

2023-2024

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

OFFICE OF SCHOLARSHIP AND FINANCIAL AID



MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY  
MOORHEAD®

[MNSTATE.EDU/FINANCIAL-AID](https://mnstate.edu/financial-aid)



## MISSION STATEMENT

The Office of Scholarship and Financial Aid promotes student learning, achievement, and success by meeting the needs of students: first through scholarships and grants; next through on and off campus employment; and lastly, through access to student loans.

### ***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, how to apply, and what to expect during the application process. Use this Guide in addition to financial aid information available from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid ([www.studentaid.gov](http://www.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 and utilized by the student 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. Be enrolled as a regular student in a degree program;
5. Be 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 may be 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. Pell Grant pays in full at twelve credits per semester and is prorated for student enrolled in 1-11 credits. 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.

#### ***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 with the lowest Expected Family Contribution as determined by the FAFSA. Priority is given to Pell Grant recipients. The maximum award is \$1000 for the academic year and is prorated for students enrolled in 1-11 credits.

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

Students may be eligible for the Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant if the following conditions are met:

- ▶ The student is not eligible for a Federal Pell Grant on the basis of his or her Expected Family Contribution, but
- ▶ The student meets the remaining Federal Pell Grant eligibility requirements, and
- ▶ The student's parent or guardian was a member of the U.S. armed forces and died as a result of military service performed in Iraq or Afghanistan after the events of 9/11, and
- ▶ The student was under 24 years old or enrolled in college at least part time at the time of the parent's or guardian's death.

The grant amount is equal to the amount of a maximum Federal Pell Grant for the award year, but cannot exceed the student's cost of attendance for that award year. Students complete the FAFSA annually to apply. MSUM, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education, will determine the student's eligibility. The grant is limited to students pursuing their first bachelor's degree or the equivalent of twelve full time semesters of attendance.

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

The Teacher Education Assistance for College & Higher Education (TEACH) Grant 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 Unsubsidized Direct Loan requiring repayment of the full amount plus accrued interest from date the TEACH Grant was disbursed.

### ***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 award amount. The minimum award is \$100 for the academic year for enrollment of three or more credits per semester. The award amount at each credit level will be included on the official financial aid offer of eligible students. Eligibility is limited to four years of full time attendance at a post-secondary institution. Students must submit the FAFSA prior to the 30th calendar day of the semester of enrollment each academic year. Students with child support arrears or in default on a SELF Loan are ineligible for the Minnesota State Grant.

### ***Minnesota Future Together Grant***

The Minnesota Future Together Grant, first awarded in Spring 2022, is part of Governor Walz's allocation of American Rescue Plan funds and is intended to provide eligible Minnesota residents a tuition-free pathway to earning a degree in a high-need field. The grant covers the cost of tuition and fees for eligible students after all other financial aid is calculated. Award amounts range from \$100 - \$15,400. Grants will be awarded if funds are available until the program ends in 2024.

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

The Minnesota Fostering Independence Grant is a financial aid program that 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. Students complete the FAFSA or the Minnesota Dream Act application 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 you are eligible, MSUM will award the Fostering Independence Grant as part of the official financial aid offer.

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

The Minnesota Dream Act (also known as The Prosperity Act) provides certain benefits to undocumented students who meet certain criteria. The act was introduced by Sen. Sandra Pappas and Rep. Carlos Mariani and was included in the omnibus Higher Education bill passed by the 2013 Minnesota Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Mark Dayton on May 23, 2013. Contact the Minnesota Office of Higher Education for more information (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 twelve and younger (or 14 or younger if 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 submitted annually to the Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid and awards are based on the availability of funds.

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

The 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 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 other sources. Undergraduate and graduate students are eligible to apply. Adjustments to financial aid offers may be required if a student receives scholarships or assistance from additional sources. Visit our website for more information.

#### ***University Scholarships***

University scholarships are awarded based on academic achievement or special talents. New entering freshmen, transfer students, and currently enrolled students are eligible to apply. These scholarships are funded through the MSUM Foundation and University resources. The application is available annually from October 1 – February 1.

