Guide to Understanding Financial Aid

for

Undergraduate Continuing & Professional Education Graduate Students

Financial Aid Services
Academic Affairs
UMassAmherst
Financial Aid Services  
University of Massachusetts Amherst  

Dear UMass Amherst Student and Family,

UMass Amherst Financial Aid Services is committed to working with students and families to provide the best possible financial resources information available. We created this guide to help you understand the components of your financial aid package as well as the options available for financing your education.

What is the best way for you to pay for a UMass Amherst education? The first step should include reading this guide and understanding your options. Then take a careful look at your household budget and determine what funds are available to cover educational costs and any potential additional funds you may have.

When planning how to finance your education, it is important to plan your expenses for the entire academic year. Included in this guide is information about paying your university bill and an expense worksheet to help you estimate what that amount will be.

Financial Aid Services can assist you with questions you may have regarding your financial aid award and financing options available for your college education. Financial Aid Services can be reached at (413) 545-0801.

We look forward to working with you!

Sincerely,

Suzanne Peters  
Director of Financial Aid Services
ELIGIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL AID

Students and parents of dependent students have the primary responsibility to pay for college. Financial aid is meant to supplement that responsibility. Eligibility for financial aid begins with filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA should be completed online at [fasa.gov](http://fasa.gov) each academic year. The information provided on the FAFSA is used by the federal processor to determine an expected family contribution (EFC). This is an estimate of the amount of money you (and your parents, if you are dependent) could reasonably contribute toward college costs. The EFC is the initial indicator of what types of grants and/or loans you may be eligible for. In addition, financial aid applicants must meet the following key criteria to receive most types of financial aid:

- Be admitted into a degree-granting program.
- Be a United States citizen, permanent resident, or eligible non-citizen as defined by the federal government.
- Be enrolled in at least six credit hours each semester (some grants require full-time enrollment, 12 credits).
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress toward completion of your degree.
- Additional eligibility requirements may apply.

At UMass Amherst students applying for financial aid are considered for all programs for which they are eligible, including federal, state, and institutional aid programs. There are two types of financial aid you may be eligible for: need-based and non-need based financial aid. Your award package may include both types.

**Need-Based Financial Aid** is awarded when you have demonstrated financial need. You have financial need when your EFC is less than your estimated cost of attendance (COA). UMass Amherst determines your COA. The federal processor determines your EFC using the U.S. Department of Education’s formula. Need-based financial aid includes federal, state and university grants and subsidized student loans.

**Non-Need Based Financial Aid** is awarded when you have no financial need, i.e. your EFC is greater than the COA. Therefore, you only qualify for non-need based aid, which includes unsubsidized student loans.

**Graduate Students on Program Fee or Continuous Enrollment Fee**

Graduate students who are not enrolled for any course credits but who are candidates for a degree must pay a program fee for each term to be considered for continuous registration until the degree is formally awarded. Program Fee students may be eligible for a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan if their work on their degree requirements is classified as equivalent to at least half-time (six credits per term). If you are on program fee and would like to borrow a Direct Loan, you must update your enrollment status each semester with the Graduate Records Office by providing them with a letter from your Program Director. It is your responsibility to notify Financial Aid Services, as your loan eligibility will be affected. Financial aid eligibility is directly related to your billed expenses.
Graduate Non-Degree Students

Graduate non-degree students enrolled at least half-time (six credits per term) may be eligible for a Federal Direct Loan for up to $6,250 per semester only under the following conditions: the student applied for admission to a graduate degree program, will be considered for admission at a later date and the coursework is verified by a Graduate Program Director as preparatory/prerequisite in nature before admission to a degree program. A memo from the Graduate Program Director to Financial Aid Services is required each semester to verify this information before a non-degree student may be awarded federal unsubsidized loans. A non-degree memo template is available on our website at umass.edu/umfa/aidtypes/ndprogramfee. Please note that after 12 consecutive months (two semesters) of non-degree status, you must be enrolled in a degree-granting program to be considered for federal loans. Students are only eligible to receive federal loans as a non-degree student once during a lifetime.

