

CHICAGO STATE UNIVERSITY

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THE FINANCIAL AID PROCESS

STUDENT CHECK LIST . . .

- ✓ *File FAFSA early*
- ✓ *Review your SAR*
- ✓ *If selected for Verification access CSU X-press to review document requirements and submit promptly*
- ✓ *Access CSU X-press to review and accept your financial aid awards*
- ✓ *If you need additional funds apply early for a loan*
- ✓ *Read all e-mail correspondence from the Office of Student Financial Aid*
- ✓ *Access CSU X-press periodically to review your financial aid status*
- ✓ *Check the Office of Student Financial Aid web site periodically for important information*

Students who wish to receive consideration for financial aid funds (grants / loans / student employment, and many scholarship programs) must complete the financial aid application process every academic year. At Chicago State University (CSU) the academic year begins with the Fall semester and ends with the Summer semester.

Whether you are an incoming or returning student (in an undergraduate or graduate program), the application process is the same. The first step you must take is . . .

COMPLETE THE FAFSA (FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID)

You are encouraged to file on-line at www.fafsa.ed.gov (you may link to this web site through the Office of Student Financial Aid page of the CSU web site). CSU's Federal school code is **001694**. You will need to enter this code on your FAFSA so that CSU will receive a copy of your application once it has been processed by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). By filing the FAFSA candidates for Bachelor degrees automatically apply for:

Federal Pell Grant

Federal SEOG (Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant)

Federal ACG (Academic Competitiveness Grant)

Federal National SMART (National Science and Mathematic Access to Retain Talent Grant)

Federal TEACH (Teacher Education Assistance and Higher Education Grant Program)

State of Illinois MAP Grant (for Illinois residents only)

State of Illinois IIA Grant (for first time Illinois freshman only)

Additionally, the information you provide on the FAFSA will also help determine (for Bachelor, Masters, Second Bachelor, Teacher Certification, Certificate programs, and Doctorate candidates) eligibility for:

Federal Stafford Loan

Federal Graduate PLUS Loan

Federal Work-Study

(Funding for Federal SEOG and Federal Work-Study is limited. In order to receive consideration for these funds you should **file your FAFSA as soon as possible after January 1st** of each year for the upcoming academic year. Funding for the State of Illinois MAP Grant is also limited. In order to receive consideration for this fund you are encouraged to file your FAFSA no later than March 31st for the upcoming academic year.)

Once your FAFSA has been processed you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR). If you filed via the internet (and were able to sign your FAFSA with your USDE PIN) and you provided your e-mail address on the FAFSA you will be able to access your SAR via the Internet within two business days. If you filed a paper FAFSA, or via the internet without providing an e-mail address, you can expect to receive a printed copy of your SAR in approximately four weeks. Our office will receive an electronic copy of your SAR (provided you included our Federal school code) once processing is completed.

REVIEW / MAKE CORRECTIONS / PROVIDE MISSING INFORMATION

You should review your SAR thoroughly. If additional information is required, or you see that you made an error in any of the information you provided in your original filing, it is your obligation to provide the additional/correct information in order to complete the FAFSA process. Our office will receive electronic copies of any additions/corrections you make.

VERIFICATION

Approximately 30% of FAFSAs/SARs are selected by the USDE for a process called Verification. If a student is selected for Verification they must complete a CSU Institutional Verification Form (available for download from the Office of Student Financial Aid web site) and submit it to our office along with the appropriate tax return(s) and income information. In some instances you must also provide us with copies of proof of registration for Selective Service (males only), birth certificates, Social Security cards, etc.

If you are a current CSU student we will send an e-mail to your CSU assigned e-mail account notifying you that you have been selected for Verification.

If you are a new student, and you have provided an e-mail address on your FAFSA, we will send you e-mail notification to that address.

If we have no e-mail address for you we will mail notification via the U.S. Postal Service.

In all these instances the notification will be of a generic nature and will refer you to *CSU X-press*, CSU's electronic student information system. When you have accessed your record on *CSU X-press* you will be able to review what documents you need to provide or what additional information is required to complete the processing of your financial aid package.

