

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

Financial Aid Packaging Philosophy and Awarding Overview

Mission Statement

The Offices of Student Financial Services' (SFS) mission is to keep student success central while providing the highest level of service, and equal opportunity in the awarding of funds at all WSU campuses. We increase opportunities for access and affordability by providing accurate financial information, and individualized guidance and support for students and families in an environment which embraces teamwork and collaborative partnership.

Institutional Packaging Philosophy

The packaging philosophy in SFS is to ensure consistent, equitable, and fair distribution of financial aid funds.

Institutional Packaging Procedures

The packaging of financial aid is to consider Federal Pell Grant first, other grants and/or scholarships second, and the campus-based aid Federal Direct Subsidized, Federal Direct Unsubsidized, Additional Federal Direct Unsubsidized, and Federal Direct PLUS) third. The various types of financial assistance listed above are considered in a manner that the student's cost of attendance (COA) is met (tuition & fees, housing & food, board, books & supplies, transportation, and miscellaneous components).

Federal Pell Grant eligibility is determined by the Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA). On-time filing dates do not apply to this funding source along with Federal Loans. Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) is awarded to students who meet priority filing dates and demonstrate exceptional need. Resident students who are Federal Pell Grant eligible are awarded the minimum \$100 match per term. Non-Resident students who have a Student Aid Index of 0- 14,000 are awarded a flat dollar amount based on available allocation of funding.

The Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA) is for students who don't file a federal FAFSA application. A Washington State resident should complete the WASFA if they are undocumented or do not qualify for federal financial aid because of immigration status. Through this application, students are only considered for state aid. If a student is unsure if they should complete the FAFSA or WASFA, they can complete the [WASFA Eligibility Questionnaire](#).

Washington State Grant funding is designated for Washington State Resident, Undergraduate Students and need eligibility is determined by WSAC through Median Family Income levels. On-Time deadlines do not apply to these State Aid awarding programs.

Institutional Grant and Cougar Commitment Grant are funds designated for Resident, Undergraduate, first-degree seeking students. Funding is allocated based off student's meeting on time filing dates, Pell Eligibility, Washington College Grant Eligibility, and or SAI range.

WSU is allocated Work Study funds for State Work Study and Federal Work Study. The split of Work Study earnings is 60% covered by the Work Study program and 40% is covered by the employer. Work Study is not included in financial aid offers as to be awarded Work Study, aside from meeting need eligibility, students must have a Work Study appointment through an Employer Work Study Authorization process approved by SFS. Work Study is awarded after federal, state, and institutional grants and before subsidized loan. For more details about Work Study [here](#) is more information.

WSU awards the following Health Profession Loans (HPL), but these are not included in automated packaging as allocations vary from year to year. HPL loans are Vet Med, Pharmacy and Nursing. These loans are administered by the institution with promissory note and entrance loan counseling coordinated through Heartland ECSI Loan Servicing Department. For more details on eligibility for these loans, click [here](#).

Federal and State Academic Progress (SAP) rules are followed per federal and state regulations governing this process. For institutional financial aid sources, Federal SAP rules are followed in determining eligibility. For further details regarding SAP policies, click [here](#).

Students typically are packaged for a full academic year based on terms of their enrollment, which is typically fall and spring semester. Medical Students are packaged with a different academic structure of three terms based on their program. Students entering spring semester are packaged for the spring term. Students initially packaged for the full year and subsequently apply to graduate in the fall, will have their financial aid offer adjusted to a fall only package. Students are packaged based on their actual weeks of enrollment in the term. Summer term is a separate packaging term. Prior to each term, students cost-of-attendance budgets and financial aid offers are validated based off credits of enrollment and weeks of enrollment.

Financial aid Funds are awarded in a sequential order based on source and need. Consideration is in the following order: Federal Grants, State Grants, Institutional Grants, Work Study, Federal Direct Subsidized Loan, Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan, Direct Plus Loans, Direct Grad Plus Loans.

On Time filing dates and eligibility for funding sources

Description	Source	On Time Filing Dates Apply
Pell Grant	Federal	No
Federal SEOG Grant	Federal	Yes
Washington State Need Grant	State	No
Washington College Bound Sch	State	No
Washington Bridge Grant	State	No
Institutional Grant	Institutional	Yes
Cougar Commitment Grant	Institutional	Yes
Subsidized Direct Loan	Federal	No
Unsubsidized Direct Loan	Federal	No
Parent Plus Loan	Federal	No

Students are automatically packaged financial aid from designated packaging plans by criteria set up using the Financial Aid Module in PeopleSoft called myWSU. Students can view their financial aid from the Student Homepage where they will see the tile Financial Aid. Grants and scholarships do not need to be accepted. Federal Direct Student Loans are awarded as offered and the student must take action by [accepting](#) these funds through their myWSU portal. If a parent wishes to apply for a Direct Parent Plus Loan, the application process is initiated with SFS, instructions can be found [here](#).