ESTIMATED COST OF ATTENDANCE (COA)

COA is the amount we estimate it should cost you to attend UMass Amherst for one academic year. A student’s eligibility for financial aid is not based on individual preferences and spending habits, but on the standard budget allowances developed by UMass Amherst. These costs have been developed as guides to help students anticipate their educational expenses. Some students will spend more than the typical amounts, others less, depending on individual lifestyles and circumstances. COA includes billed and non-billed expenses.

Costs for the academic year are based on estimated information. Final fees are set by the Board of Trustees in June 2014, therefore estimates are subject to change. Please visit the Bursar’s website at umass.edu/bursar for up-to-date 2014-15 tuition, fees, and room and board charges.

The Financial Aid Services website has information to assist in determining your estimated cost of attendance: umass.edu/umfa/basics/costs.

Supplemental Health Insurance is a fee that may appear on your student bill that is not automatically included in your COA. It may be waived upon request. Massachusetts state law requires that all full- and part-time students be covered by a U.S. based major medical insurance plan. This fee may be waived if your health insurance meets the Massachusetts state requirements. Otherwise you will be charged for the Supplemental Health Insurance every semester. For detailed information on the cost of this fee, please visit: umass.edu/bursar.

- Billed expenses are the charges that appear on your university bill. These include tuition, fees, and on-campus room and board.
- Non-billed expenses are the cost of items such as books, supplies, off-campus room and board, personal expenses (clothing, laundry, recreation), and transportation needs.
TYPES OF FINANCIAL AID
All financial aid programs are subject to change due to external factors.

Need-Based Financial Aid

**Federal Pell Grant** Awarded to full- and part-time undergraduate students who demonstrate exceptional need and are seeking their first bachelor’s degree. Awards are limited to the equivalent of 12 full-time semesters. Final eligibility determination is required.

**MASSGrant Program** A need-based grant funded by appropriations from the Massachusetts Legislature for Massachusetts residents. Eligible undergraduate students must take at least 12 credits each term, be seeking their first bachelor’s degree and file the FAFSA by May 1, 2014. Award amounts are determined by the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education.

**FSEOG (Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant)** Awarded to Federal Pell Grant eligible students. Awards range from $200 to $2,000. Students enrolled part-time may also be eligible for FSEOG. Not all Federal Pell Grant eligible students are awarded due to limited funding.

**University Awards** Grants, tuition waivers, and scholarships that are funded through state appropriations, annual donor gifts, and other university revenue are awarded to full- and part-time eligible undergraduate students seeking their first bachelor’s degree. Please note that some of the university academic grant awards have GPA requirements. All are subject to fund availability.

**State Financial Aid Programs** Visit your state department of higher education to get information regarding financial aid programs available to residents.

Massachusetts residents should visit osfa.mass.edu for more information.

**Federal Work-Study (FWS)** This federally funded program provides students with funding to obtain part-time employment opportunities both on and off campus. Students typically work 10-15 hours per week and receive a bi-weekly paycheck. Earnings are taxable.

- FWS is not applied to your university bill.
- FWS can be used for on-campus hourly employment and at APPROVED FWS off-campus sites.
- You can have more than one job; however, you may not work more than eight hrs/day and should not work more than 20 hrs/week while school is in session.

**William D. Ford Federal Direct Subsidized Loans for Undergraduate and CPE Students** A low-interest loan funded by the federal government and available to eligible students enrolled at least half-time who complete the FAFSA. A credit check is not required to receive this loan. Subsidized loans are awarded based on demonstrated need. The government pays the interest while the student is in school.

- The current interest rate is fixed at 3.86 percent and there is a 1.072 percent origination fee retained by the federal government. The interest rate and origination fee are subject to change.
- Eligibility is limited to 150 percent of the program length. Affected students will receive notification on
the disclosure statement sent by Common Origination and Disbursement (COD).

