

FINANCIAL AID

The Financial Aid Department at Jackson State University coordinates all financial assistance offered to students. The fundamental purpose of the financial aid program is to make it possible for students to attend school who would normally be deprived of a post-secondary education.

Financial Aid is economic assistance available to help a student meet the difference between what they can afford to pay and what it will actually cost to attend Jackson State University. This economic assistance may be in the form of grants, loans, employment, scholarships, or a combination of any of these programs.

Students seeking federal financial assistance are required to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The priority deadline date for Jackson State University is April 15 of each year.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid

(FAFSA) www.studentaid.gov (<http://www.studentaid.gov>)

All aid is contingent upon admission; therefore, a student must apply for admission to the University. Federal Financial Aid Programs fall into one of three categories: grants, loans, and work-study.

Grants are financial aid that students do not have to pay back unless the student withdraws from school and owes a repayment. The types of grants available are:

1. Federal Pell Grant
2. Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG)
3. Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant (TEACH)
4. Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant

The **Federal Pell Grant** is the federal government's largest student aid program and it is used as a "floor" or starting point for developing a student's financial aid award package. Student eligibility is primarily based on financial need that is determined by a formula established by law, which is applied uniformly to all applicants. The formula produces an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) number that determines eligibility for this program.

The **Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant** is awarded to undergraduate students with exceptional need, giving priority to Pell Grant recipients. Students with the lowest Expected Family Contribution (EFC) numbers are considered to have exceptional needs. Supplemental grants range from \$100 to \$4,000 per academic year.

It is up to the discretion of the financial aid administrator to decide whether the aid package will contain FSEOG based on the availability of funds.

Not everyone who qualified for FSEOG will receive an award due to limited funds. Therefore, it is important for the students to complete the FAFSA early to be considered for these funds.

The **Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant (TEACH)** provides up to \$4,000 a year in grant assistance if the student is completing or plan to complete course work needed to begin a career in teaching.

As a condition for receiving a TEACH Grant, the student must sign an Agreement to Serve promising to teach full-time in a high-need field at a

low-income school or educational service agency after completing the course of study for which the student received the grant.

If the student does not complete the teaching service obligation, the TEACH Grant will be converted to a Direct Unsubsidized Loan that must be repaid with interest charged from the date of each TEACH Grant disbursement.

For detailed information on this grant, visit www.studentaid.gov (<http://www.studentaid.gov>).

The **Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant** is for students not eligible for Pell Grant whose parent or guardian was a member of the U.S. Armed Forces and died as a result of service performed in Iraq or Afghanistan after September 11, 2001. The student must be under 24 years old or enrolled in college at the time of the parent's or guardian's death. The student must be at least a part-time student at the time of the parent's or guardian's death.

Loans

Loans are borrowed money that must be repaid with interest. The types of loans available are:

1. Federal Direct Loans
2. Federal Plus Loans

William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program

Federal Direct Loans (Subsidized and Unsubsidized) are low-interest loans made by the U. S. Department of Education to students enrolled at least half-time. Federal direct loan rates are updated October 1st of each year. Please visit www.studentaid.gov (<http://www.studentaid.gov>) for the most current interest rate.

The Federal Direct "Subsidized" Loan is based on financial need, but the Federal Direct "Unsubsidized" Loan is not. The Subsidized and Unsubsidized Federal Direct Loans combined cannot exceed loan maximums set by the Department of Education per academic year. The loan maximums for undergraduate students are:

Dependent Students:

\$3,500 plus (\$2,000 unsubsidized) first year;
\$4,500 plus (\$2,000 unsubsidized) second year, and;
\$5,500 plus (\$2,000 unsubsidized third or fourth year.

Independent Students:

\$9,500 (No more than \$3,500 in subsidized) first year;
\$10,500 (No more than \$4,500 in subsidized) second year, and;
\$12,500 (No more than \$5,500 in subsidized) third or fourth year.

Note: Students enrolled in teacher certification or re-certification programs are considered the same as 5th-year undergraduate students, and may borrow up to the same limits as fourth-year students (Dependent or Independent).

Eligible loan amounts are determined by the Cost of Attendance minus Expected Family Contribution, and minus any other assistance the student may receive.

After the student graduates, leaves school, or drops below halftime, they have six months before beginning repayment. This is called a "grace period" if it is a Subsidized Stafford Loan; they will not have to pay any principal or interest during that period. If the student has an Unsubsidized

Direct Loan; they will be responsible for the interest from the time the loan is disbursed until the loan is paid in full.

Student Loan Entrance and Exit Interviews are required for all loan borrowers. Students may contact the Financial Aid Office for more information.

The **Federal Direct PLUS Loan** is a loan for the parent of a dependent child who is enrolled at least half-time. In addition, graduate or professional degree students may obtain PLUS Loans to help pay for their own education. This loan is made through the U. S. Department of Education. Credit checks are required. The yearly loan limit is the cost of attendance minus any estimated financial aid for which the student is eligible.

