

2001-03 Undergraduate Catalog

Financial Aid

Office of Student Financial Aid
231 Administration Building, 372-2651
www.bgsu.edu/offices/sfa
email: sfa@bgsu.edu

Financial aid, which includes scholarships, grants, loans and work opportunities, is coordinated by the Office of Student Financial Aid (SFA). Detailed information about individual programs as well as financial aid counseling is available on a walk-in basis. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The most up-to-date financial aid information is available on our Web site at the address above.

Application, awarding and disbursement

To apply for need-based financial aid, the student and family must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Because funds are offered on a first-applied, first-considered basis, the FAFSA should be filed as soon as possible after Jan. 1 for the following academic year. BGSU's standard academic year consists of fall and spring semesters. Generally, the summer session is optional. Students interested in financial aid for summer school should contact SFA.

Need-based financial aid programs are based on the philosophy that the primary responsibility for a student's educational expenses belongs to the student and the student's family. The ability to contribute toward educational costs is determined from information provided on the FAFSA. FAFSA data are analyzed using a federally-mandated formula that considers income, assets, taxes paid, household size and the number of family members in college. The resulting Expected Family Contribution (EFC) is subtracted from the cost of education. The cost of education includes both direct costs (instructional and general fees, on-campus room and meal charges, and the non-resident fee, when applicable) and indirect costs (books and supplies, transportation costs, personal expenses, and off-campus room and meal costs). The cost of education budget used is comprised of average costs; actual costs may be different from student to student. Examples of cost of education budgets are available from SFA.

When the student's EFC is less than the cost of education, SFA attempts to make up the difference by providing financial aid from federal, state, institutional and private sources. A financial aid package consisting of grants, scholarships, loans and/or work study is determined. It is not uncommon for some students to have remaining financial need that cannot be met through this process.

Approximately 30% of FAFSA filers are selected for the verification process by the federal processor. Verification is the process by which SFA confirms the accuracy of the information reported on the FAFSA.

Applicants selected for verification must supply to SFA additional information and copies of documents by the stated deadline.

Students will receive a "Notification of Financial Aid Eligibility" (award letter) informing them about the financial aid they may receive. Award letters are mailed in March and continue throughout the award year. The types and amounts of financial aid offered to a student are limited by regulatory maximums, academic class status (freshman, sophomore, etc.), grade point average, fund availability, enrollment status (full- or part-time) and level of need. A student's financial aid package may change as a result of new application data, the verification process, changes in enrollment status or office error.

With the exception of Federal Work Study, most financial aid processed by SFA is automatically disbursed to the student's bursar account. Prior to the beginning of the fall and spring semesters, any confirmed financial aid is listed as a *deferral* (estimated payment) against University charges. The student is then asked either to pay the balance of the charges or make payment arrangements with the Office of the Bursar (see Fees and Charges, p. 24).

When the semester begins, deferred aid is changed to *disbursed aid* on the student's bursar account, provided the student has registered for the appropriate number of credit hours and has met individual program requirements. Federal financial aid is used first to pay University housing and meals, instructional, general, non-resident and special course fees. If the disbursement of financial aid exceeds these charges, the

student may authorize the bursar's office to apply the balance of his or her aid toward other miscellaneous charges. If disbursement of aid is more than enough to pay bursar account charges, the student can obtain a check in the amount of the credit balance from the Office of the Bursar following the start of classes.

Rights of a financial aid recipient

1. You have the right to accept, reject or seek adjustment to your financial aid award(s).
2. You have the right to know how much aid you will receive, how it is distributed, the criteria for the distribution and when it will be disbursed to your bursar account.
3. You have the right to know how your financial need was determined and what resources were considered in the calculation of your financial need.
4. You have the right to know the University's refund policy.
5. If you are offered a loan, you have the right to know the interest rate, the total amount to be repaid, the repayment procedures, the length of time you have to repay the loan and when repayment begins.
6. You have the right to review your financial aid file and seek financial aid counseling with SFA's professional staff.
7. You have the right to submit to SFA a written appeal requesting reconsideration of your financial aid eligibility. If there has been a substantial loss of family income or benefits since you filed your FAFSA, you should contact SFA and request a Special Consideration Application.