- Repayment begins six months after the student leaves school or drops below six credits.

First time borrowers are required to complete a Master Promissory Note (MPN) and Loan Entrance Counseling at studentloans.gov before the loan funds are disbursed to your university account.

**Federal Perkins Loans For Undergraduate and CPE Students** Made available through the University of Massachusetts Amherst and awarded to eligible students who demonstrate financial need. Perkins loan awards range from $200 to a maximum of $5,500 per year.

- 5 percent fixed interest rate.
- No processing fee.
- Offers several partial cancellation benefits based on post-graduation employment. See the promissory note for more details.
- Repayment begins nine months after the student leaves school or drops below six credits.
- Borrowers are required to complete a Perkins Promissory Note and Loan Entrance Counseling forms for each year the loan is awarded.

**Non-Need Based Financial Aid**

**William D. Ford Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan**

Is a non-need based, low-interest loan funded by the federal government and available to degree-seeking students enrolled at least half-time who complete the FAFSA. A credit check is not required to receive this loan.

- The interest rate is fixed at 3.86 percent for undergraduate and 5.41 percent for graduate students. There is a 1.072 percent origination fee retained by the federal government. The interest rate and origination fee are subject to change.
- Interest accrues from the date the loan is disbursed and may be paid while in school or capitalized (added to the principal) at a specified time.
- Students are billed quarterly for the interest. You have the option to make the interest payment or let it accrue.
- Repayment begins six months after the student leaves school or drops below six credits.
- First-time borrowers are required to complete a Master Promissory Note (MPN) and Loan Entrance Counseling at studentloans.gov before the loan funds are disbursed to your university account.
- An unsubsidized loan is the primary source of financial aid for many graduate students. The annual loan award is based on the cost of attendance and individual eligibility, with a maximum annual limit of $20,500.
- When awarding Direct Unsubsidized Loan(s) to graduate students we assume that you may receive a graduate appointment. If you do not receive a graduate appointment, please contact Financial Aid Services; this may increase your loan eligibility. This assumption does not apply to students enrolled in CPE online graduate programs.
MPN: The Direct Loan Master Promissory Note

If you are a first-time borrower and choose to accept a Federal Direct Loan, you must sign a Master Promissory Note (MPN). This is a legal document in which you promise to pay back the loans with interest. Your MPN covers both Federal Direct Subsidized and Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans and is valid for 10 years. If you become eligible for more loan funds, your MPN will cover all loan increases. In subsequent years, Financial Aid Services will notify you of your loan eligibility and the loans will automatically credit to your Bursar account unless you request otherwise. Please be aware that your MPN may become invalid or expired if there is no disbursement activity for 12 consecutive months. To learn all about your Direct Loans and to complete your MPN visit: studentloans.gov.

Direct Loan Entrance Counseling

If you are a first-time borrower and choose to accept a Federal Direct Loan you must also complete the Direct Loan Entrance Counseling at: studentloans.gov.

A combination of student loans is included in most undergraduate financial aid packages. You may choose not to borrow the loan(s) awarded or borrow a lesser amount than offered. Remember, loans are debts that must be repaid, in most cases with interest. Please consider your options and other resources prior to accepting student loans.

To learn more about Federal Direct student loans and the Master Promissory Note (MPN) visit: studentloans.gov.
FACTORS AFFECTING YOUR FINANCIAL AID AWARD:

Your award was determined in accordance with the laws, regulations, and appropriations of the U.S. Congress, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the University of Massachusetts Amherst. It is subject to adjustment or cancellation in the event of changes to these laws, funding, or your eligibility.

Most Common Reasons for Adjustments or Cancellations to Financial Aid Awards

Outside Scholarships, Waivers, Resources: Financial Aid Services may adjust your award(s) if you receive additional scholarships, loans or university waivers that are not currently listed on your award. According to federal regulations, your total financial aid including federal, state, university, and other sources may not exceed your total COA. In cases where your total financial aid exceeds your demonstrated need, Financial Aid Services will adjust or reduce your awards in this sequence: loans, work study, scholarships, and grants.

