



**Penn**  
Student Registration  
& Financial Services

## Information for Graduate/Professional School Financial Aid Recipients

Academic Year 2011 - 2012



- The Annenberg School for Communication
- The College of Liberal and Professional Studies - Graduate Programs
- The Graduate School of Education
- The School of Design
- The Graduate School of Nursing
- School of Social Policy & Practice
- The School of Arts and Sciences, Graduate Division
- The Graduate School of Engineering and Applied Sciences



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The arrow graphic ➤ indicates when action is required by you.

# How Your Financial Need Was Determined

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## The Financial Aid Notice

Students receiving University funding will receive a financial aid notice. The top section of this notice will display your expected academic-year cost-of-attendance budget and indicate the expected family contribution. If you are not prepared to use your resources to pay any or all of the expected family contribution, then alternative unsubsidized loan may be substituted. This will, however, lead to a higher debt level at graduation.

## The Educational Budget

Your basic cost of attendance budget includes tuition, fees, books, supplies, allowances for room and board, and miscellaneous expenses (personal items and the health insurance premium\*).

\*As a condition of enrollment, all full-time students are subject to certain requirements, including submission of health and immunization records, coverage for out-patient medical care through the Student Health Service and maintenance of health insurance coverage for in-patient and catastrophic care. Students who do not provide information about their health insurance coverage will be automatically enrolled in the Penn Student Insurance Plan. Detailed information about these requirements is available at the Student Health Service website: [www.vpul.upenn.edu/shs](http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/shs).

- **Financial Aid Tuition Adjustments:** Full-time tuition costs are assumed in your educational budget (4 course units Fall 2011 and 4 course units Spring 2012) unless you inform SFS of your plans to take a reduced course load. To ensure that your financial aid eligibility is as accurate as possible and that it does not change after the semester begins, it is extremely important that you inform SFS immediately of any course load changes. Submit the **2011-2012 Tuition Adjustment Form** to communicate credit unit changes. This form is available on our website at [www.sfs.upenn.edu](http://www.sfs.upenn.edu). (A reduction in credit units may result in a reduction of your financial aid eligibility.)

## Your Financial Need

The factors used in determining your eligibility for financial assistance are the Educational Budget established by the University and the calculation of "family contribution" as determined by the U.S. Department of Education. Once your "family contribution" is computed it is subtracted from the Educational Expense Budget to determine your financial need eligibility.

	<b>Educational Expense Budget</b>
—	<b>Family Contribution</b>
=	<b>Financial Need</b>

## Determination of Financial Need

The U.S. Department of Education derives your family contribution through an established formula. This formula determines the amount you and your spouse (if applicable) are expected to contribute toward your education, based on the information you provided on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

The federal formula takes into consideration your and your spouse's (if applicable) 2010 total income, value of investments, business and/or farm value, family size and number of family members attending college between July 2011 and June 2012. Spouse's contribution is only considered if you are married at the time of completion of the application.

Financial need can be met with a combination of grant/scholarships (awarded by your school), loans, and Federal Work-Study. Your aid notice will indicate the type and amount of University assistance awarded to you. In addition, your aid notice may also include a referral to outside loan sources. The following pages detail sources of funds, eligibility and how to secure the various sources of aid.

Students who are not eligible for University assistance may wish to obtain funding from outside loan sources such as the Direct Loan, Direct PLUS Loan and/or alternative loan program. See details on pages 2-5.

- **Review your financial aid notice and become familiar with the funds awarded.**

# University Financial Aid Sources

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If you have been determined to have financial need, your Financial Aid Notice may reflect funds from the following sources:

**Grants/Scholarships** - You may have been awarded a grant or scholarship from your school or department. The amount indicated on your Financial Aid Notice will be applied to your student account in equal installments in the Fall and Spring Terms. Certain grants or scholarships may be considered taxable income. Review the tax information on page 10 for further details.

**Federal Perkins Loans** - This loan is awarded if you demonstrate exceptional financial need and are a U.S. citizen or permanent resident. The annual interest rate is 5% and the loan is interest-free until nine months after graduation or withdrawal from the University, when repayment begins. Federal regulation limits annual borrowing to \$8,000 (Though your award amount will be lower based on the institutional availability of these funds), and maximum eligibility is \$60,000 inclusive of undergraduate borrowing. **Note: Perkins Loans in subsequent years are conditional on the availability of funds for the Perkins Loan Program.**

If you are awarded a Federal Perkins Loan, the Master Promissory Note is included with your aid notice and lists the cancellation provisions.

You must:

- Complete the Perkins Master Promissory Note. Keep one copy for your records. Return the Master Promissory Note along with the enclosed Student Loan Personal Data Form to Student Financial Services.
- Continuing borrowers will receive a Federal Perkins Disclosure Statement. If you wish to cancel or reduce the Perkins Loan, indicate it on the Disclosure Statement and return to Student Financial Services in the enclosed envelope.

## Nursing Student Loans

Some nursing students may be awarded a Nursing Student Loan. Nursing Student Loans have an annual interest rate of 5% and repayment begins 9 months after you cease to be enrolled at least half-time. Federal law limits annual individual borrowing to \$4,000.