The Direct PLUS loan interest rate updates on October 1st of each year. Please visit www.studentaid.gov (<http://www.studentaid.gov>) for the most current information.

The **Federal Work-Study Programs (FWS)** provides part-time jobs for students who have financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay education expenses. The program encourages community service work. At Jackson State University, students work in various offices and departments with their work schedule built around their academic class schedule.

The amount of the FWS award depends on the student's financial need and the amount of money the school has been allocated for the program. In arranging a job and assigning a work schedule, the work-study coordinator will take into account the student's class schedule, health and the skills needed to perform the assigned duties. The salary received will be based on the current minimum wage. The student will be allowed to work up to 20 hours per week unless otherwise indicated. Under no circumstances can a student earn as much FWS money as they want. The total amount of aid awarded from Federal and Non-Federal sources cannot exceed the student's financial need. The student is paid once per month.

College Work Aid is a non-need program that provides jobs for students who are unable to qualify for the Federal Work-Study Program. These funds are available for students who possess a needed skill or talent.

Students are employed in a variety of University offices and departments. The criteria for determining a student's eligibility for aid under these programs are:

- the student demonstrates financial need, except for some loan programs;
- has a high school diploma or a General Education Development (GED) certificate;
- is enrolled as a regular student seeking a degree or certificate in an eligible program;
- is a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen;
- has a Social Security Number;
- is making satisfactory academic progress;
- has certification that federal aid will be used only for educational expenses;
- certify not in default on federal loan and do not owe money on a federal grant;
- is registered with Selective Service, if required.

Mississippi State Student Financial Aid Programs

To receive the State Financial Aid, students must apply at <https://maapp.msfinancialaid.org/>

Programs offered by the State are:

- Family Protection Specialist Social Worker Loan/ Scholarship
- Higher Education Legislative Plan for Needy Students (HELP)
- Mississippi Eminent Scholars Grant (MESG)
- Mississippi Law Enforcement Officers and Firemen Scholarship
- Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant (MTAG)
- Nissan Scholarship
- Mississippi Law Enforcement Officers and Firemen Scholarship
- Teacher Education Scholars Loan/Scholarship
- William Winter Alternative Route Teacher Scholarship/Loan
- William Winter Teacher Scholar/Loan

Verification Policies and Procedures

The Financial Aid Department conducts verification on all applicants selected for verification by the Department of Education edit checks.

Applicants selected for verification will be placed in one of the five verification groups. The verification group determines which items must be verified. The potential verification items are:

- Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)
- U.S. Income Tax Paid
- Untaxed IRA Distributions
- Untaxed Pensions
- IRA Deductions and Payments
- Tax-Exempt Interest Income
- Education Credits
- Income Earned from Work
- Number in Household
- Number in College
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP-Food Stamps)
- Child Support Paid
- High School Completion Status
- Identity/Statement of Education Purpose

Applicants selected for verification must submit the required documents for the student, parents, and/ or spouse, if applicable, to the Financial Aid Office. The acceptable documentation for verification may be:

- IRS Tax Return Transcript for the appropriate tax year requested if the IRS Data Retrieval Tool was not used or could not be used, IRS Data Retrieval used but data changed after it was transferred from IRS, or other acceptable documentation (copy of tax return, W-2 form, Form 4868, signed statement, etc.) if applicable. IRS Data Retrieval may be used if IRS request fields) on the ISIR will have a value of "02" when the data is unchanged.
- A completed Verification Worksheet (dependent or independent) for one of the five verification groups with acceptable documentation. The verification worksheets are used to collect data such as household size, number in college, and other untaxed income and benefits

non-tax file information, high school completion status, identity/ statement of educational purpose.

The information submitted on the FAFSA is compared with the information contained in the official documents submitted to complete verification (tax returns or other acceptable documents and verification worksheets). The verification process can take four to six weeks from the time all required documents are received.

Note: Verification documents requested by the Financial Aid Department must be submitted within sixty (60) days of the request. If the requested information is not received within the sixty (60) days, the application for financial assistance will not be processed until verification is completed.

Correction Process

Once all documents are received, corrections, if any are needed, will be made electronically. If the verification process results in a change in the expected family contribution (EFC), the student will receive an acknowledgment letter from the U.S. Department of Education with the corrected data. The student will also receive notification from the Financial Aid Office via their JSU web account. The electronic correction process takes 10-14 working days. Once the correction is received, the student will be awarded and notified.

Conflicting Information

Conflicting information must be resolved prior to disbursing federal student aid to students. If conflicting information is discovered after disbursing federal student aid, the discrepancies must still be resolved, and the appropriate action must be taken based on specific program requirements. Conflicting information is separate and distinct from verification and must be resolved whether or not the student is selected for verification.

Referrals to the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Education

The Financial Aid Department will refer to the Inspector General of the Department of Education any credible information indicating that an applicant for Title IV Program assistance may have engaged in fraud or other criminal misconduct in connection with his or her application.

Examples of this information are:

1. False claims of independent student status;
2. False claims of citizenship;
3. Use of false identities;
4. Forgery of signatures or certification;
5. False statements of income; and
6. Other illegal conduct involving the administration of Title IV Programs.