Responsibilities of a financial aid recipient

1. You are responsible for providing documentation and information requested by SFA.
2. You are responsible for notifying SFA in writing if you receive aid from sources not listed on the front of your award letter, your residency status changes, or your application or other information is incorrect.

3. You are responsible for attending classes and completing requirements for all courses in which you enroll. If you are unable to begin a class or if you must withdraw, it is your responsibility to promptly notify the University and complete all official withdrawal procedures.
4. You are responsible for repayment of all loans in accordance with the terms of your promissory notes. You must notify your lender if any of the following occurs before your loan is repaid: change of address, graduation, withdrawal from the University or less than half-time attendance, name change and transfer to another post-secondary institution.
5. You are responsible for maintaining satisfactory academic progress.
6. You are responsible for keeping copies of your financial aid records.
7. You are responsible for reapplying for financial aid each year.

Satisfactory academic progress

All financial aid recipients are required to maintain satisfactory academic progress. For need-based financial aid academic progress is determined on the basis of minimum cumulative grade point average requirements, course completion rate and cumulative number of credit hours completed. Students who are unable to meet the minimum requirements may lose their eligibility for need-based aid and must correct satisfactory academic progress deficiencies to regain eligibility. A copy of the University's satisfactory academic progress policy is available from SFA.

Standards of progress for students receiving scholarships, or talent or leadership awards may differ from the requirements for students receiving need-based student financial aid. Such requirements are shared with the student at the time the scholarship, talent or leadership award is made.

Dropping and withdrawing from classes

If a student is unable to begin a class or must withdraw, it is the student's responsibility to notify the University promptly and complete all official withdrawal procedures (see Withdrawal from the University, p. 9, and Grading policies, p. 10). At the time the University becomes aware that a student has unofficially or officially dropped a class or withdrawn from all classes, the University is obligated to determine if any financial aid adjustments are required.

Initial financial aid awards are determined on the assumption of full-time (12 credit hours) attendance unless SFA is notified by the student of planned enrollment below full time. If the student's enrollment status is different than his or her assumed or planned enrollment status, the student's financial aid for the enrollment period will be adjusted in

accordance with federal, state or University requirements.

If a student officially withdraws from all courses, the University must, in accordance with the University's refund policy and federal and state requirements, assess the amount of financial aid the student is eligible to receive. All financial aid in excess of this amount must be returned to the appropriate financial aid sources. This could result in the student having to return all or a portion of the financial aid funds provided to him or her.

If, in any enrollment period, a student unofficially withdraws from all courses or never begins a course in which he or she is enrolled, the University is obligated to determine the affect of these actions on the student's eligibility for financial aid. As a result a portion or all of the financial aid funds provided to the student may have to be returned to the appropriate financial aid source. This could result in the student having to return all or a portion of the financial aid funds provided to him or her.

Examples of financial aid award adjustments the University must make when a student drops a class or withdraws from all classes are available in the Office of Student Financial Aid. Financial aid recipients are encouraged to be aware of the above as they make decisions regarding changes in their enrollment status.

Grants

Grants are financial aid awards that do not require repayment. They are available to eligible students who have the lowest expected family contribution.

Federal Pell Grant

The Federal Pell Grant program is the largest of the grant programs. It provides a foundation of financial aid for undergraduate students who have the highest financial need. Students apply for the Federal Pell Grant by completing the FAFSA.

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant

The Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) is another aid source for students with exceptional need. Funds are awarded on a first-applied, first-considered basis.

Ohio Instructional Grant

The Ohio Instructional Grant (OIG) is a state-funded grant available to eligible undergraduate Ohio residents who demonstrate financial need. The OIG is designated to pay instructional and general fee charges. Ohio residents apply for OIG by completing the FAFSA. Students from other states should contact the appropriate agency in their state to learn about the application procedures, eligibility requirements and whether your state's grant may be used at BGSU.

Talent awards and grants-in-aid

Students demonstrating special talents or abilities in areas such as leadership, athletics, music, drama, broadcasting or speech may be eligible for University-funded grants. Recipients apply to and are selected by individual colleges, schools, departments or committees.

Loans

Loans are available to eligible students and/or their parents through a variety of need-based and non-need-based programs. Typically, need-based student loans are offered at low interest rates and need not be repaid until the student stops attending college on at least a half-time basis. Interest rates and repayment grace periods vary according to the terms of the individual programs. Most loans require the student to complete the FAFSA.