If you have been awarded a Nursing Student Loan, your promissory note is included with your aid notice.

You Must:

- Read, sign and date **each** line of the Schedule of Advances (top part of note) if applicable.
- Complete and sign both signature lines on the reverse side of the Promissory note.
- Keep one copy for your records and return one copy, along with the enclosed Student Loan Personal Data Form to Student Financial Services in the enclosed envelope.

**Direct Loan Program (Subsidized and Unsubsidized)** - The maximum eligibility amount for a graduate school student is \$20,500 each academic year. Your actual eligibility may be reduced if you receive a large amount of grants or scholarships, as your total funding from all sources may not exceed your educational expense budget. Depending on financial need, students may receive up to \$8,500 of the Direct Loan as a subsidized loan. In this case, the federal government pays the interest for you while you are in school. The remaining Direct is unsubsidized, meaning the interest accrues during the in-school period. You must maintain satisfactory academic progress by successfully advancing grade levels for each new level of borrowing. See pages 3 and 4 for further details.

The types of financial aid described above are included within your financial aid award. There are, however, other types of financing options to which Penn may refer you to meet your educational expenses. These programs require separate application processes. Available at the University of Pennsylvania are educational financing and payment programs including the Direct Loan, the Direct Grad PLUS Loan, alternative loan programs, a monthly budget plan, and a tuition prepayment plan, to assist you in meeting your educational expenses. See pages 4 and 5 for an overview of these programs.

**Direct Graduate PLUS Loan and Alternative Educational Loans** - If you need funding beyond the Direct Loan, you may wish to consider a Direct Grad PLUS Loan or another alternative educational loan. Interest on these loans begins to accrue while you are in school. While both Direct Grad PLUS Loans and alternative loans enable you to borrow up to your cost-of-attendance budget, including your family contribution, they differ in a few key aspects. Refer to page 5 for additional information on these loans.

**Federal Work-Study** - The Federal Work-Study Program is a federally funded work program of which you may be able to take advantage as a graduate student. You are able to select from a variety of positions located on-campus as well as from approved off-campus non-profit organizations and government agencies. The program encourages community service work and work related to your course of study. Work Study job listings are available on the Student Employment Office website at [www.sfs.upenn.edu/seo](http://www.sfs.upenn.edu/seo). Earnings from work-study jobs are not applied toward your student account but are paid to you weekly according to the actual number of hours you worked.

# Eligibility for Federal Assistance

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If you were awarded or receive federal funds (Perkins Loan, Direct Loan, Grad PLUS Loan, Nursing Loan, or Federal Work-Study), you must maintain eligibility by complying with the following:

1. Be enrolled on at least a half-time basis (minimum of 2 course units in fall or spring, or 1 course unit in the summer) in a degree program.
2. Make satisfactory progress toward the completion of your course of study. Students must complete at least 6 course units with passing grades to progress each academic year and receive additional Direct Loan, or a Direct Grad PLUS Loan.
3. Not be in default on repayment of a Direct Loan or Federal Perkins Loan or owe a refund on a Pell Grant, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant or State Student Incentive Grant programs for attendance at any educational institution.
4. Submit all necessary documents in accordance with financial aid application procedures.

Need-based financial aid awards are generally made independent of any financial assistance you might receive from an outside source or any other University office. If you receive any other award it is your responsibility to report this to Student Registration & Financial Services. Federal regulations require that other financial assistance be considered as a resource in determining financial need. In the majority of cases, your financial aid award will be adjusted by the dollar value of this additional resource. These additional resources include, but are not limited to, departmental grants, Faculty and Staff Scholarships, teaching and research assistant ships, fellowships and any stipends. Your alternative loan, Direct Grad PLUS Loan, Direct Loan or Perkins Loan may be reduced if you receive additional financial assistance.

## How to Apply for a Direct Loan

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To begin the process you will need to submit a 2011-2012 FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Our school code is 003378. After we receive the FAFSA, our loan office will create a Stafford loan application for you.

### Direct Loan Reductions:

- **Eligibility** - We will notify you of your subsidized and unsubsidized eligibility for the 2011-2012 academic year
- **Master Promissory Note (MPN)** - With the notification of eligibility you will be instructed to complete your MPN. Please follow the instructions in the letter to complete the Direct Loan process. The Master Promissory Note is valid for ten years.
- **Entrance Interview** - You are required by Federal law to complete an Entrance Interview prior to disbursement. You may complete this requirement online, after you file your MPN, at [www.sfs.upenn.edu](http://www.sfs.upenn.edu).
- **Disbursement** - Your Direct Loan will not disburse until both the MPN and Entrance Interview are completed as well as any other required document for disbursement.

### Returning Borrowers:

- **Eligibility** - We will notify you of your subsidized and unsubsidized eligibility for the 2011-2012 academic year
- **Disbursement** - Your Direct Loan will not disburse until all disbursement requirements are met

### Direct Loan Reductions:

- If you don't wish to borrow the full amount of your Direct loan eligibility, you can reduce the Direct Loan through the Penn Loan System at [www.sfs.upenn.edu/loans](http://www.sfs.upenn.edu/loans).