If a student has aid other than Title IV Aid and State Aid Student Assistance, it is applied and evaluated to determine if any adjustments to other aid are needed per federal, state, and institutional awarding rules. Students will be sent an email notification if any adjustments are made to their financial aid offer throughout the award year. Common reasons why a student's financial aid offer may change are the following:

- Other Financial Assistance (OFA) Resource(s) awarded.
- Residency Change
- Term change
- Student Need Change based on Student Aid Index
- Academic Program Change
- Enrollment change

Educational Costs

A student's budget as established at Washington State University will consist of the following expenses:

- Tuition – Direct Cost
- Mandatory Fees – Direct Cost
- Housing & Food – Estimated Indirect Cost
- Books & Supplies – Estimated Indirect Cost
- Miscellaneous Expenses – Estimated Indirect Cost
- Transportation-Estimated Indirect Cost

Additional costs that may be included are the following:

- Average Loan Fees – automatically included if a student has been offered loans.
- Cost of License, Certification or First Professional Credential – automatically included if student's program requires this.

Students living at home, not paying rent will have their Housing & Food cost cut in half in their cost-of-attendance budget.

Additional Costs that can be considered through a [Revision Request Form](#) are the following:

Additional Cost Description

Automotive Repair	The maximum budget may be increased to is \$3,500 for the year or \$2,000 for the semester. Cost must be more than \$767/sem to qualify.
Dependent Care Costs	Students with dependents listed on the FAFSA incurring childcare expenses

Grade Level Change	Students with a class standing change after receiving a Financial Aid Offer, may have an adjustment made to their student loan(s).
Rent	Cost must be more than \$900/month. Utilities, phone bills, and cable costs are not considered.
Graduate Student confirming will remain in less than fulltime	Adjustment will be made with a projection of the same enrollment for spring to ensure no overaward.
Special Fees	Common fees are Winter Session Tuition, Medical Insurance, enrolled in additional credits charged beyond fulltime tuition, Books and Supplies exceeding budgeted amount.
Transportation	Commuting to and from campus; cost must exceed budgeted amount.
Travel	If travel is considered mandatory for all students in the class.
Work-Study award to Loan	If awarded Work Study funds and not earning funds, a student can request to have award replaced with remaining loan eligibility
Disability Related Expenses	Expenses may be special services, personal assistance, transportation, equipment and supplies that are incurred and not provide for by other resources/agencies.
Computer Purchase	One-Time computer purchase for educational purposes.

Students are budgeted based on their projected terms of enrollment which typically is for the full academic year. Exceptions may be students with only one active academic term such as a fall only or spring only due to finalized enrollment for that term. Prior to the first scheduled disbursement of aid for the term, the estimated cost-of-attendance budget will be revalidated based on the student's actual credits and weeks of enrollment for the term. Based on any changes, the student's Financial Aid Offer is also revalidated. Estimated Cost-of-Attendance Budgets and additional details can be found [here](#).

Outside Resources

Students are encouraged to seek assistance from outside resources. It is required that all outside assistance be [reported](#) to Student Financial Services. As noted earlier, financial aid, including outside resources, may not exceed the student's cost of attendance. Therefore, if a student has been awarded by SFS and receives outside funds, an adjustment to the original financial aid offer notification may be necessary. If an adjustment is necessary, SFS will first reduce or cancel all loans until the overaward no longer exists. If the overaward still exists, Work-Study is reduced or cancelled to eliminate the overaward.

Rules on the Treatment of Other Financial Assistance (OFA)

Resources provided beyond federal, state, institutional financial aid and scholarships, grants, and net earnings from need-based employment or loans are considered educational benefits provided because of enrollment as a student at WSU. These benefits are counted in a student's financial aid eligibility. Gift cards and prizes awarded to a student based on their enrollment status are also considered OFA and must be reported to Student Financial Services. All resources provided to the student must be reported to Student Financial Services to assess and determine how such funding should be accounted for and processed if awarded by the institution.

Short term emergency loans and earnings from work that are not based upon financial need are specifically excluded from consideration as OFA.