#### ***Freshman Automatic Scholarships***

Freshman Automatic Scholarships are renewed for subsequent years for up to three years or until the student graduates, whichever comes first, if the scholarship requirements are met.

### ***Transfer Automatic Scholarships***

Transfer Automatic Scholarships are one year awards (non-renewable).

### ***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 other than MSUM; however, they are typically disbursed by MSUM. Students are required to report external scholarships to the Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid.

### ***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; their dependents; and members of the ROTC. Students must notify the MSUM Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid 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 annually by the Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid based on results of the FAFSA. Students must demonstrate financial need and, if funds are available, are allocated a specific amount of money that can be earned each semester 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 not work during scheduled class times. Students may work more than one job to earn the maximum allocation.

Work-study positions are posted through Dragon Jobs on the Career Development Center's web page ([www.mnstate.edu/dragonjobs](http://www.mnstate.edu/dragonjobs)). A Work Authorization form, available through a link in the Official Financial Aid Offer, is required to start the payroll process. Students submit bi-weekly timesheets and are paid every two weeks through direct deposit to the student's checking or savings account.

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

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

### ***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 information on available work sites.

### ***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 opt to work off campus in the Fargo-Moorhead 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 interest rates and repayment options are often more favorable. Students who elect to 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***

William D. Ford Federal Direct Loans provide Subsidized and Unsubsidized Direct Loans. Eligible students who complete a FAFSA are offered Federal Direct Loans. The money is borrowed from the U.S. government and the Department of Education, not a bank or lender. No cosigner is needed. A Subsidized Federal Direct Loan (if the student is eligible) is offered before an Unsubsidized Federal Direct Loan, when possible.



Students must be enrolled at least half time (six credits) in an eligible degree program. 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 only, and students must demonstrate financial need, as determined by the FAFSA, for eligibility. The advantage of a Federal Direct Subsidized Loan is 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. At the end of the six month grace period, repayment of principal and interest begins.

### **Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan**

Undergraduate and graduate students are eligible for the Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan. 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.

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

The Federal Direct Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS Loan) allows parents of dependent students to borrow funds for the student's educational costs. The parent is the borrower and bears full responsibility for repayment. The Federal Direct PLUS Loan Request Form is available at [www.mnstate.edu/cost-aid/financial-aid/forms/](http://www.mnstate.edu/cost-aid/financial-aid/forms/). The loan application is processed by the Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid. 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 processing a Federal Direct PLUS Loan Request. The student must be enrolled at least half time (six credits) and meet all financial aid eligibility requirements throughout the application process to receive the loan. The amount borrowed may not exceed the student's educational costs minus all other financial assistance received or estimated.

The parent borrower is required to complete the Federal PLUS Master Promissory Note at ([www.studentaid.gov](http://www.studentaid.gov)). The parent borrower's FSA ID is used to electronically sign the application. 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 the MSUM Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid 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) provides graduate students an opportunity to borrow funds for their educational costs. The Federal Direct PLUS Loan Request Form is available at ([www.mnstate.edu/cost-aid/financial-aid/forms/](http://www.mnstate.edu/cost-aid/financial-aid/forms/)). The loan application is processed by the Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid. 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 processing a Federal Direct PLUS Loan Request. The student must be enrolled at least half time (six credits) 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 student is required to complete the Federal PLUS Master Promissory Note at [www.studentaid.gov](http://www.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 table below 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 different from the first may 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

There are several loan repayment options. The terms and conditions are based on when the student first borrowed. Estimate the monthly payments and borrow only what is needed. Borrowing from more than one lender will create multiple monthly repayment obligations.

The table below 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 amount borrowed. Contact your loan servicer for additional information.

<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, but 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 attending MSUM. 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 his or her 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 University charges (documentation of need may be required).

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

The Minnesota Student Educational Loan Fund (SELF Loan), one of the private loans, is administered by the State of Minnesota. The application is available to Minnesota residents or non-Minnesota resident students attending eligible institutions in Minnesota. Undergraduate, graduates, and students with a bachelor's degree who are pursuing a second major are eligible to borrow through the SELF Loan program. Students must be enrolled in an eligible degree program and making satisfactory academic progress. A credit-worthy co-signer is required for the SELF Loan. 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 Loan program. A federal loan default adversely affects SELF Loan eligibility.