**Note: The eligibility amount listed on your Direct Loan notification letter takes into account the total financial aid funding you are receiving at the time of certification. If you receive additional funding, SRFs may be required to reduce your Direct Loan eligibility. Should this happen, you will be notified electronically of the change.**

If you plan to apply for a Direct Loan, you should complete the application process as soon as our Student Loan Office notifies you of your eligibility to ensure that you have the money needed for payment of your bill and other expenses, and to avoid the assessment of late payment penalties and financial hold

# Federal Funding Programs

	<b>Direct Loan</b> Subsidized/Unsubsidized	<b>Perkins Loan</b>
<b>Features</b>	GraduatesStudents may borrow up to \$20,500 per year, \$138,500 aggregate including undergraduate borrowing. The maximum subsidized loan is \$8,500 per year. Unsubsidized loan is non-need based and can be used to replace student's contributions.	For students with exceptional financial need; annual maximum is \$8,000; maximum aggregate is \$60,000 including undergraduate borrowing; subject to availability of funds.
<b>Interest Rate</b>	<b>6.8% Fixed in school or repayment</b> For eligible borrowers, up to \$8,500/yr is interest-subsidized until repayment. For unsubsidized loans, interest is capitalized at repayment.	<b>5%</b> Interest does not accrue until repayment begins.
<b>Fees</b>	Origination fee of 1.5% w/a rebate of 1.0% for a total of .5%	None
<b>Eligibility</b>	At least half-time student in a degree program; FAFSA is required before loan can be processed; U.S. citizen or permanent resident; Not in default on prior educational loan. Must make satisfactory academic progress	Full-time in a degree program; FAFSA required; U.S. citizen or permanent resident; Not in default on prior educational loan.
<b>Repayment</b>	6-month grace period following graduation/leaving school; up to 10 years to repay; \$50 minimum monthly payment;	9-month grace period; up to 10 years to repay; \$40 minimum monthly payment.
<b>Disbursement</b>	Twice per loan period by electronic transfer. Entrance interview is required for new borrowers.	Twice per loan period. Loan notes are mailed from the school. Once promissory note and statement of rights and responsibilities have been signed and returned, funds are disbursed to student account.
<b>Deadline</b>	June 15 or as soon after notification from the SFS Loan Office in order to receive credit on the fall bill.	June 15 or as soon after notification from SFS in order to receive credit on the fall bill.
<b>How To Apply</b>	File a FAFSA every year. See page 3 for details.	Submit FAFSA and other required documents in accordance with your school procedures every year. Complete a Perkins Master Promissory Note and Personal Data Form once.
* Stafford Loans borrowed at the previous variable interest rate will continue to have a variable rate.		

# The Federal Grad PLUS Loan and Alternative Loans

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Many graduate/professional students rely on alternative loans to cover their costs of attendance. While you may have been referred to one of these loans as part of your financial aid awards, you may also borrow through them to cover all or part of your expected family contribution. Doing the latter, however, will increase your overall debt at graduation.

Alternative loans are available either through the Direct Grad PLUS Loan program (Grad PLUS) or a private educational loan program. These programs have different terms and conditions associated with them. Doing research in advance of borrowing could save you money both during school and through repayment.

## Principal differences between Grad PLUS and private alternative loans:

- **Interest Rates:** Private alternative loans generally have variable rates, which rise or fall based on market conditions. The actual rate you are offered most often depends on your credit score. Your rate may start lower than the Grad PLUS fixed rate of 7.9%; however, it could change dramatically between now and your graduation/repayment date. The Grad PLUS rate can only change through an act of Congress. Lenders may offer benefits to reduce the interest rate.
- **Fees:** The Grad PLUS Loan Program has an origination fee of 4% with a rebate of 1.5%. The total fee would be 2.5%. Some alternative loan programs offer no fee loans, however all borrowers may not qualify for a no fee loan.
- **Deferment and Forbearance:** Both alternative loan programs and Grad PLUS loan programs offer deferment and forbearance options (in-school, economic hardship, etc.) to postpone when repayment starts. Length of deferment/forbearance for alternative loan programs may vary by lender.
- **Interest Accrual:** Both private alternative loans and Grad PLUS loans accrue interest while the student is enrolled. However, alternative loans may offer a grace period between the time when a student leaves the University and when the first payment is due. Grad PLUS repayment begins 6 months after a student ceases to be enrolled at least half time.
- **Credit Checks:** Credit requirements are less stringent for Grad PLUS. Neither lack of credit history nor income to debt ratios will negatively impact eligibility.
- **Loan Consolidation:** Grad PLUS may be consolidated with other federal loans, and some private lenders offer private consolidation. In most cases this can extend the length of repayment, thereby lowering your monthly payments. However, this move may substantially increase the cost of your loan as interest is being paid over a longer period of time and because you may lose any benefits offered as part of the original loan you pay off through consolidation.
- **Repayment Options:** Grad PLUS loans offer income-based or income-contingent payment options, which tie your monthly payments to your actual income and may reduce your monthly payment amount.
- **Loan Discharge:** Grad PLUS Loans, as they are federal loans, provide the same death and disability discharge benefits as Stafford Loans. Private loans generally do not carry these benefits.

