

Financial Aid Overview

For any student going to any college in Ohio, financial aid comes from any combination of four sources:

- (1) U.S. Department of Education (aka “The Feds”)
 - Pell Grants
 - Academic Competitiveness Grants
 - SMART Grants
 - TEACH Grants
 - Subsidized Federal Stafford Loans (0% while in school)
 - Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans (rate currently 6.8% while in school, cannot exceed 8.25%)
 - Parent PLUS loans (borrowed on behalf of student – credit based – rate is currently 7.9%)
- (2) Ohio Board of Regents (aka “The State”)
 - Ohio College Opportunity Grant
- (3) Campus Based Aid (from the college you are attending)
 - Merit-only scholarships
 - Need-based grants
 - Merit + Need grants and scholarships
 - Perkins Loans (FAFSA required)
 - Work Study (FAFSA required)
 - Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FAFSA required)
- (4) All Outside Aid
 - Search for scholarships at Fastweb.com
 - Search for scholarships at Finaid.org
 - Local scholarships (from clubs, churches, businesses, service organizations, etc.)
 - Parents’ Employers, etc.

How To Apply

- For sources 1 and 2 above, file the FAFSA at www.fafsa.ed.gov by the published deadline of the college(s) of your choice.
- For source 3, call the admissions office at each college to ask if a separate scholarship application is necessary as well as their deadline.
- For source 4, the legwork is all done by the student and they should begin searching for outside \$ immediately if they have not done so already.

Dependency Definition/Assumptions

Per Federal law, the student must fill out their FAFSA annually with both their own and their parent(s) income and asset information until the student is 24, married or a parent and self-supporting, an orphan, a ward of the court, a veteran, active duty military, or in graduate school. Simply living on his own and claiming himself for tax purposes does NOT mean the student is independent for financial aid purposes.

General Advice – Saving for College

College is much more expensive than in your parents’ day. You and your parents should be making financial sacrifices (when possible) in order to save as much money as you can for college. Having a large amount of debt will NOT be taken into consideration when calculating your eligibility for most sources of aid. Save, save, save . . . and start as early as possible. Speak with your accountant or financial planner about which college savings plan is best for you. Also, consider living at home and commuting to college to save on room and board costs, which average between \$7,000 to \$8,000 per year at four year colleges and universities.

General Advice – While in College

Dependent students should work as few hours as possible to reduce their income, thereby elevating their need. This will also help them to take more credit hours, perform well in their classes, and hopefully graduate within four years. However, do not sign up for more hours than you are truly prepared to handle. When they do work, they should save at least 40% of what they make for college expenses. Parents of dependent students should try their best to minimize and consolidate debt and save as much as possible for their student’s college expenses.