Verification: The U.S. Department of Education and the university select certain financial aid applications for a process called verification. If your application is selected, you will need to update your tax information on the FAFSA using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool and supply our office with documents to verify the financial and family information submitted on your 2014-2015 FAFSA. A revised notification and Student Aid Report (SAR) will be emailed.

Residency: If your residency status changes during the academic year (e.g., out-of-state residency to in-state residency), an adjustment to your financial aid may be required.

Appeals: You may request a review of your eligibility by completing an appeal form. Some of the more common appeal requests include: special circumstances relating to family income, or family size due to death or divorce; and change to cost of attendance for off-campus living expenses or computer purchases. You can download an appeal form at: umass.edu/umfa/forms.

Enrollment Status: Financial aid awards are initially based on full-time enrollment (12 or more credits per term) for undergraduate students and six credits for graduate and CPE students. If your enrollment changes, an adjustment to financial aid may be required. Adjustments to financial aid occur after the university add/drop period each term.

Loan Aggregate Limits or Loan Default: If you have reached your aggregate loan limit or are in default on a federal loan, your award may be cancelled or adjusted.

Cancellation or Reduction Requests: You may cancel or reduce your federal loans and/or work study on the award summary page in SPIRE. Please note that you have 30 days from the date of disbursement of your Federal Direct Loan to request an adjustment.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP): The U.S. Department of Education requires that students receiving federal financial aid meet the university academic progress standards ensuring sufficient progress toward their degree. Determination of SAP is conducted at the end of each semester. To meet the university’s academic status standards, undergraduate students must maintain a minimum grade point average
of 2.0 and the necessary credit hours to ensure graduation within ten semesters. Failure to maintain these standards will, at a minimum, place the student on financial aid warning. If a student does not meet the university’s academic progress standards after the warning period, he or she may become ineligible to receive federal, state and university financial aid. An appeal process is available for students who may lose or have lost financial aid due to failure to maintain SAP. Students who wish to earn a double major or add a minor are reminded that they must complete their requirements within the ten-semester limit to ensure financial aid under the SAP regulation. Visit the Financial Aid Services website for more information at: umass.edu/umfa/receivingaid.sap.

Graduate students must maintain a 2.0 GPA to receive or keep federal loans.

YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS A FINANCIAL AID RECIPIENT

Rights

- You have the right to privacy. All records and information that you submit are confidential and subject to legal requirements concerning disclosure of such information.
- You have the right to request a review of your financial aid eligibility (appeal based on extenuating circumstances).
- You have the right to know specific consumer information such as campus crime statistics and athletic information.
- If you withdraw from the university after the term begins, you should be informed about the refund policies for both university charges and financial aid. The Dean of Students Office acts as a resource for students considering withdrawal from the university.

Responsibilities

- You are required to inform Financial Aid Services of any outside sources of aid that do not appear on your award letter. Some examples include: scholarships, tuition waivers, and veteran’s or rehabilitation benefits.
- You are responsible for completing all requests for information. Some examples include: federal tax transcripts, verification forms, loan entrance counseling, loan promissory notes, and loan exit counseling.
- You must notify our office if you would like to reduce or cancel your loan amount.
- You are responsible for maintaining satisfactory status on student loans. Students who default or owe refunds on federal grants are not eligible for any financial aid.
- You must contact Financial Aid Services if you plan to participate in an Internship/Co-op or Study Abroad/National Exchange program.
- You must inform the Registrar’s Office and your student loan servicer/lender of any changes to your name, address or phone number.
A college education is the best investment you can make for your future but it can be a costly one without a careful borrowing plan. Student loans are an excellent resource to pay for educational costs, but the amount of debt incurred should be considered carefully.

Taking out student loans to pay for college has long-term financial implications. Like any other debt, a student loan is a serious financial obligation that must be repaid with interest when you leave school. Failure to repay your student loans may affect your credit rating and your ability to borrow for other purposes.