Annual and cumulative loan limits are set by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education. The cumulative borrowing for students in an undergraduate or graduate program is \$140,000.

Students must receive an Official Financial Aid Offer from MSUM prior to applying for the SELF Loan, then complete SELF Entrance Loan Counseling online followed by the SELF Loan application. If the student will not or cannot complete the FAFSA, contact the Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid before starting the SELF application.

SELF Loan applicants have the option of a fixed or variable interest rate. Quarterly interest payments are required while enrolled. After leaving school, monthly "interest only payments" are required for the first year. Principal and interest payments begin the second year. An alternative repayment plan allows for payment of interest only for two years and principal and interest beginning in the third year. Using this extension of "interest only payments" does not extend the total repayment period. There are limited deferments offered on the SELF Loan. Additional information is available at ([www.selfloan.state.mn.us](http://www.selfloan.state.mn.us)).

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

### ***Application***

The FAFSA is an annual application available at [www.FAFSA.gov](http://www.FAFSA.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, if dependent, one parent, will need a Federal Student Aid Identification (FSA ID) to identify themselves electronically and access Federal Student Aid websites, including the FAFSA. Students and parents can create the FSA ID at [www.studentaid.gov/FSA-ID/create-account/launch](http://www.studentaid.gov/FSA-ID/create-account/launch).

### ***Verification and Documentation***

Students may be selected for verification of FAFSA information. These students are required to submit documentation to confirm items reported on the FAFSA. Documentation may include a signed copy of IRS Form 1040 (including Schedules) or a Tax Return Transcript from the IRS, W-2s, and a signed statement with the student's household size and number of family members in college information. The student and/or parents may be able to utilize the IRS Data Retrieval Tool within the FAFSA application to electronically transfer IRS Form 1040 data from the IRS to the FAFSA and fulfill some verification requirements.

Students are encouraged to respond to requests within two weeks. 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 fall semester (with prior approval). Failure to submit required documentation once taxes are complete may result in cancellation of previous and future financial aid disbursements.

### ***Dependent and Independent Status***

Students who do not meet one of a limited number of criteria are considered dependent for financial aid purposes and must submit financial information on the FAFSA for themselves and parents (including stepparents). The IRS and U.S. Department of Education use different definitions of a "dependent," so tax exemption status, tax filing status, and financial resources are not considered when determining a student's financial aid independent status. 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.

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 military for purposes other than training
- ▶ Veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces
- ▶ Have a child or dependent other than a spouse who lives with the student and receives more than half of their support from the student at the time FAFSA submitted through June 30 of the award year
- ▶ Orphan, in foster care, or a ward of the court at any time since the age of 13
- ▶ An emancipated minor as determined by a court in the student's state of legal residence
- ▶ Someone other than a parent or stepparent has legal guardianship as determined by a court in the student's state of legal residence
- ▶ Student's high school or school district liaison determined the student was an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or was self-supporting and at risk of being homeless at any time on or after July 1 of the processing year
- ▶ The director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development determined the student was an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or was self-supporting and at risk of being homeless at any time on or after July 1 of the processing year
- ▶ The director of a runaway or homeless youth basic care center or transitional living program determined the student was an unaccompanied youth who was homeless or was self-supporting and at risk of being homeless at any time on or after July 1 of the processing year

### ***Expected Family Contribution***

When meeting the financial costs for college, the major responsibility rests with the student and his or her family. The Expected Family Contribution (EFC) is an assessment of the student's ability to pay based on information provided on the FAFSA. The EFC is determined by the Federal Needs Analysis Methodology formula. The formula reviews income, taxes paid, family size, number in college, and assets. Allowances for taxes paid, Social Security, and moderate family living costs are deducted from income and the remaining available income is then assessed to determine the amount available to assist with school costs. A dependent student's EFC is based on student and parent information. An independent student's EFC is based on student and spouse information (if married).

### ***Cost of Attendance***

The Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid establishes an average Cost of Attendance (COA), or budget that includes the estimated cost of tuition and fees, books and supplies, personal and incidental costs, room and board, and transportation. Personal and incidental expenses include such things as laundry, personal care items, loan fees, and entertainment. Students living with parents have a reduced budget compared to students who live on- or off-campus.

