



CSU, FULLERTON FINANCIAL AID TIP SHEET

What is Financial Aid?

Financial aid is available to remove the cost barriers that may prevent a student from pursuing their educational goals. Assistance is available from a variety of programs funded by federal, state, university and private sources. Students who demonstrate significant financial need may qualify for grant aid while students with less need may obtain low cost loans. Financial need is determined through a federal formula that assesses the family's relative financial strength and ability to contribute to meeting the student's educational costs.

There are three general categories of financial aid:

- Grants and scholarship (free \$)
- Loans (\$ to be repaid)
- Employment opportunities (\$ to be earned)

How Does a student apply?

STEP 1: Complete an Application

The first step in applying for financial aid is to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). From this single application, the student will be considered for both federal and state aid (to be considered for a Cal Grant a GPA Verification form must be submitted to the California Student Aid Commission).

Apply for a Federal PIN at www.pin.ed.gov. Dependent students should also have their parent apply for a Federal PIN. The PIN will allow the family to sign the application electronically and they will be able to make corrections and track their FAFSA online. They can apply for the PIN any time so it's available when they are ready to complete the FAFSA online.

They should check out the "Before beginning a FAFSA" section of the federal website. The FAFSA on the Web Worksheet will help the student know what documents to gather to make the FAFSA on the web experience quick and painless.

The priority filing period is January 1 – March 2 for the following academic year. If the March 2 deadline is missed, a student may miss out on certain types of financial aid including Cal Grants; however, Federal Pell Grants and Federal Stafford Loans may be available even if the FAFSA is filed late.

STEP 2: Check Application Status Regularly

Within two to four weeks of submitting the FAFSA to the federal processor, the U.S. Department of Education will send the student an electronic or paper Student Aid Report (SAR). The SAR contains important information for the student to review. They should read it carefully and follow-up on any missing or conflicting information.

When CSUF receives FAFSA records from the federal processor, we send the student an e-mail acknowledgment using the campus assigned email account. We direct the student to TITAN Online to check their application status. Students log into TITAN Online with your Campus Wide ID and PIN and follow the instructions to complete the application process.

STEP 3: Submit Required Documents (if any)

The Office of Financial Aid may request documentation from the student and/or their parents to verify income or other application information. They can access TITAN Online to download the required forms.

If they have any difficulty downloading or printing the forms, they can call or visit the office and we will be happy to print the forms for them.

Encourage students to follow all instructions provided to ensure the documents they submit are complete and acceptable. Incomplete documents will be returned and financial aid award delayed.

STEP 4: Eligibility is Determined

Once the file is complete and we confirm the student's eligibility, we will "package" their financial aid.

How Can a Student Verify CSUF Received Their FAFSA?

They should watch for an e-mail from the Office of Financial Aid acknowledging receipt of their FAFSA. From the e-mail, they will be directed to TITAN Online where they can obtain specific information about their financial aid status.

Use the campus-assigned e-mail account for all campus communications. They should check their e-mail and TITAN Online frequently—at least once a week—to monitor their status and stay informed about their aid awards.

Will They Need To Fill Out Anything Else?

They may need to submit additional information or documentation so that we may verify their eligibility for financial aid. If we need anything from the student, we will send them an e-mail to advise them of any documents required for their file. To obtain the forms needed, they log into TITAN Online with their campus ID and PIN and download the forms. They should respond quickly to any request for information or documents. We will not be able to award financial aid until they satisfy all requests for documentation.

They should not send us tax returns or other documents unless they are requested. ***Unsolicited documents create a processing backlog and result in delays for the student.***

Enter the campus-wide ID (CWID) on the top of every document submitted and be sure all documents are complete and signed **according to the instructions provided** on each form. Incomplete and unsigned documents will be returned and awarding delayed.

When Will They Receive a Award Notification?

We will begin sending award notifications in late March for the 2007-2008 academic year. The student must be officially admitted to Cal State Fullerton before we will award them. If tax returns or other documents were required, they should receive an award notification within six weeks from the time they complete their file. We will send them an e-mail directing them to TITAN Online to view their award.

When Financial Aid pay the student's fees (tuition)?

If the student is awarded enough aid to cover their registration fees in full, at the time they register for classes they will not be required to make a out-of-pocket payment . Their registration fees will be deducted from their disbursement and any remaining balance sent to them by check or direct deposit.

What If the Student Doesn't Qualify For Need-Based Aid?

We recommend that they submit a FAFSA each year to determine their eligibility for financial aid. If the student is not eligible for need-based aid, we encourage them to explore the following programs:

- Scholarships
- Student Assistant Employment
- Unsubsidized Stafford Loan/PLUS loan
- Private Loan Sources

Who should I call if I have more financial aid questions?

Usually the Financial Aid Office at your institution can answer most questions, but CSUF specific questions can be directed to the Office of Financial Aid, CSU, Fullerton by calling (714) 278.3128.