## When should students consider the Grad PLUS?

- If you prefer a fixed rate loan to the uncertainty of a variable rate loan.
- If you don't have great credit.
- If you like the option of consolidating your Grad PLUS loans with other federal loans.
- If you have a relatively low income compared to your overall educational debt.
- If you like the further financial security of death/disability discharge benefits for you and/or your estate.

## When should students consider a private alternative loan?

- If you have an excellent credit rating and thus can get a good interest rate on your loan.
- If you plan to pay off the loan quickly, thereby lessening the impact of a higher long-term interest rate while taking advantage of the no origination fee loan.
- If you believe you can get a variable alternative loan at a better interest rate than the fixed Grad PLUS.

## Apply for a Direct Graduate Plus Loan

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- File a 2011-2012 FAFSA if you haven't done so already
- Login to studentloans.gov - your FAFSA pin is required
- Request a PLUS Loan
- Complete a Master Promissory Note

## Penn Payment Options

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	<b>Penn Monthly Budget Plan</b>	<b>Tuition Prepayment Plan</b>
<b>Features</b>	Budget what is needed to pay for tuition/fees and expenses billed through Penn; not based on financial need analysis; not a loan.	Prepay two, three or four years of tuition/general fee/technology fee to stabilize costs at the level when you join the program.
<b>Interest Rate</b>	None	None
<b>Fees</b>	\$75 enrollment fee (Plus additional \$50 late enrollment fee after May 22)	None
<b>Eligibility</b>	Any Penn student	Any Penn student enrolled in a full-time school
<b>Repayment</b>	Payments begin May for 10 month payment plan	None
<b>Disbursement</b>	Funds credited to student account once per term in equal disbursements	Tuition/general fee/technology fee/recreation fee paid in August and January for active participants.
<b>Deadline</b>	May 23	
<b>How To Apply</b>	<a href="http://www.sfs.upenn.edu/budget-plan/">www.sfs.upenn.edu/budget-plan/</a> or mail Enrollment Form with enrollment fee	Contact Student Financial Services. E-mail: <a href="mailto:sfsmail@sfs.upenn.edu">sfsmail@sfs.upenn.edu</a>
Terms and conditions for these programs apply to the 2011-2012 academic year.		

# Understanding and Paying Your Bill

It is important for you to read the insert that accompanies your initial term bill. The following will give you some understanding how funds are applied to your account.

**Scholarships, fellowships, and research and teaching assistantships and departmental grants:** If you were awarded any of these funds, credit will be applied to your student account in accordance with the instructions provided by your department.

**Federal Perkins Loan and McKean Loan:** Credit will be applied to your student account provided that the enclosed promissory loan note(s) and supporting documents have been properly signed and returned to Student Financial Services. We are required to credit half of your award to your Fall 2011 student account and the other half to your Spring 2012 student account.

**Direct Loans, Direct Grad PLUS Loans, and Alternative Loans:** Most loans are disbursed to your student account via electronic funds transfer (EFT). Depending on your choice of lender or loan product, you may be required to endorse a student loan check to accept loan funds.

If you are entitled to a refund from any of these funds please refer to Credit Refund Procedures on page 8.

## Payment through the Penn Monthly Budget Plan:

If you enroll in the Penn Monthly Budget Plan, a credit for half the amount you budgeted will be applied to your student billing account once each semester, provided you have met all terms and conditions. Detailed information on this program can be found at [www.sfs.upenn.edu/budget-plan](http://www.sfs.upenn.edu/budget-plan)

## Penn.Pay

The University bills students through an electronic billing system called Penn.Pay. You will be notified by email at your University assigned email address when your new monthly statement is available for viewing. Penn.Pay enables you, and other payers you authorize (parents, grandparents, etc.), to receive your monthly billing statements over the web. If you have a U.S. bank account, you can submit payments online, using an electronic interface with your bank. This paperless system provides you with the convenience of web-based electronic payments at no additional cost. Or if you prefer, you may print your payment coupon from Penn.Pay and mail a check to the Student Financial Services lockbox. American Express is also accepted as a form of payment; if you elect to use this payment method, you will be billed a convenience fee of still 2% on your cardholder statement. Penn does not receive any portion of the convenience fee. Your billing and Penn.Pay history are kept online for six months for your reference. For more information, visit the SFS website at: [www.sfs.upenn.edu/pennpay](http://www.sfs.upenn.edu/pennpay).

## Billing Schedule

	Bill Delivery and Mechanism	Delivered / Mailed	Due Date
<b>Fall Term</b>	Incoming Students: July/August paper bill and e-bill when applicable Continuing Students: e-bill only	June 24, 2011	July 29, 2011
<b>Spring Term</b>	e-bill only	Early December 2011	Early January 2012
<b>Monthly</b>	After September 1, 2011 e-bill only		

## Late Payments

A late payment penalty of 1.5% of any past-due balance will be assessed monthly. A past-due balance may also result in your student account being placed on financial hold. If left unresolved, financial hold can restrict future registration, receipt of your diploma and academic transcripts.