It is important to plan for the entire cost of your education and consider how much you need to borrow to meet that cost while keeping your debt at a manageable level. Be sure you understand your rights and responsibilities under each loan program before you accept any student loan.

**Repaying Your Federal Direct Loans**

- Repayment of principal and interest begins six months after leaving school or dropping below six credits. You must repay student loans even if your financial circumstances become difficult.

- You make payments to your loan servicer. William D. Ford Federal Direct Loans are serviced by one of nine Federal Loan Servicers. To find your loan servicer visit: nslds.ed.gov.

- You are responsible for staying in touch with your servicer and notifying them of any changes.

- Borrowers of Direct Loans have five flexible repayment options.

- You may be eligible for deferments or forbearance on your federal student loans.

- For more information about repaying your student loans visit: studentloans.gov.
YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS A STUDENT LOAN BORROWER

Rights
You have the right to:

- A “grace period” before your repayment begins. The grace period starts when you leave school or drop below half-time status.
- Loan deferments, forbearance and to know the conditions under which your loans can be cancelled and/or repaid by the Department of Education.
- An explanation of default and its consequences.
- A loan repayment schedule, an explanation of refinancing and consolidation options, and your option to prepay your loan at any time without penalty.
- Know the amount of your total debt (principal and interest), what your interest rate is, and the total interest charges on your loan.
- Know where to send your payments, and where to write if you have questions about your loan.
- Know when your first payment is due, and the number, frequency, and amount of all payments.
- Know what fees you should expect during the repayment period.

Responsibilities
You must notify the lender if you:

- Graduate, withdraw from school, or drop below half-time status.
- Transfer to another institution.
- Change your name, address, or social security number.
- Have a change of address while you are in school. You must also notify the University of the change.
- Have a change that affects your ability to repay the loan or your eligibility for deferment or cancellation.
- You must repay the loan according to the repayment schedule your lender will give you.
- Your loan money can only be used for tuition and other related education expenses.
- Before you leave school you must complete an exit interview, which may be conducted online at nslds.ed.gov, in person or mailed to you for completion.
## EXExample Of DiRect Loan rePaiMent PlianS At 6.8% inTerest*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Loan Debt at Repayment</th>
<th>Monthly Payment</th>
<th>Total Repaid</th>
<th>Monthly Payment Fixed</th>
<th>Total Repaid</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>$288</td>
<td>$34,524</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
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<tr>
<td>$35,000</td>
<td>$403</td>
<td>$48,334</td>
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<tr>
<td>$50,000</td>
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<td>$1,588</td>
<td>$190,573</td>
<td>$958</td>
<td>$287,346</td>
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</table>

*Please note these figures are estimated; your payment amount may be different. To get more information on these plans and to calculate your estimated repayment go to: studentloans.gov.*
The following chart gives examples of monthly payments for specific loan amounts. You can use this chart to estimate how much your monthly payments will be when you leave the university. If you need more information on debt management, contact UMass Amherst Financial Aid Services or visit: [studentloans.gov](http://studentloans.gov).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRADUATED</th>
<th>INCOME CONTINGENT</th>
<th>INCOME BASED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(up to 10 years)</td>
<td>Income = $25,000</td>
<td>Income = $25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payments start low and increase every two years.</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment is calculated on yearly AGI, family size and total loan debt.</td>
<td>(up to 25 years)</td>
<td>Payment is calculated on yearly AGI, family size.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monthly Payment</th>
<th>Total Repaid</th>
<th>Monthly Payment</th>
<th>Total Repaid</th>
<th>Monthly Payment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$198</td>
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<td>$236</td>
<td>$187,553</td>
<td>$110</td>
<td>$189,753</td>
</tr>
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Paying Your University Bill

All tuition bills are sent to the student’s OIT email account. QuikPAY is the electronic system for all students or authorized payers to view, print and/or make their payment online. To access QuikPAY go to your Student Center in SPIRE and select “View/Pay Bill.” For more information about QuikPAY and tuition charges, please visit the Bursar’s website at: umass.edu/bursar.

