

Changes In Pell Grant Eligibility

For 2012-13

The Federal Pell Grant program provides financial assistance to students who could not otherwise afford to pay for college as an undergraduate. As a federal program, the Pell program is overseen by Congress, and is consequently revised during legislative sessions.

As you begin the 2012-13 academic year, SFA wants you to be aware of some recent changes to the Pell program that may affect you.

Duration of Eligibility

Effective July 1, 2012, the Pell Grant duration of eligibility has been set to 12 full-time semesters, or approximately six years. This new limit applies to all Pell recipients regardless of when the student first began receiving Pell Grant funds.

Once you have received a Pell Grant for 12 semesters, or the equivalent, you are no longer eligible for additional Pell Grant funding.

This can get a little confusing because Pell Grant is prorated according to enrollment. It's possible to use less than 100% of your award amount for one particular academic year. This is why the Feds talk about the 600% lifetime limit—100% for six years (12 semesters).

For example, if your maximum Pell Grant award amount for the 2010-11 school year was \$5,550, but you receive only \$2,775 because you were enrolled for only one semester, you would have used 50% of your maximum award for that year. If in the following school year, you were enrolled only three-quarter time, you would have used 75% of your

maximum award for that year. Together, you would have received 125% out of the total 600% lifetime limit.

What Does It Mean to You?

In order to comply with this new regulation, the Office for Student Financial Affairs (SFA) has reduced or canceled Pell awards for any student affected by this change. The Department of Education also sent out email notifications to all students who had filed a 2012-2013 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Any students who met UF's 2012-13 on-time financial aid application deadline had any reduced Pell funds replaced with institutional grant or scholarship funds. If your percentage used is ≤ 500 , your 2012-13 Pell Grant will not be reduced.

What's My Percentage?

If you're not sure how much of your lifetime Pell eligibility remains, you can find out using NSLDS, the National Student Loan Data System, located on the web at www.nsls.ed.gov.

After logging in with your federal PIN, you will be directed to a page that shows "Pell Lifetime Eligibility Used" under the Grants section.

For more information about Pell Grants, see our Grants page, www.sfa.ufl.edu/programs/grants.

For more information about how to use the NSLDS website, see our video presentation, "Using NSLDS to Track Your Loan History." You can view it on our YouTube page, www.youtube.com/ufsfa.

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The Foundation for The Gator Nation

Federal Direct Loans for 2012-13

Interest Rates & More

As you begin the 2012-13 academic year, SFA would like to remind you about the basics of Federal Direct Loans.

Subsidized Loan Interest Rates

For undergraduate students, subsidized loans for which the first disbursement is made on or after July 1, 2012, and before July 1, 2013, have a 3.4% fixed interest rate. Graduate and professional students are no longer eligible to receive subsidized loans.

Unsubsidized Loan Interest Rates

For undergraduate and graduate students, unsubsidized loans for which the first disbursement is made on or after July 1, 2012 and before July 1, 2013 have a fixed rate of 6.8%.

Additional Funding

If you need additional funds, consider Federal Direct PLUS or Grad PLUS loans before private alternative loans. Federal student loans include many benefits not typically provided by private loans, such as fixed interest rates and income-based repayment plans. In contrast, private loans may require a cosigner and are generally more expensive than federal student loans. For more information, visit www.studentloans.gov.

Keep Track of Your Loans

The National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) is the U.S. Department of Education's central database for student aid.

At www.NSLDS.ed.gov, you can access your federal loan information, keep track of your indebtedness, and obtain the contact information for your federal loan servicer. You will also be able to see the date on which you are scheduled to begin repayment of your loan.

For more information, see SFA's video about NSLDS on our YouTube page, www.youtube.com/ufsf.

Assistance with Your Loans

If you are unable to make your scheduled loan payments for any reason at all, you should contact your loan servicer immediately. Your loan servicer can help you understand the options for keeping your loan in good standing. For example, you may wish to change your repayment plan to lower your monthly payment or request a deferment or forbearance that allows you to temporarily stop or lower the payments on your loan.

More Information

www.studentloans.gov

www.sfa.ufl.edu/programs/loans

Selected for Verification?