## Student Financial Services / Penn Card Program

The SFS/PennCard program extends you a \$1,000 line of credit which can be used at the Penn Bookstore, Computer Connection, Wharton Reprographics, PSA Commissaries and academic transcripts. It also extends to you a \$4,000 annual line of credit for a one time purchase of a computer from the Computer Connection. These charges will be billed monthly via your student account.

# Understanding and Paying Your Bill (continued)

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## Temporary Credits on Your Bill

If you submitted your FAFSA, all the required supplemental forms and filed a Direct Loan Master Promissory Note and/or submitted loan applications for the Direct Grad PLUS or other alternative loan program by June 24, 2011, a temporary credit for half of the loan amount(s) (less applicable fees) will be posted on your Fall 2011 bill. Students applying for loans after June 24, 2011 may request a temporary credit directly from Student Financial Services. To request a temporary credit, email Student Financial Services at [sfsmail@sfs.upenn.edu](mailto:sfsmail@sfs.upenn.edu) stating that you have submitted an application for a Direct Loan, Direct Grad PLUS, or other alternative loan funds. The temporary credit will be limited to one half (the Fall term portion less applicable fees) of your pending loan. You must pay any balance due after adjusting your bill for the Fall portion of your loan. All temporary deferments will be removed by early October, or when the actual credit is received, whichever is earlier.

## Refund Procedures and Direct Deposit Program

Students are entitled to a refund if their actual financial aid (excluding temporary credits) exceeds their billed charges (i.e. tuition, fees, insurance, etc.). For refunds produced by Federal aid such as the Direct or Direct Grad PLUS Loans, you must give the University permission to use these funds to cover certain charges such as health insurance. Additional information can be found on the Financial Aid Checklist on the back cover. Failure to complete this step may result in a balance due the University after a refund is produced.

The University of Pennsylvania strongly encourages students to enroll in direct deposit to expedite payment from University employment or refunds from financial aid funds. You can enroll online at [www.sfs.upenn.edu](http://www.sfs.upenn.edu). Remember: Your checking or savings account must be with a U.S. financial institution, for a list of local banks visit our website.

**If you do not sign up for direct deposit, Penn will automatically enroll you in the new TotalPay Card system.** The TotalPay® Card option is more flexible than the current paper check process. You can write and cash checks for up to the amount of your reimbursement. You'll have the flexibility to use the Visa branded debit card for purchases, withdraw money from ATM's and get cash back after purchases. You can also electronically transfer funds and/or pay bills online.

**Note: Before spending your credit refund, it is your responsibility to make sure you have paid all University charges. It is possible, for example, that you may receive a credit refund before your University Student Health Insurance is charged to your tuition account.**

## Legal Information

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### Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The federal government views your educational information, both financial and academic, as yours regardless of who assists in paying your expenses. (A summary of University policy on the privacy of student records, which includes rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, often referred to as the "Buckley Amendment", is available at [www.upenn.edu/osl/confiden.html](http://www.upenn.edu/osl/confiden.html). Federal guidelines require that students provide written permission before we can share financial information with any third parties, including parents or spouse. You can stipulate with whom we can speak about your account by completing a consent form online via PennInTouch at <https://sentry.isc.upenn.edu/intouch>. Make sure you provide those to whom you allow access to your information with your Penn ID number, as it is the preferred method of verifying your identity at Penn.

### Non-Discrimination Statement

The University of Pennsylvania values diversity and seeks talented students, faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds. The University of Pennsylvania does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, age, disability or status as a Vietnam Era veteran or disabled veteran in the administration of educational policies, programs, or activities; admissions policies; scholarship and loan awards; athletic, or other University-administered programs or employment. Questions or complaints regarding this policy should be directed to:

The Executive Director, Office of Affirmative Action, and Equal Opportunity Programs  
Suite 228 Sansom Place East,  
3600 Chestnut Street,  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6106

or (215) 898-6993 (voice) or (215) 898-7803 (TDD).

# Reevaluation of Financial Assistance

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## Application for Reevaluation

We want to be as responsive as possible to your particular situation, within the limits set forth by federal and University regulations and policies. It may not be possible for us to adjust your financial aid, but we will review your request for reevaluation if:

- You or your family has experienced a change in financial circumstances, such as unemployment, or
- You or a family member have extenuating circumstances, which distinguishes them from other families of similar income and characteristics, and which were not considered in the initial determination.
- If you feel that your information submitted to the government was inaccurate in any way.

Note: Please be aware of the maximum level of need based assistance in regards to Perkins Loan allocation and departmental grant award before you apply for reevaluation. This reevaluation step may be unnecessary. The maximum Perkins award is \$2,800 for the 2011-2012 academic year. You must consult with your individual school to determine grant appropriation policy. A copy of your 2010 Federal income tax and W-2 forms is also required for the reevaluation process.

## Application for Budget Increase

Also, students can be considered for a budget increase for additional borrowing eligibility through a Direct Grad PLUS or alternative loan. While we recommend that students minimize their loan borrowing, we recognize you may have certain circumstances, such as high medical expenses or child care, that warrant the need for loan borrowing beyond the standard budget. Expenses such as consumer debt and car payments cannot be included in the budget increase.

The Application for Budget Increase is available through the SFS website: [www.sfs.upenn.edu](http://www.sfs.upenn.edu).