Accounting for Other Financial Assistance That Does Not Disburse through SFS

Funding sources that are considered OFA and do not disburse through SFS are accounted for as "Placeholder" funds on a student's financial aid account. If funds are disbursed directly by the Bursar's Office, SFS will receive notification from Bursar's Office to account for these funds. SFS projects the same amount of funding will be applied to spring term to assist with ensuring no future over award. If a student is not receiving funds for a future term, they can [contact SFS](#) and the projected funding will be removed. Common funding sources accounted for this way are Departmental guarantees such as Fellowships or Assistantships, and Outside Third Party Guarantees such as State Veterans Waivers, Employer reimbursement of employee's tuition and Vocational Rehab Guarantees.

Resolving "Overawarded" Students

When a student is receiving federal or state financial aid, and/or institutional need-based aid, all outside resources must be evaluated to ensure that:

- The resource is not considered to be a countable resource by financial aid regulations, OR
- The resource fits within the established budget for the student; OR
- The resource is designated for educational costs not already included in the budget and these costs are documented by an appropriate administrator in the awarding unit. Student Financial Services may then allow the cost-of-attendance to be increased to allow the additional expenses.

Resources Not Considered OFA

Prepaid tuition plans are not considered OFA but are reported as an asset on the FAFSA. Federal Veterans Education Benefits for the purposes of Title IV Student Assistance Programs are not considered OFA and the list can be found [here](#).

Award Notification and Acceptance of Awards

Students receive notice of financial aid offered via an email notification. Students must login to [myWSU](#) to view their offer and accept or decline their loans. As noted earlier, a student's financial aid offer may change throughout the award year and if this is the case, the student will

receive an email notification from SFS of a change and to view changes, the student will view their financial aid offer through their myWSU account.

Summer Aid

Summer term is considered a “trailer” to the academic year. Students may be eligible for remaining Pell Grant and Washington State Aid based on yearly aggregate limits. Beyond having a current FAFSA/WASFA on file from the previous academic year, students do not need to complete a supplemental application. If students have remaining aid eligibility and are registered in a minimum of ½ time for summer term, they will be packaged with financial aid.

Special Circumstances

If a student’s FAFSA or WASFA does not accurately reflect their family’s current financial situation or budget expenses, a Special Circumstances appeal may be submitted for review and consideration. For further details on this process, additional information can be found [here](#).

Consortium Agreements/Exchange Student

A student may receive Title IV aid if he/she is taking coursework at two or more schools, if the participating institutions enter into a consortium agreement. A consortium agreement specifies which institution will process and disburse student aid. The agreement also should stipulate which institution will consider the student enrolled. Whichever institution disbursed aid funds is responsible for keeping records and returning Title IV funds in the case of an over award.

International Students

International students are not eligible for federal or state financial aid because they do not meet the citizenship requirement. International students may receive non-federal aid and are encouraged to apply for such aid. International students seeking assistance are referred to the [Office of International Programs](#).

Financial Aid Offers & Disbursements

A confirmation of the financial aid awarded to each student is provided in a Financial Aid Offer Notification emailed by the Office of Student Financial Services. Financial Aid Offers are emailed during the spring and summer preceding the fall enrollment term. For details regarding a Financial Aid Offer, click [here](#).

The Financial Aid Offer will contain data on student budgets, student aid index, award categories and Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students must login to [myWSU](#) to view their offer and accept or decline their loans.

Financial aid Offers are usually made on an annual basis. The annual award is divided into two equal installments which are posted to the student's account by the Bursar’s Office during the Fall and Spring Terms. Disbursements of financial aid are scheduled by term with the first scheduled disbursement to occur 1 week prior to the start of the term. Financial Aid authorization and disbursement occurs Thursday evening through Sunday evening with the exception of WSU holiday periods. Funds disburse to the student’s account and apply toward

direct charges such as tuition, mandatory fees and housing and dining. If there is remaining funding left after all direct charges are paid, a refund via check or direct deposit occurs. More information on this process can be found [here](#)

Student Financial Services' goals in packaging financial aid are to provide accurate and timely Financial Aid Offers to students so they have the information needed to prepare for funding their financial education.

Financial Education & Default Management Resources

WSU's financial education program, [Cougar Money Matters](#), offers both in-person and online resources for students regarding budgeting, student loan debt, credit, investments, retirement, major purchases, and many other topics.

When students receive notice of their financial aid offered, they are provided specific information and links to loans. Students also are provided a link from their myWSU portal to a real time Lifetime Aid Summary page that provides them with summary information on debt, including what they have borrowed, the percentage of student loan and percentage of remaining eligibility.

WSU partners with [Student Connections](#) to provide default management outreach services. Students entering repayment receive a communication from Student Financial Services introducing them to student Connections and their resources.

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