William D. Ford Federal Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans

These are low-interest loans that do not require repayment until six months after the student no longer maintains at least a half-time (6 credit) enrollment. Subsidized loan borrowers are not charged interest as long as they meet enrollment requirements. The Unsubsidized Direct Loan is not based on need, but requires the student to file the FAFSA to first determine subsidized loan eligibility. Unsubsidized loan borrowers are charged interest regardless of enrollment status. The interest rate varies, but is capped at 8.25% annually.

Federal Perkins Loans

These are need-based, lower interest (5%) loans that do not require repayment or accrue interest until nine months after the student no longer maintains at least a half-time (6 credit) enrollment. Award amounts are determined by SFA. Students file the FAFSA for Perkins Loan consideration. Funds are awarded on a first-applied, first-considered basis.

Nursing student loans

Students must be admitted to the School of Nursing to be considered for need-based nursing loans (currently the interest rate is 6%). Loans do not accrue interest or require repayment while the student is enrolled at least half time (6 credits). Special deferment and cancellation options are available depending on the location of the student's employment after graduation. Award amounts are determined by SFA.

Federal Direct Parent Loans for Undergraduates

Federal Direct Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students (PLUS) are available to parents whose students either do not qualify for need-based financial aid or who need

additional assistance above and beyond their determined eligibility. Applications are available from SFA. Parents applying for the Direct Parent Loan do not have to file a FAFSA form, but should contact SFA for a PLUS application. Interest rates are variable (not to exceed 9%); monthly payments are required within 60 days after the loan is disbursed.

Short-term loans

Short-term loans for personal emergencies are available in SFA. Interest rates range from 0-8% depending on the amount borrowed. All loans must be repaid within 45 days or by the last day of the semester, whichever comes first. Application is made at SFA.

Alternative loans

Alternative loans are private student loans made available through some financial institutions such as banks. Because there are differences in private loan programs, students are encouraged to compare loan programs and select the one that best meets the borrower's needs. Regardless of the loan program selected, students should be cautious regarding the amount of debt they incur. Student loans are a significant source of financial aid, but students are encouraged not to borrow any more than is necessary to pay for educational costs.

Scholarships

Scholarships are based upon outstanding academic achievement, service and talent. Most are not based on financial circumstances. When required, financial need is determined from FAFSA data. Like grants, scholarships do not have to be repaid. The "Scholarship Guide" is an annual publication prepared by SFA that lists more than 700 University-wide and departmental scholarships, as well as application criteria and award amounts. For entering freshmen, BGSU has renewable academic scholarships as well as scholarships for multicultural students, National Merit finalists and semifinalists, National Achievement Award finalists and semifinalists, and others. Continuing BGSU students may also obtain University-wide and departmental scholarships and should consult the "Scholarship Guide" for additional information.

Assistantships

Some academic departments offer undergraduate assistantships to qualified juniors and seniors. Students should consult with and apply in the individual department. Upperclass students are also employed as residence hall advisers. Information about residence hall advisers is available in University residences or in the Office of Residence Life, 440 SaddleMire Student Services Building, 372-2011.

Employment

A variety of part-time employment opportunities are available both on and off campus. At BGSU students are a vital element of the work force. The Student Employment Program posts on-campus job openings daily. Students contact, apply and interview directly with prospective employers. During the academic year, campus employment is available to undergraduate students who are enrolled on at least a half-time basis. Students are employed University-wide in a variety of positions.

In addition to on-campus job postings, the Student Employment Program maintains a list of off-campus jobs in the Center for Career Resources in the SaddleMire Student Services Building.

Students participate in either the Federal Work Study Program, which is a need-based program, or the University's regular work program, which is not based on financial need. Students eligible for the Federal Work Study Program may apply for one of many community service positions via programs such as America Reads, which provides tutoring for elementary students.

Other programs

Some students qualify for Veterans Benefits or Bureau of Rehabilitation Assistance or are eligible to participate in the Job Partnership and Training Act programs. Students are encouraged to contact the local, federal or state sponsoring office in their area.

For further information

Legislative acts at the state and federal level often result in significant changes to student financial aid policies and procedures. Policy and program changes are anticipated at all colleges and universities, including Bowling Green State University. To be aware of these changes, visit SFA's Web site at www.bgsu.edu/offices/sfa.