## Continuing Financial Assistance in Future Years

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You must submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each academic year. Be sure to keep your FAFSA PIN to expedite the renewal process. Each student's eligibility for all financial assistance awarded through Student Financial Services is reviewed annually. Students who previously deferred admission will have to submit application information again. The total amount of aid offered may vary from year to year, depending on a student's circumstances, and the availability of University funds.

Renewal application materials are available early in the spring term. Most recent tax returns and W-2 forms may be required as well if you are chosen for federal verification.

To be eligible for a renewal of a financial aid award, a student must continue to demonstrate financial need and remain enrolled at least half-time. Financial aid awards are terminated by withdrawal from the University or a leave of absence.

## Exit Interview Requirements

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For graduating students: During the last year of your program, you are required to complete an exit loan counseling session. You will receive instructions and website directions regarding this process before you graduate. During your enrollment you can keep track of your educational debt by using PennPortal: [www.upenn.edu/pennportal](http://www.upenn.edu/pennportal). Here you can review your annual loan borrowing and your cumulative loan borrowing at Penn by loan program. It is very important to be aware of your loan debt and repayment obligations as you proceed through your program and after graduation.

# Loan Repayment Information

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All educational loans described in this booklet have a deferred repayment provision during your enrollment. Some loan programs may require repayment of principal and/or interest if your enrollment falls below half time. Non-subsidized loans (such as unsubsidized Direct, a Direct Grad PLUS Loan, and alternative loans etc.) will begin to accrue interest following disbursement of funds. You should note when and how often the interest capitalizes (added to principal). Keep records of who lent you money and notify your lender(s) when you have a change of address or enrollment status.

Below is a sample repayment table schedule showing monthly payments at varying levels of borrowing and interest rates. Some loans have minimum monthly payment amounts. This assumes the standard 10-year (120-month) repayment period.

	5.0%	6.0%	6.8%	8.0%	9.0%
Loan Amount	Monthly Amount	Monthly Amount	Monthly Amount	Monthly Amount	Monthly Amount
\$10,000	\$106	\$111	\$115	\$121	\$127
\$25,000	\$265	\$278	\$287	\$303	\$317
\$50,000	\$530	\$555	\$577	\$607	\$633
\$75,000	\$795	\$833	\$866	\$910	\$950
\$100,000	\$1,061	\$1,110	\$1,155	\$1,213	\$1,267

This sample chart assumes interest is paid monthly.

## Tax Tips

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### Educational Credits and Deductions

The Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 includes provisions for education tax credits and deductibility of interest on educational loans.

The Lifetime Learning Credit is applicable to graduate students. Some families may be eligible for a non-refundable tax credit of up to \$2,000 a year for qualified payments of tuition and related expenses.

Deduction for Interest on Education Loans: The Act provides a deduction for interest paid on educational loans, for borrowers below certain income levels.

Additional information on the Taxpayer Relief Act is available on our website at [www.sfs.upenn.edu](http://www.sfs.upenn.edu).

### Taxability of Grants

The Tax Reform Act of 1986 states that grant assistance is considered taxable income to the extent that it exceeds tuition, required educational fees, and course related expenses. Course related expenses are those for books, supplies, and equipment required for your courses. You should keep a record of these expenses if the provisions affect you. For international students, the University is required to remit federal income tax on grants received in excess of these billed expenses described above. You will be billed for any amount due.

**It is suggested that you consult your tax advisor if you have any questions.**

# Financial Planning

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## Credit Evaluation and Establishing Good Credit

Most private loan programs, along with the Direct Graduate PLUS Loan program, require some form of credit evaluation of you, and your co-signer if applicable. Therefore, it is critical that you review your credit report and clear up any discrepancies before you even start the financial aid process. Credit bureaus may have inaccurate information on you; transmitting that data to a lender could adversely affect your loan eligibility.

The credit evaluation for educational loans is handled in two ways:

- 1) It considers the student's current financial ability to repay the loan. Since most students are not working during enrollment, a creditworthy co-signer may be necessary.  
or
- 2) It views the student's future potential earnings after graduation as collateral.

Your credit history is the most important factor used in determining your eligibility for a loan. All credit reports are reviewed to determine if there are indications of bad credit. The accounts on your credit record include credit cards, loans (personal or educational), mortgages, and any reported billing account. If you have adverse credit, even a credit-worthy cosigner will not be considered when applying for a loan.

We recommend that you obtain a copy of your credit report as soon as possible to get a full understanding of your credit-worthiness and have time to correct any errors. To receive a free copy of your credit report, visit [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) or call them at (877) 322-8228. You may receive a free credit report from each of the three major reporting agencies, Equifax, Experian, and Transunion, once every 12 months; you may either receive all three at once or over the course of the year. If you elect to receive them at the same time you will be able to compare reports from all three agencies. However, requesting one every three or four months will allow you to track and troubleshoot credit issues more frequently.

## Defaulted Loans and Loan Rehabilitation

If you have defaulted on a previous educational loan it will remain on your credit history and limit your ability to secure additional educational loans, unless that loan is rehabilitated. Rehabilitation for federal loans generally requires 12 consecutive monthly payments and possibly the reselling of the loan to a new servicer. Educational loan defaults on private loans will also negatively affect your ability to borrow. You should contact your loan servicer for information on rehabilitating these loans.