Recovery of Funds (Overpayments)

Jackson State University will make every effort to avoid overpayment of Federal funds to financial aid recipients. If a financial aid recipient receives an overpayment as a result of the verification process, the Financial Aid Department will eliminate the overpayment. The overpayment will be eliminated by adjusting subsequent financial aid payments during the award year or reimbursing the Federal Program account within sixty (60) days of the recipient's last day of attendance or the last day of the award year, whichever is earlier. **Applicants who owe a**

repayment of federal funds are not eligible to receive federal aid until the overpayment is paid in full.

Standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress

Section 484 of the Higher Education Act (HEA), as amended, require students to maintain satisfactory academic progress (qualitative and quantitative) in the course of study he or she is pursuing in order to receive aid under the student financial assistance programs authorized by Title IV. These programs include the Federal Pell Grant (PELL), Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (SEOG), Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant Program (TEACH), Federal Work-Study, and Federal Family Educational Loan Program—William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program (Subsidized, Unsubsidized, and PLUS).

Jackson State University students must show measurable academic program towards a degree. Undergraduate students are required to earn a 2.00 Cumulative Grade Point Average in major courses of study in order to graduate.

Title IV recipients use a graduated scale that culminates in the graduation requirement in order to maintain satisfactory academic progress.

Qualitative Standards

The following scale is used to determine whether qualitative satisfactory progress is being maintained for undergraduate students:

Undergraduate Satisfactory Academic Progress Table

Total JSU Hours Attempted	Minimum Cumulative GPA Required
0-29	1.50
30-59	1.75
60-89	1.80
90-107	1.90
108-128	2.00

Quantitative Standards

Students are expected to complete the requirements for a degree within a reasonable time frame. Undergraduates pursuing a degree are allowed to attempt up to 150% of the published length of their academic program. For example, length of the program = 124 hours x 150% = 186 hours. This includes both Jackson State University attempted hours and hours transferred from other institutions.

Undergraduate students must make incremental progress (PACE) toward their degree; therefore, a minimum percentage of hours attempted must be completed. To meet this standard, students must complete 67% of hours attempted. To calculate PACE, the following formula is used:

PACE= Cumulative number of hours student successfully completed **divided by** Cumulative number of hours student attempted

Transfer credit hours accepted will count as hours attempted and completed and will be used in the formula to calculate the PACE rate for transfer students.

Financial Aid Warning

Students who fail to maintain the above standards at the end of the evaluation period (semester) will be placed on Financial Aid Warning

and eligible for Title IV assistance for the subsequent payment period (semester).

Financial Aid Suspension

Students who fail to complete the required hours and maintain the required cumulative GPA for two consecutive semesters will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension. Students who fail to bring the cumulative GPA into compliance and/or complete the required hours, at this point, will be considered as not maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and will be ineligible for Title IV assistance.

Students placed on financial aid suspension may submit an appeal for reinstatement of aid due to mitigating circumstances that prevented them from maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).

Reinstatement of an Academic Suspension to attend the university does not reinstate financial aid.

Grades

All JSU credit hours attempted are included in the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) calculation. Grades of "F", "W" (withdrawn), and "I" (incomplete) are not counted as hours completed; however, they are counted as hours attempted. Also, all repeated hours are counted as attempted hours. Passed hours may only be repeated **once** for Title IV assistance.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is measured at the end of each payment period (semester) including the summer term.

Appeal Procedures

Students who fail to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and have been placed on financial aid suspension may submit an appeal due to mitigating circumstances for reinstatement of aid. The appeal must clearly explain what mitigating circumstances caused the student to fail the standards and what has changed that will allow the student to make Satisfactory Academic Program (SAP) at the next evaluation. The appeal due to mitigating circumstances with supporting documentation must be submitted to the Financial Aid Department by the last published date of registration. The Financial Aid Appeals Committee will render a decision and the results will be posted to the student's JSU P.A.W.S. account and/or written notification approximately seven to ten days after the appeal is received.

Mitigating Circumstances

Mitigating circumstances are unforeseen, special or unusual/ traumatic conditions which caused undue hardship. These circumstances may include serious illness or injury relating to the student, death or serious illness of an immediate family member, significant traumatic occurrence that impaired emotional and/or physical health, or other documented circumstances.

Financial Aid Probation

Students will be placed on Financial Aid Probation for one payment period (semester) after a successful appeal. At the end of the probationary period (semester), the student must be making Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) or following an Academic Plan developed by the student's Academic Advisor that ensures the student can complete his educational program within a reasonable time frame.

Reinstatement

Reinstatement of Financial Aid will be based on the strength of the appeal statement, documentation received, and the academic record.

Filing an appeal does not guarantee Financial Aid reinstatement. Financial aid will be reinstated for students who reestablish eligibility by maintaining the standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).

The Financial Aid Office at Jackson State University does not discriminate against students on the basis of sex, handicap, race, color, religion or national origin, pursuant to the requirements of Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other applicable statutes.