As you begin the 2012-13 academic year, you may receive emails from SFA alerting you that you have been selected for verification.

If so, check your financial aid status on ISIS to determine what, if any, documents to provide.

Read the instructions carefully—providing incorrect or incomplete documents will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid funds.



WAYS TO PAY

Students can pay UF fees using the following methods:

Electronic Check (E-Check) Use "Make A Payment" within myUFL. No service charge.

Online credit card payments Use "Make a Payment" within myUFL. There is a 2.6 percent service charge. Visa is not accepted.

GatorParent Payment Access Add parents to your account using myUFL, "My Campus Finances." Payments from your checking account are free. There is a 2.6 percent service charge on credit card payments.

Personal check, cashier's check, or money order (secure drop box or USPS) There is no service charge for this payment method.

Remember, the University Bursar will pay oldest debts first.

Financial Aid in the News

Ryan's Addition Will Bring Education Spending to the Forefront in Campaign

(EdWeek.org, Retrieved Aug. 22, 2012)

The addition of Paul Ryan to the Republican presidential ticket will likely bring the issue of federal aid for students to the forefront, argues Alyson Klein in *EducationWeek*. Ryan's budget plan, the "Path to Prosperity," will likely figure prominently in the party's platform as the presidential contest lurches toward November. According to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, Ryan's budget proposals would slash "discretionary domestic" spending, which broadly includes education, by as much as 22%.

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan testified before Congress in March, saying Ryan's budget would have a "disastrous" impact on K-12 funding, and the Obama campaign has asserted that the Republican-backed budget would "cut college aid for nearly 10 million students."

In an election year, truth is hard to separate from hyperbole, but it's clear that issues of financial aid and the federal role in education will figure prominently in the presidential campaign.

Senator Calls for Passage of New Student Loan Bill

(Sacramento Bee online, Retrieved Aug. 22, 2012)

Illinois Senator Dick Durbin wants potential student-borrowers to know the full range of options when it comes to student loans. That's why he is calling for passage of his bill known as the "Know Before You Owe" Act. Often, Durbin contends, students are not aware of the huge differences between federal and private student loans, or they are simply unaware of their eligibility for federal loans.

Since private loans, which, in Durbin's words "resemble credit cards rather than financial aid," have less favorable terms than federal loans, student-borrowers need to be aware of what they are agreeing to when they take on student loan debt.

Durbin's bill would require private lenders to certify with the borrower's school that the student is enrolled and the amount the student is eligible to borrow before issuing a private loan, provide the borrower with quarterly updates on their loans, and report information to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau about their student loans. Read more at Senator Durbin's website, <http://www.durbin.senate.gov/public>.

Fall 2012-13 Reminders from SFA

Florida Bright Futures, Tuition & Fee Deferment, and Tax Transcripts

Florida Bright Futures & the FAFSA

As the OSFA Bright Futures webpage says, "No FAFSA = No \$."

All Florida Bright Futures Scholarship recipients must submit a complete, error-free Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in order to be granted both initial and renewal Bright Futures eligibility. The FAFSA must be submitted prior to disbursement.

The FAFSA can be filed online at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

If you filed a FAFSA primarily to fulfill the Bright Futures requirements, you still should make sure that your FAFSA is both correct and complete—Bright Futures funds will not disburse until it is.

Tuition and Fee Deferment

Students may be aware that in some situations, payment of their tuition and fees is deferred to a later date. Tuition and fees are normally due at the end of the second week of classes, (Friday, August 31st @ 3:30 pm) but qualifying students are able to postpone payment until the deferred fee payment deadline.

For fall of 2012–13, the deferred tuition and fee payment deadline will be **October 12, 2012**.

To see if your fees have been deferred, use myUFL, or check with your financial aid adviser.

IRS Tax Transcripts

If you are notified that your financial aid file is being verified by SFA, you may be asked to provide federal tax documentation. In the past, students have been able to provide copies of their (or their parents') tax returns. Beginning in the fall of 2012, SFA will no longer be able to accept copies of tax returns.

In compliance with federal regulations, students (and parents) must provide IRS tax return "transcripts" if they are requested to provide tax information. A tax return transcript provides most of the same line items from your tax return as you originally filed it.