FINANCIAL AID AWARDS

We will, upon receipt of your SAR (and any corrections you make to it), send notification via e-mail (if we have an e-mail address for you), or by regular mail in the absence of an e-mail address, informing you that a listing of your financial aid awards, if you are eligible, is available for your review and acceptance on *CSU X-press*. It is imperative that you access the web page referenced in the notification and read all the information set forth therein. It is important that you complete the acceptance process as soon as possible as funding for some awards is limited (an award could be withdrawn if funding becomes exhausted before the award is accepted). If you have been awarded a Federal Pell, ACG or SMART grant(s) and/or State of Illinois MAP or IIA grant(s) you will notice that we have accepted these awards for you (this is known as "passive acceptance").

Loans (Stafford, Parent PLUS, Graduate PLUS and Alternative) are not "Offered" for the 2009-2010 academic year as part of a student's initial Financial Aid Awards package, but rather must be applied for by a paper application process, as discussed below. Loans (discussed below) will be shown in an "Accepted" status after you submit the appropriate Loan Request Form to the Office of Student Financial Aid and it has been processed. The University does not maintain a Loan request form for Alternative Loans but rather relies on notification from lenders and/or students when an Alternative Loan requires certification.

If the status/amounts of your awards should change for any reason over the course of an academic year we will send you another notification that you need to, once again, review your awards on *CSU X-press*.

If you were selected for Verification (discussed above) please note that the amount of your awards could change if the documentation you provide conflicts with the information you provided on your original FAFSA (and any subsequent corrections you may have made). Should the amount of any award change (increase, decrease or be eliminated altogether) we will send you another notification that you need to, once again, review your awards on *CSU X-press*.

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

Each of these possible sources of financial assistance has an individual web site which may be accessed from the Office of Student Financial Aid web page. You are strongly encouraged to visit these sites.

STAFFORD LOAN

Should you desire a Stafford loan(s) you must submit a Federal Stafford Loan Request Form (available for download from the main Office of Student Financial Aid web site) to our office, and complete all requirements as outlined on the Fact Sheet which is a part of the aforementioned Federal Stafford Loan Request Form. Applications for loans will be available, and the deadlines for submitting them, are as follows:

Summer 2009:	Available – 04/01/2009	Last day to submit – 06/12/2009
Full year (Fall 2009 / Spring 2010):	Available – 07/01/2009	Last day to submit - 10/15/2009
Spring 2010:	Available – 11/15/2009	Last day to submit – 02/28/2010
Summer 2010:	Available – 04/01/2010	Last day to submit – 06/11/2010

Once your loan(s) has been processed you will be notified that you need to access *CSU X-press* to review the results.

PARENT PLUS LOAN (Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students)

If the parent(s) of a dependent student would like to apply for a Federal Parent PLUS (Parent Loan for Undergraduate Student), he/she must submit a Federal Parent PLUS Loan Request Form (available for download from the main Office of Student Financial Aid web site) to our office, and complete all requirements as outlined on the Fact Sheet which is a part of the aforementioned Federal Parent PLUS Loan Request Form. Availability of this application and the deadline for submitting are the same as for the Federal Stafford Loan (discussed above).

GRADUATE PLUS LOAN

Masters and Doctorate candidates who desire to apply for a Federal Graduate PLUS Loan must submit a Federal Graduate PLUS Loan Request Form (available for download from the main Office of Student Financial Aid web site) to our office, and complete all requirements as outlined on the Fact Sheet which is a part of the aforementioned Federal Graduate PLUS Loan Request Form. Availability of this application and the deadline for submitting are the same as for the Federal Stafford Loan (discussed above). Please Note: Federal Law prohibits students from receiving a Graduate PLUS Loan for any loan period until they have exhausted their Stafford eligibility for said loan period.

PRIVATE EDUCATION LOANS (a/k/a ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION LOAN)

There may be instances where you may not qualify for a Stafford or Graduate PLUS Loan or it may be that you are not eligible for sufficient funding of your needs under these federal programs. If that is the case you might wish to pursue a private education loan. The earliest day of any semester or loan period that we will honor a request for certification of eligibility for a Private Education Loan is the same as the "Available" date for Federal Stafford Loans (discussed above). The deadline for submitting requests for certification of eligibility for such loans is the same as for the Federal Stafford Loan (discussed above).

