

Paying For College

The costs for attending college can be expensive, but there are many different financial programs to help everyone access a college education. Many of these financial programs are based on your income, so more money is available for those who have smaller household incomes. In fact, almost all college bound students utilize some type of financial aid, assistance or financing plan to help pay for their college education.

Types of Financial Aid

Scholarships: (Also called “Merit-based” Aid). Money that is offered to students based on their grade point average, test scores or application regardless of income level. Some scholarships are offered in a one-time amount, while other scholarships are renewable for each year you attend college. Most scholarships are awarded by the college you attend based on your application, but some scholarships are also awarded from outside organizations or companies in your community. Scholarships are financial aid money that does not need to be paid back.

Grants: (Also called “Need-based” aid) Money that is offered to students who demonstrate a lack of financial resources to pay for college. To qualify for need based aid, students need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) an online application. By completing this application your college will then know what grant programs they can offer you. The greater your financial need, the more grant programs are available. Grants are financial aid money that does not need to be paid back.

Work Study: Campus job opportunities that are offered to students who demonstrate financial need via the FAFSA application. Students are offered the opportunity to work on campus for a limited number of hours each week and the money earned will go directly to paying for tuition. Students are able to select which job they are most interested in when they arrive on campus. Work study is financial aid money that is earned and will not need to be paid back.

Loans: Money which can be borrowed by students, parents or both to help pay for college. The amounts available to borrow will be calculated from your the FAFSA application. Many types of student loans do not need to be paid while you are attending college, but will need to be paid back once you leave college.

Most students use a combination of all of these financial aid options to earn their college degree.

Financial Aid Resources

[FAFSA Introduction Video](#)

[FAFSA Process](#)

[FAFSA Deadlines](#)

[FSA ID Instruction Video](#)

[Why your family should apply for FAFSA](#) [Kansas Financial Aid Resources & Links](#)

[Kansas Scholarship & Grant Programs](#)

[Midwest Student Exchange Program \(multi-state tuition reciprocity\)](#)

Financial Aid Timeline

1. Complete college application
2. Create your FSA ID
3. Complete the FAFSA Application (Application opens Oct 1 each year)
4. Look for additional scholarship applications or deadlines at your chosen institutions
5. Search for scholarship applications in your community, [state](#) or online
6. Receive your Financial Aid packet from the institutions you have been accepted to
7. Compare the financial aid options at each institution, decide on taking out optional loans after scholarship and grant money have been distributed & send in an enrollment deposit to your chosen institution.
8. Complete the FAFSA each year you are in college.

Complete your [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#)

Financial Aid Tips:

1. Do not pay for someone to complete the FAFSA for you (it is a free application)
2. Always go to FAFSA.ed.gov DO NOT use anything with a “.com” or “.org” extension. Always utilize the government site.
3. Financial Aid departments at each institution are free resources for questions and assistance in filling out your FAFSA
4. Look for the logo for NASFAA or KASFAA to know if an organization is reputable
5. Apply early! FAFSA opens each year on Oct. 1. You should complete the FAFSA application as soon as you complete your college applications.
6. [FAFSA Tips & Common Mistakes to Avoid](#)
7. Consider the public institutions in your community & state to receive a reduced resident tuition rate
8. Starting your education at a community college or trade school and then transferring to a university is a way to significantly reduce the costs of the first two years of a 4 year university bachelor degree program.