The university bills students by term. (For undergraduate and CPE students fall term bills are due in August; spring term bills are due in January. Graduate student bills are due after add/drop period.) If your financial aid award is finalized before your term bill is sent to you, your financial aid will appear as an anticipated credit on the bill. The earliest your financial aid will be disbursed to your student account is 10 days prior to the start of the term. Visit the Bursar’s Office website at umass.edu/bursar for additional information about your bill.

We encourage you to log on to your SPIRE account at spire.umass.edu for up-to-date information on your university bill. If additional information is required, please call the Bursar’s Office at (413) 545-2368 or email them at: bursar@admin.umass.edu.

The Bursar’s Office only accepts cash or check payment. To pay your bill with a credit card (MC, Discover or American Express) go to QuikPAY by logging into your SPIRE account at spire.umass.edu, and click on “View/Pay Bill” under Finances. A service fee will be applied for credit card transactions. You can also use QuikPAY to pay your bill with an electronic check.

You will need your ID and password to access your account on the SPIRE web page. If additional information is required, please call the Bursar’s Office at (413) 545-2368. Or visit the Bursar’s Payment website at: umass.edu/bursar/payments.

To be in good standing with the university, you must meet your financial obligations to the Bursar’s Office by all published deadlines. In accordance with university policy, failure to do so will result in any one or a combination of the following sanctions, depending on the specific time in the term in which your financial account is in arrears:

- Suspension of meal privileges in the dining halls
- Cancellation of registration and dropping of your classes
- Eviction from the residence halls
- Registration hold for any future terms
- Administrative withdrawal
EXCESS REFUNDS

If the amount of financial aid and other credits on your university bill exceeds the tuition, fees, and other charges, and you do not have a previous balance, you may receive an excess (refund). To ensure timely processing of your refund:

- Sign up for Excess Express, a service offered by the Bursar’s Office to speed up excess check refunds to students. With this service, funds will be electronically deposited into the USA checking or savings account of the student’s choice. To enroll, log in to your SPIRE account and go to the “Finances” panel.

- Register for your classes early; you must be registered for at least six credits for your financial aid to be disbursed to your account.

- If you have not completed your Direct Loan Master Promissory Note (MPN) and Direct Loan Entrance Counseling go to studentloans.gov to complete both.

- Graduate students receiving a teaching assistantship or appointment, make sure your contract and all payroll paperwork is complete and submitted to the Graduate Assistantship Office in order for your waivers to credit your account.

- If you are a graduate student on program fee/continuous enrollment fee, be sure that your graduate program director sends a memo to the Graduate Registrar’s Office confirming that you are considered enrolled at least half-time.

- State scholarships that require full-time enrollment are disbursed after the end of add/drop and full-time enrollment verification.

OPTIONS FOR FINANCING YOUR EDUCATION

UPay Payment Plan

UPay is an installment payment plan offered by the Bursar’s Office. It is recommended to help budget payment of your educational expenses and limit your overall debt. UPay allows you to spread your balance over 10 months for a small one-time non-refundable fee. There is no interest charged on the amount budgeted. Enrollment is available online only via the student’s SPIRE account.

For more information on the UPay Installment Payment Plan visit: umass.edu/bursar.

Financing Options

UMass Amherst understands that to meet your specific financing needs, you must have the right choice of loans. Loans offer different combinations of rates, terms, and benefits. Some loans require immediate repayment, and all loans are subject to credit approval. It is your responsibility to understand each loan program’s eligibility requirements and repayment terms. For more information about credit based alternative loan options visit: umass.edu/umfa.
Federal Direct Parent PLUS Loan

A loan for parents of dependent students. A PLUS loan can be used to cover all or part of the amount due the university.