Some students have special circumstances affecting the cost of education. Examples of special circumstances 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 the Office of Scholarship & Financial aid for more information.

### **Financial Need**

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

$$\text{Cost of Attendance} - \text{Expected Family Contribution} = \text{Financial Need}$$

The Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid will meet as much of a student's documented financial need as possible, pending funding and eligibility requirements. Not all financial need will be met.

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

Students receive an email at 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 anticipated full time enrollment. Undergraduate full time 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, expected family contribution, 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 lesser amount, or decline the entire Federal Direct Loan. Declined Federal Direct Loans may be reinstated by contacting the Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid. Loans not accepted by the student and certified by MSUM 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 the Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid within 14 calendar days after disbursement. The signed and dated request must include the borrower's name and Dragon ID or STAR ID number, 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.

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 ([www.studentaid.gov](http://www.studentaid.gov)). Transfer students are encouraged to complete loan counseling even if it was completed at a previous school. An in-person loan counseling session may be scheduled with the Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid for those unable to complete the session online. Loans are not released until Loan Counseling is complete. This applies to only the first Federal Direct Loan disbursed.

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

### ***Master Promissory Note***

Students borrowing through the Federal Direct Loan program are also required to complete the Master Promissory Note at ([www.studentaid.gov](http://www.studentaid.gov)). Loans are not released until the Master Promissory Note is complete. The Master Promissory Note is valid for up to 10 years. A paper Master Promissory Note will be provided to those unable to use the electronic 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 prohibit receiving financial assistance that exceeds the cost of attending MSUM. If a student receives additional assistance, a portion of the financial aid offer may be reduced or cancelled. When available, other resources such as State Veterans benefits, Division of Rehabilitation Services assistance, Resident Assistant compensation, or housing and tuition waivers meet a portion of the educational costs and aid is adjusted accordingly. If the 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 already received. Students are encouraged to keep a copy of the original Official Financial Aid Offer and notify MSUM 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 and 8+ credits per semester for graduate students. Students are not required to be enrolled full time to receive financial aid. Financial aid programs may prorate awards at specific credit levels or on a credit-by-credit basis. Proration may also reduce eligibility to zero.

The Pell Grant and FSEOG are prorated when enrollment is less than twelve credits. Payments are 75% of the award for 9-11 credits, 50% for 6-8 credits, and 25% for 1-5 credits. Pell Grant payments are based on enrollment on the 22nd calendar day of the semester. Federal Direct Loan eligibility is eliminated if the student is enrolled for less than six credits.



## **Billing**

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

Students view and print tuition & fee statements 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 filing the FAFSA and have results submitted to MSUM, 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 MSUM bill. Prior to charging, students must 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 typically offered for the academic year and disbursed equally across semesters. The default loan period is fall and spring semesters. Financial aid disburses each semester after the five day drop/add period, but no more than ten days prior to the student's earliest course start date. Financial aid (Pell Grant, FSEOG, Minnesota State Grant, TEACH Grant, most loans, and scholarships) is applied directly for tuition, fees, room and board charges, and bookstore charges. Disbursements are based on actual registered credits at that time or the date funds are released.

Once financial aid is applied to the student's balance, 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 funds. Disbursement schedules may be altered if applications are submitted later in the semester or attendance is for a portion of the year.

Students are responsible to pay for all registered classes. 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/).

If a student is registered and decides not to attend MSUM, the student must drop all registered credits prior to the end of the drop/add period to avoid charges.

## **Tuition Rates**

Beginning Fall 2023, the tuition rate for all undergraduate degree-seeking students will be the same as Minnesota residents. See Business Services for more information.

## **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 MSUM degree requirements. No additional paperwork is required. Students apply for and receive financial aid offers from MSUM and financial aid is applied to the student's bill at MSUM. Any remaining funds are disbursed to the student. 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, it is the student's responsibility 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” and allow the student to receive most forms of financial aid for those courses. A consortium agreement must be submitted to the Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid a minimum of one month prior to the semester start date. Students are responsible for obtaining a transcript with final grades and credits to validate disbursements.