Tax return transcripts, which are free of charge, can be requested using the IRS website, <http://www.irs.gov>, or by phone at 1-800-908-9946.

**University Financial Services (UFS) is now
the University Bursar (UB).**

Office for Student Financial Affairs
S-107 Criser Hall, P. O. Box 114025
Gainesville, FL 32611-4025
(352) 392-1275
www.sfa.ufl.edu

NEWS Financial Aid for Gators is produced once a semester by the Information/Publication Services section of the Office for Student Financial Affairs, to inform students about financial aid programs and services that help UF students meet educational costs.

Director: Rick Wilder
Editor: Harry Monkhorst

NEWS: Financial Aid for Gators is available in other formats for students with documented, print-related disabilities. Students who are speech- or hearing-impaired can contact the Florida Relay Service.

Dial 711 or 1-800-955-8771 (TTY)
Online at <http://www.ftri.org/FloridaRelay>.

The University of Florida is committed to equal treatment of students without regard to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations, or veteran status.

New Student Financial Management Center

Financial Literacy Center in SFA Lobby

As part of SFA's continuing commitment to educating students about financial responsibility, SFA is opening an in-house financial literacy center aimed at helping students prepare themselves for fiscal independence and responsibility.

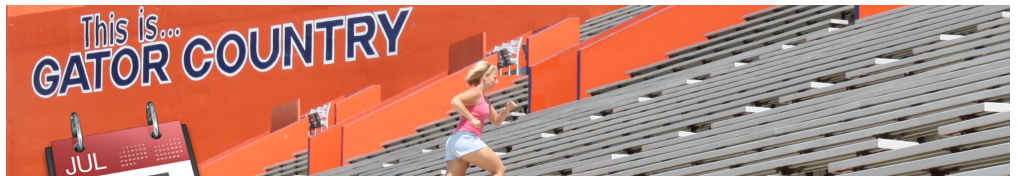
The Student Financial Management Center (SFMC) provides students with the resources to educate themselves in the following areas:

- Financial Budgeting
- Debt Management
- Credit Card & Loan Awareness
- Completing the FAFSA

- Preparing Financially for College
- Grad School Financial Prep
- Managing Student Debt

Located adjacent to SFA's lobby in S-107 Criser Hall, the center will provide online and personal resources for students interested in learning how to make sound and informed financial decisions as they create their financial future.

<http://www.sfa.ufl.edu/literacy/sfmc>
uvsfmc@sfa.ufl.edu



SFA CALENDAR

AUGUST 22

Classes Begin

AUGUST 28

Drop/Add Ends @ 11:59 pm

AUGUST 31

Fee Payment Deadline (3:30 pm, UB)

SEPTEMBER 3

Labor Day Holiday

NOVEMBER 9-10

Homecoming

NOVEMBER 12

Veteran's Day (Observed)

NOVEMBER 21-24

Thanksgiving Break

DECEMBER 5

Classes End

TOLL-FREE Federal Student Aid Number

1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)

Florida Bright Futures

For information about application, renewal requirements, reinstatements, restorations, appeals, summer awards, and other topics, go to the

Florida Department of Education

website,

www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org

Send questions by email:

osta@fldoe.org

Send mail to:

Florida Department of Education
Turlington Building, Suite 1514
325 West Gaines Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399
Toll-Free Hotline: 1-888-827-2004

U.S. Department of Education

Student Aid Information Center
P. O. Box 84
Washington DC 20044-0084
1-800-433-3243 / 1-800-730-8913 (TTY)
www.ed.gov/finaid/landing.jhtml?src=rt

Federal Direct Loan Information

<http://www.studentloans.gov>

- View loan documents
- Entrance Counseling
- Sign MPN
- Complete PLUS Request Process

National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS)

http://www.nsls.ed.gov/nsls_SA

Federal Direct Loan Consolidation

1-800-557-7392; 1-800-557-7395 (TTY)
<http://loanconsolidation.ed.gov>

Satellite Aid Offices Main Office: Student Financial Affairs • S-107 Criser Hall • P. O. Box 114025 • Gainesville, FL 32611-4025 • (352) 392-1275

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