## Recommendations for establishing good credit.

- 1) Pay all bills by the due date.
- 2) Notify all creditors of any name and/or address change.
- 3) Keep the number of credit cards to a minimum. Ironically, credit card companies inundate students with offers. Lenders then calculate the total credit line on all credit cards, even if they are paid in full. Therefore, you should cancel or refuse any unneeded credit cards to reduce the potential amount you can use. Stay within 30% of your credit limit to maintain a good credit score and manage your balances.
- 4) Manage your checking and savings accounts well. Pay special attention to electronic transactions and automatic bill payments, and review your statements each month. Finally, explore overdraft protection with your bank.
- 5) Periodically review your credit report to correct any errors and to keep yourself informed.

# Financial Planning (continued)

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## Loan Borrowing and Financial Planning

A quality graduate education is an expensive endeavor. We feel it is important for you to have a sound knowledge of the financial commitment you are making. Here are several suggestions to help you make a smooth transition through your Penn education and ultimately to the work environment.

1. Minimize the amount of loan you need to borrow. Plan a conservative but realistic budget and stick to it. It is tempting to borrow the maximum amount of loan available to you. Keep in mind that you are committing a portion of your future income to loan repayment every time you borrow.
2. Schedule an appointment or call a Penn financial aid administrator. We recommend that you contact Student Financial Services or your school financial administrator listed on the front cover. These highly experienced individuals are available to help you with questions about financial issues.
3. Keep records and copies of all financial documents you complete and sign. These are your official records. You are the best source of information about your loans and other financial matters.

## Choosing a Loan Program

This section gives you some basic guidelines on how to select the best loan program to meet your financial needs. These four steps, and the previous loan/payments options charts, should give you enough information so you can make a decision prior to submitting an application.

1. How much do you need? Establish a budget and determine the amount you need to borrow.
2. If eligible select the Direct loan first. Subsidized loans have interest paid by the Federal government during in-school and grace periods. The subsidized Direct Loan has an \$8,500 maximum annual limit each year.
3. If you will still need funds, select a non-subsidized Direct loan next. These interest-bearing loans have a lower interest rate than alternative loans.
4. If you need funds beyond the Federal subsidized and unsubsidized Direct Loans, you will want to review the Federal Grad PLUS Loan and various alternative loan programs available. Prior to submitting an application, ask these questions to evaluate which program best suits your needs.
  - What is the interest rate and origination/insurance fee costs to you?
  - When does interest begin to accrue?
  - How does the credit evaluation view student/co-signer credit worthiness? Does the loan require a cosigner?
  - When does repayment begin? How long is the grace period?
  - Is interest capitalized (added to the principal) during the in-school period? How often?

# Finalizing Your Financial Aid Checklist

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➤ Use the following checklist in conjunction with information in this booklet to finalize your financial aid.

**Student Aid Report (SAR)**

Review your SAR which you received after you filed your FAFSA, to be sure that all data is accurate. If corrections are needed, you can make them online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov), or make them on the Information Review Form (Part 2). You will receive a corrected SAR for your records in a few weeks and Penn will receive the corrections electronically directly from the federal processor. If you were selected for federal verification, you may need to complete and return to SFS a verification worksheet. This worksheet will be mailed to you under separate cover beginning in June.

**Tuition Adjustment Form** - If you plan to enroll in fewer than 4 course units during the fall and/or spring term, or drop a course during the term, complete and return the 2011-2012 Tuition Adjustment Form (this form is available on the SFS website). Taking less than 4 course units in a term reduces your tuition and can reduce the amount of your financial aid eligibility.

**Direct Loan Application Master Promissory Note**

First-time Direct Loan borrowers at Penn will receive instructions for completing a Direct Loan Application and Master Promissory Note (MPN) from our Student Loan Office. Once you receive this notification, you may complete your application and MPN. The MPN is valid for 10 years from the signature date. If you filed one in previous years, you do not need to file one again. A FAFSA, however, must be filed each year. See Page 3 for details.

**Direct Loan Entrance Interview**

If you are applying for a Direct Loan for the first time at Penn, an Entrance Interview must be completed before funds can be disbursed. A link to the Entrance Interview can be found at [www.sfs.upenn.edu](http://www.sfs.upenn.edu).

**Perkins Loan Master Promissory Note & Student Loan Personal Data Form - Recommended Deadline: June 15**

First-time Federal Perkins Loan at Penn borrowers must sign and date your Perkins Loan Master Promissory Note and return it in the enclosed envelope, along with the completed Student Loan Personal Data Form, to:  
University of Pennsylvania, Student Financial Services, 005 Franklin Building, 3451 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6270.

**Nursing Student Loan Promissory Note & Student Loan Personal Data Form - Recommended Deadline: June 15**

If you were awarded a Nursing Student Loan, you need to sign and date your note and return it in the enclosed envelope to:  
University of Pennsylvania, Student Financial Services, 005 Franklin Building, 3451 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6270.

