the Return to Title IV (R2T4) Policy for students who are considered to have withdrawn.

If you receive a financial aid refund and then drop a course(s), you may owe a balance. You should check your account online.

If my financial aid has been denied for Satisfactory Academic Progress, what financial options are available to me?

Alternative student loans are available to students. These are credit based loans that students can borrow for their schooling. Most require a co-signer and a certification from the school. We suggest students check with their financial institution. Students should also contact the Cashiers office to see what payment plans are available to them.

What do I need to do to get my financial aid reinstated if it was denied due to Satisfactory Academic Progress?

If a student's aid was denied due to Satisfactory Academic Progress, students need to complete at least six hours on their own in their major, making sure that they have a semester GPA of 2.25 or better. If this requirement is met, the student can submit a letter to the Financial Assistance Office for review of future aid and the Appeal for Satisfactory Academic Progress form found on our web site.

What if I or my parents filed for a tax filing extension with the IRS?

Students and/or parents who file an extension with the IRS will need to wait until they can either use the IRS DRT tool or submit a tax transcript before awarding can occur. We encourage families to seek alternative assistance in the form of a payment plan with the Cashier's Office or a short term loan.

If I am enrolled in an Academic Partnership program, can I receive aid for both AP and non- AP courses?

Although we offer the Academic Partnership programs administered thru Lamar, the way financial aid administers aid is separate from that of Lamar University's regular degree programs. For example, if you are in Academic Partnership courses, and would like to take a course on-campus also, we can only cover the Academic Partnership program. The reason for this measure is that the Cost of Attendance for each program is different and we cannot figure aid packages based on the dual enrollment into both programs.

What should I do if my classification changes?

It is the responsibility of the student to inform the Office of Student Financial Assistance if a change in the student's classification has occurred (ex: from an Undergraduate (UG) to a Post Baccalaureate (PB) or Graduate (GR), or from a Post Baccalaureate (PB) to a Graduate (GR), etc.). Initial notifications of financial aid are tentative, and are based on the assumption that the student's classification is the same as the prior semester. It is essential that the student communicate any change in his/her classification to the financial aid staff during the period leading up to the beginning of each semester as it may impact the student's aid eligibility. If the student does not provide notification of this change it may not be until later in the semester that this is identified, potentially resulting in aid adjustments and possibly leaving the student with a balance owed to the university.

Can I receive aid if I am a doctoral off-campus student?

Doctoral students are classified as On-campus Non-AP students (even if they are taking classes on-line). For this purpose, you must be in classes that span the entire semester or take parts of term that encompass the entire semester. The minimum hour requirement in both cases is six (6) hours.

Example 1: enrolled in 1 class that is from Jan. – May and another class that is only Jan. – Feb. (this meets the 6 hour requirement and at least one class spans the entire semester)

Example 2: Enrolled in 3 classes that are from Jan. – Feb., Feb. – Mar., Mar. – May. (this meets the 6 hour requirement and spans the whole semester term)

What happens to my financial aid if I am an undergraduate student enrolled in both undergraduate and graduate level courses?

After an accumulation of earned hours (approximately 95) your financial assistance package will be adjusted and/or cancelled after the census date based on the undergraduate courses you are enrolled in.

What is Exit Counseling?

A mandatory information session which takes place when you graduate or attend school less than half-time that explains your loan repayment responsibilities and when repayment begins.

Can I receive aid for a double major and/or minor at Lamar University?

Here at Lamar University students who are seeking a dual degree and/or minor will only receive aid for one major degree program. Students must earn their bachelor's or graduate degree within the 150% maximum time frame standard outlined in the Lamar University Financial Assistance Handbook. Students who have not met this requirement may be able to appeal through the Office of Student Financial Assistance at Lamar University. Please visit <http://financialaid.lamar.edu/academic-standards/index.html> to review the appeal process. Please note that students who have met all degree requirements for their first bachelor's degree will no longer qualify for financial assistance as an undergraduate student even if they have not officially applied for graduation.

FINANCIAL AID CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to help guide you through the Financial Aid Process.

_____ Complete admissions requirements.

_____ Submit Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

_____ Check Self Service Banner after 3-5 business days for required documents.

_____ Submit all required documents to Financial Assistance Office by hand delivery, mail, or fax.

_____ Resubmit paperwork with corrections if requested.

_____ Check Self Service Banner for Award Package. (Typically 7-14 days after final paperwork is submitted)

_____ Stafford Entrance Counseling and Master Promissory Note at www.studentloans.gov for loans.

_____ Get Advised and Register for Classes. (This can be completed any time after admission to Lamar)

_____ Check your Bill online to verify the amount of Financial Aid disbursed and your refund status. (Refunds are processed by the Cashier's office)

It is important to check your Lamar email and Self Service Banner Account regularly. Additional documentation may be requested after you receive an award offer, i.e. appeal letters, appeal approval forms, and student eligibility forms. Failure to turn in additional requested documents will result in delay or loss of your financial aid.

SELF SERVICE BANNER INSTRUCTIONS

Avoid the lines and check your status ONLINE!

Start at the LU Portal <https://my.wip.lamar.edu>

User Name: Your Student ID (this can be found on the front of your Cardinal One Card beginning with "L")

PIN: Birthday MMDDYY for First Time Users (remember to change your pin for security reasons once you log in)

Click the Self Service Banner link and follow the appropriate instructions below to....

View Required Documents	View Award Amounts	View Your Bill
<p>Click Financial Aid Link</p> <p>Click Eligibility Link</p> <p>Choose Appropriate Aid Year * 2013-2014 or 2014-2015</p> <p>Click Student Requirements</p>	<p>Click Financial Aid Link</p> <p>Click Award Link</p> <p>Click Award for Aid Year Link</p> <p>Choose Appropriate Aid Year * 2013-2014 or 2014-2015</p> <p>Award Overview Link *Summary of All Aid Awarded</p> <p>Award Payment Schedule *Expected Disbursement Dates</p> <p>Accept Award Offer *View Award Package Offered *Accept Awards Desired (Award types highlighted in blue have important information listed if you click the link)</p>	<p>Click Financial Aid Link</p> <p>Click the Student Link</p> <p>Click Account Summary or</p> <p>Click Account Summary by Term</p>

If you accept loans you must go to www.StudentLoans.gov and complete:

1. Stafford Loan Entrance Counseling, and
2. A Master Promissory Note

(These items can take up to 5 business days to update in Self Service Banner)

Problems logging in? Visit the Help Desk in the Cherry Bldg. Room 1640 (bring your id).
Online students call 409-880-2222.