### ***Study Abroad***

Many study abroad programs qualify for financial aid. 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. A consortium agreement may be required. Students are required to document their semester start date and number of registered credits prior to financial aid disbursement. Contact the Center for Global Engagement or the Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid 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. Financial aid is available for tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, travel, and personal expenses. Many schools have the option of paying MSUM tuition and receiving financial aid at MSUM (Plan B) or paying the host school's tuition and applying for and receiving financial aid at the host school (Plan A). 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 at least 15 days

- ▶ 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 less than 15 days

- ▶ 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 (R2T4) 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. Any eligible refund dollars 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, TEACH Grant, and Iraq and Afghanistan Service 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 will result in a hold on diplomas, future registration, and/or release of official transcripts.

## Exceptions

- ▶ 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).
- ▶ Student repayment of grant funds will be reduced by 50% after the 'unearned' calculation is determined and the University's repayment amount is subtracted.

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

- ▶ If the calculation made according to 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 who elect to appeal the refund policies and/or percentages used for determining the refund amounts may file a Tuition Refund Appeal. No refunds will be granted for less than \$1.00.

If withdrawing for military reasons, please see the University Military Withdrawal Policy and contact the Registrar's Office at 218.477.2565 for more 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 Housing refund. Contact Housing and Residential Life at 218.477.2118 for more information.

## **Refundable Drops**

In the event a student has received financial aid, then drops a class and receives a refund, financial aid may be adjusted if total enrolled credits decreases. Students may be required to repay financial aid previously received.

## **Last Day of Attendance**

The Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid reviews financial aid eligibility for 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” after aid is received, a repayment may be owed.

## **Summer Financial Aid**

Summer is considered a third semester in the academic year. Funding may be available through the Pell Grant, Minnesota State Grant, federal or state work-study, Federal Direct Loans, and private educational loans. Eligibility is determined by the FAFSA used in the previous fall and spring semesters. A separate application is not required. Official Summer Financial Aid Offers are posted to eServices.

All 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 not maintaining satisfactory academic progress at the end of the previous spring semester 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 have summer offered. Financial aid may be cancelled if a student’s financial aid is suspended.

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 Pell Grant**

Eligibility for summer Pell Grant is limited to the unused remainder 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**

Summer work-study funds are limited and awarded on a “first-applied” basis. Students enrolled fall and spring semesters who were ineligible for work-study are usually eligible for work-study in the summer if registered for at least six summer credits.

### **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).

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

Once students complete their first bachelor’s degree, they are no longer eligible for Pell Grant, FSEOG, Minnesota State Grant, Minnesota Future Together Grant, and the Minnesota Fostering Independence Grant.

Students pursuing an approved graduate licensure, a second bachelor’s degree different from one previously earned, some certificate programs, and those taking prerequisite courses for admission to a graduate program may be eligible for limited financial aid. These students must submit the Degree Certification form available on the Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid web page. If approved, funding may be available through the Federal Direct Subsidized or Unsubsidized Loan program, PLUS Loan, SELF Loan, or private loan programs, or federal or state work-study.

Students pursuing additional majors or minors may be eligible for SELF Loan or other private loans.

## **Graduate Student Aid**

Graduate students must be admitted as a graduate degree-seeking candidate in an eligible graduate program to be considered for graduate-level funding. Financial aid budgets for graduate students are based on 20 credits per year (ten credits per semester of enrollment in graduate-level courses). Undergraduate courses usually do not count. Full time for graduate students is eight credits per semester and half time is six credits.

Graduate students may be eligible for Federal or State Work-Study, the Minnesota Post-Secondary Child Care Grant, Federal Unsubsidized Direct Loans, PLUS Loan for Graduate Students, or private educational loans.

All graduate students must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress.

Students in loan repayment are encouraged to contact their loan servicer regarding in-school deferment of loan payments.

### **Graduate Assistantships**

Graduate assistantships provide real-world experience in the student’s academic discipline, help meet graduate school expenses, 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 the Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid. 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)).