Students who have not already submitted the Student Loan Personal Data Form for a Perkins Loan or prior Nursing Student Loan should complete the form and send it to the above address.

**Direct Grad PLUS/Alternative Loan Application - Recommended Deadline: June 15**

Review your need for a Direct Grad PLUS Loan or another alternative loan and apply with your lender of choice. See page 5 for further details on these programs.

**Federal Refund Authorization Form – Beginning July 1**

If you are receiving Federal aid such as Direct, Perkins, Health Professions or Direct Grad PLUS Loans, Penn will send you an authorization letter allowing you to decide how you want funds in excess of your tuition and mandatory fee charges to be handled. You may elect to have these funds cover other charges, such as health insurance, or you may have them refunded to you. Doing the latter, or not responding, may leave a balance due the University on your student billing account.

**Privacy Settings, Addresses, and Emergency Contact Information**

If you wish to authorize other individuals, such as a parent or spouse, to have access to your financial information, you must provide permission through PennInTouch at <https://sentry.isc.upenn.edu/intouch>. You should update your permanent/local address(es) and include your emergency contact information on PennInTouch as well.

**Changes in Your Financial Circumstances**

Report changes in your or your family's financial circumstances to Student Financial Services, as soon as they occur. Changes in employment status of student and/or spouse, changes in college plans of spouse or child (if applicable), and changes in student marital status are examples of circumstances that may affect your financial aid award. See page 9 for details.

**Direct Deposit**

The University of Pennsylvania encourages students to enroll in direct deposit to expedite payments from University employment or refunds from financial aid funds. You can enroll online at [www.sfs.upenn.edu](http://www.sfs.upenn.edu). Your checking or savings account must be with a U.S. financial institution; accounts in foreign financial institutions are not accepted.

**Tax Returns** - Submit to Student Financial Services complete copies of your and your spouse's (if filed separately) 2010 federal income tax return and W-2 forms if your SAR specifies that you have been selected for federal verification. Attach your return to the enclosed tax identification form and mail it to our office in the enclosed envelope. If you are selected for verification, you may need to complete and return a verification worksheet to Student Financial Services. This worksheet will be mailed to you under separate cover beginning in June.

# Contacts

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## Student Financial Services

100 Franklin Building  
3451 Walnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6270  
Fax: 215-573-5428  
email: [sfsmail@sfs.upenn.edu](mailto:sfsmail@sfs.upenn.edu)  
web: [www.sfs.upenn.edu](http://www.sfs.upenn.edu)

## Student Employment Office

140 Franklin Building  
3451 Walnut Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6270  
Phone: 215-898-7743  
Fax: 215-898-9606  
email: [seo@sfs.upenn.edu](mailto:seo@sfs.upenn.edu)  
web: [www.sfs.upenn.edu/seo](http://www.sfs.upenn.edu/seo)

- Federal Work Study Program: 215-898-6966
- Job Listing Service

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## Graduate School Financial Aid Counseling

Counseling regarding the financial aid process, loan options, funding sources, and other general financial aid questions is provided by many of the graduate and professional schools.

<u>School</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Design	Joan Weston, <a href="mailto:admissions@design.upenn.edu">admissions@design.upenn.edu</a>	(215) 898-6520
Education	<a href="mailto:finaid@gse.upenn.edu">finaid@gse.upenn.edu</a>	(215) 898-6415
Nursing	Antoinette Oteri, <a href="mailto:nursing-finaid@nursing.upenn.edu">nursing-finaid@nursing.upenn.edu</a>	(215) 898-8191
Social Policy & Practice	Michael Light ( <a href="mailto:light@sp2.upenn.edu">light@sp2.upenn.edu</a> )	(215) 746-5894

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## Penn Websites

### Student Financial Services - [www.sfs.upenn.edu](http://www.sfs.upenn.edu)

Forms, general information, and *askBEN*, the SRFS 24/7 question and answer tool

### PennPay - [www.sfs.upenn.edu/pennpay](http://www.sfs.upenn.edu/pennpay)

Retrieve and pay your student bill electronically

### Penn Loan System - [www.sfs.upenn.edu/loans](http://www.sfs.upenn.edu/loans)

View loan requests and change terms or amounts of existing loans

### Campus Express - [www.campusexpress.upenn.edu](http://www.campusexpress.upenn.edu)

Offers information and applications for dining, housing, student health insurance and more

### PennPortal - [www.upenn.edu/pennportal](http://www.upenn.edu/pennportal)

Provides information from all campus sources, and enables students to create a personalized, secure, reference site

### University of Pennsylvania - [www.upenn.edu](http://www.upenn.edu)

Penn's website

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Other Useful Contacts	Website	Phone Number
FAFSA	<a href="http://www.fafsa.ed.gov">www.fafsa.ed.gov</a>	(800) 801-0576
Outside Scholarship Listings	<a href="http://www.finaid.org">www.finaid.org</a> and <a href="http://www.collegeboard.com">www.collegeboard.com</a>	
U.S. Dept. of Education	<a href="http://www.studentaid.ed.gov">www.studentaid.ed.gov</a>	(800) 4-FED-AID (433-3243)
Selective Service		(847) 688-2576