PERKINS LOAN

On October 22, 2009, Wayne D. Watson, Ph.D., President of Chicago State University, issued a Memorandum concerning "Procedures for Awarding and Disbursing the Perkins Loan". You may access and download a copy of this Memorandum from the Office of Student Financial Aid's The Financial Aid Process web page. Please be aware that funding is limited.

REPORT OUTSIDE RESOURCES

All scholarships, grants, stipends and all other form of gift aid, hereafter collectively referred to as scholarships, must be reported to the CSU Scholarship Coordinator, as the receipt of any scholarship may have an effect on a student's eligibility for other forms of financial assistance including loans and work-study funding. If a scholarship is processed through a CSU office it is necessary for that office to notify the Scholarship Coordinator of scholarship funds awarded to, or received by, a student. If a student secures a scholarship on his/her own it is mandatory that the student notify the Scholarship Coordinator of that scholarship. In order to facilitate the notification process an Award Notification form is available on the Scholarship Information web page of the Office of Student Financial Aid web site.

CREDITING FUNDS TO YOUR STUDENT ACCOUNT

Your financial aid funds will be credited to your student account approximately one week prior to the beginning of the fall and/or spring semester, and during the first 10 days of the summer semester (assuming you have been accepted for admission in a degree/certificate seeking program, registered for classes [generally on at least a half-time basis, and a mandatory half-time basis for loan eligibility] met all deadlines, fulfilled all other requirements, and are eligible for receipt of said funds under Federal, State and CSU guidelines).

CREDIT BALANCE DISBURSEMENTS

If the total of all credited funds exceeds your bill for tuition, fees, residence hall (if living on campus), etc., the Office of the Bursar will disburse any excess funds to you. The Office of the Bursar will notify the CSU community as to the date(s) that funds will be released to students. If you have any questions as to the status of your disbursement, once the Office of the Bursar has announced a disbursement date(s), please contact that office, not the Office of Student Financial Aid. The Office of the Bursar is located in Room 213 of the Cook Administration Building. Telephone: 773-995-2470.

CLOSING WORDS ABOUT OUR WEB SITE, E-MAIL AND *CSU X-PRESS* . . .

You should access the Office of Student Financial Aid web site on a regular basis for important information concerning issues that may affect your financial aid eligibility. You should also take time to explore the web site. You will, in many cases, find answers to questions you have regarding the financial aid process and your eligibility to receive financial aid funds. There are also numerous links embedded in the web site to take you to other areas of both the CSU web and World Wide Web where you may become better informed about the financial aid process and possible funding sources for your education.

All notification from our office to students is via e-mail (once you have been admitted and assigned a CSU e-mail address, or to the e-mail address provided on the FAFSA of first time students until they have been admitted and provided a CSU e-mail address). In those rare instances where an e-mail address is not available, regular mail will be utilized. Once an e-mail address for you has come into our system it will be used for all subsequent correspondence.

**If you have any questions/problems concerning your CSU e-mail account
please contact the CSU Information Technology Help Desk at 773-995-3963.**

CSU X-press is available to all enrolled students and applicants. It gives you access to your entire financial aid record at CSU. Even if you have not received correspondence from us you should access the financial aid section of *CSU X-press* to periodically review your financial aid standing. Sometimes issues which may affect your financial aid eligibility may arise over the course of an academic year. If it is an issue specific to just you it will be posted to your account on *CSU X-press*. If it is an issue that affects all students it will be posted to the web site.

If we send you e-mail notification regarding an issue which is specific to you, or a general issue affecting all students, there is always the possibility that you may not receive it because your box is full, or you delete it by accident, or you are having a hardware/software problem. The Office of Student Financial Aid cannot be responsible for failure of an e-mail notification to reach you for any of these, or similar, reasons. All students (prospective and admitted) have access to both the Office of Student Financial Aid web site and *CSU X-press* which is not dependent upon e-mail notification.

It is the responsibility of all students to keep themselves informed as to issues that may affect their financial aid eligibility by regularly accessing the Office of Student Financial Aid web site and *CSU X-press*.