## Special Conditions Appeal

The Special Conditions Appeal is an optional form for students whose financial circumstances have changed since the FAFSA was submitted. Appeals require supporting documentation, a signed statement explaining the special circumstances, supporting documentation and what action the student would like to see taken. The Special Conditions Appeal form is available on the Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid web page. Examples of special conditions include:

- ▶ Expenses incurred and/or economic hardship as a result of COVID-19
- ▶ Involuntary loss or significant reduction of income and/or benefits
- ▶ Significant medical or dental expenses not covered by insurance for family members in the FAFSA household
- ▶ One-time income received
- ▶ Death of a parent or spouse
- ▶ Divorce or separation of parent or student after the FAFSA was filed
- ▶ Additional family member in college
- ▶ Exceptional expenses

## 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 & Taxes**

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

A 1986 tax law requires that students pay taxes on grant and scholarship aid that is not directly used to pay tuition, fees, books, and supply costs. This includes Federal Pell Grants but not student loans. Save receipts and document all school costs including tuition, fees, books, and required equipment and supplies. IRS Form 1098-T displays allowable tuition and fee charges and grant/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. Contact a tax preparer for more information.

## **Release of Student Information**

MSUM asks that students complete the Release of Student Information (ROSI) online. 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 specifically authorizes release. The Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid 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.

### ***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 must provide a Social Security number to apply for Federal Student Aid, as authorized by Sections 483 and 484 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. The Social Security number is used to record information about your college attendance and progress and to ensure that student their receive your money appropriately.

## ***Rights and Responsibilities***

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

You 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.
- ▶ Access to your financial aid file. The information in that file and the amount of aid awarded is considered confidential, not to be released by the University or others except with your written authorization.
- ▶ Request review of your aid eligibility at any time.
- ▶ Receive complete confidentiality regarding your financial aid and the use of the application data.
- ▶ Information on the aid packaging procedures used by the University.
- ▶ Accept all or any portion of your financial aid offer, but 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. You have the right to reapply for aid for the subsequent year. 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. Contact the Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid Office for cancellation procedures beyond that date.

You have the responsibility to:

- ▶ Regularly read and respond to emails sent to your @go.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 your education through employment and personal resources.
- ▶ Notify the Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid if you:
  - ▷ Receive a loan, grant, scholarship, or other aid that is not included on your Official Financial Aid Offer; or
  - ▷ Change your 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 you 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 you are no longer enrolled on at least a half time basis.
- ▶ Repay private educational loans under the terms of your promissory note.

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

Email is the official means of university business communication. The Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid uses email to notify students of requests for information and notification of financial aid eligibility. Email communication to students will be sent to the mnstate.edu address. Students are expected to receive, read, and act in a timely manner.

### **Student Loan Records**

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

- ▶ Create online access once notified of the loan servicer.
- ▶ Keep copies of loan applications, promissory notes, disclosure statements, and correspondence to and from the loan servicer in one place.
- ▶ 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.

### **Federal Student Aid Ombudsman Group**

Contact the U.S. Department of Education's Federal Student Aid Ombudsman Group as a last resort for resolution of federal student aid program disputes. The Ombudsman does not mandate action, but facilitates resolution. Students can submit a case through the Federal Student Aid Feedback Center, or contact the Ombudsman by mail, phone, or fax.



Mail: U.S. Department of Education  
FSA Ombudsman Group  
P.O. Box 1843  
Monticello, KY 42633

Phone: 1.877.557.2575

Fax: 606.396.4821

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

The Office of Scholarship & Financial Aid 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 \$20,000 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 have 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 an approved study abroad program. 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 mandates all employers employ only U.S. citizens or nationals and lawfully authorized alien workers. 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 at 218.477.2223 for more information.

### **Accreditation**

MSUM's accrediting and licensing organizations are included in the Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletins available at [www.mnstate.edu/registrar/catalogs/](http://www.mnstate.edu/registrar/catalogs/). 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 at 218.477.2211 for more information.

**Job Placement**

Contact the Career Development Center at 218.477.2131 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 <https://www.mnstate.edu/student-life/public-safety/campus-reports/>.

**American's with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended**

This office does not discriminate based on disability, as mandated by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Publications distributed by this office are available in an alternate format upon request. Contact the Accessibility Resources at 218.477.2167 for more information.



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

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