- Before applying for a Parent PLUS loan the student must submit the 2014-2015 FAFSA at: fafsa.gov.
- Interest rate is 6.4 percent (subject to change).
- Origination fee retained by the federal government is a 4.288 percent (subject to change).
- Borrower is responsible for paying all the interest.
- PLUS Loans are not based on need but on parental creditworthiness.
- PLUS Loans are disbursed directly to the student's university account, generally in two disbursements.
- The U.S. government is the lender; payment is owed to the U.S. government. Repayment starts 60 days after the final disbursement.
- Parent has the option to defer repayment if student is enrolled at least half-time in a degree program.
- If the PLUS loan is denied, the student becomes eligible for an additional unsubsidized Direct Loan.

To apply for a Parent PLUS Loan

Complete the Federal Direct Parent PLUS Loan Pre-Application form and fax it to Financial Aid Services. The Pre-Application is available online at: umass.edu/umfa/forms.

If the PLUS loan is approved the parent borrower must complete a PLUS Loan Master Promissory Note at: studentloans.gov.

For more information regarding the Federal Direct Parent PLUS Loan, visit studentloans.gov or contact Financial Aid Services at (413) 545-0801.

Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loan

Graduate students in need of funds beyond those provided by the Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan may be eligible to apply for a Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loan.

- Before applying for a Graduate PLUS Loan the student must first maximize eligibility for Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan.
- Interest rate is 6.4 percent (subject to change).
- Origination fee retained by the federal government is a 4.288 percent (subject to change).
- Borrower is responsible for paying all the interest.
- PLUS Loans are not based on need but on student creditworthiness.
- An applicant who has an adverse credit history may be able to obtain the loan with an endorser who does not have an adverse credit history.
PLUS Loans are disbursed directly to the student’s university account, generally in two disbursements.

The U.S. government is the lender; payment is owed to the U.S. government. Repayment starts 60 days after the final disbursement.

Borrower has the option to defer repayment if the student is enrolled at least half-time in a degree program.

Graduate students may borrow up to the COA for the period of enrollment, minus other estimated financial assistance received for that period.

**To apply for a Graduate PLUS Loan**

Complete the Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loan Pre-Application form and fax it to Financial Aid Services. The Pre-Application is available online at: umass.edu/umfa/forms.

If the PLUS loan is approved the graduate student borrower must complete a PLUS Loan Master Promissory Note at: studentloans.gov.

For more information regarding the Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loan, visit studentloans.gov or contact Financial Aid Services at (413) 545-0801.

**MEFA Undergraduate Loan**

MEFA is a non-profit state authority offering low fixed interest rate loans to families of students attending Massachusetts colleges or universities. The MEFA loan can be used to cover all or part of the amount due to the university. When parents want to help finance a student’s education, the MEFA Undergraduate Loan is an excellent loan program. MEFA loans are disbursed directly to the school in two installments.

Please visit mefa.org/collegeloans for 2014-2015 rates.

**Current Fixed Interest Rates**

**Immediate Repayment Option**

- 10 year repayment—5.99 percent
- 15 year repayment—6.29 percent
- Deferred Option—7.59 percent
- Interest-Only Option—7.09 percent
- Parent must meet MEFA’s credit standards
- 4 percent origination fee with student co-borrower
- Repayment starts 45 days after final disbursement for immediate repayment and interest only option

Apply online for a MEFA Undergraduate Loan at: mefa.org/collegeloans or call 1-800-449- MEFA (6332).
MEFA Graduate Loan

MEFA is a non-profit state authority offering low fixed interest rate loans to students attending Massachusetts colleges or Universities. A MEFA Loan can be used to cover all or part of the amount due to the university. When students need help financing their graduate education, the MEFA Graduate Loan is an excellent loan program. Unlike many private loans, the MEFA Graduate Loan offers low fixed interest rate options. MEFA loans are disbursed directly to the school in two installments.

Please visit mefa.org/collegeloans for 2014-2015 rates.

Current Fixed Interest Rates

Deferred Option—7.59 percent (Repayment starts six months after graduation, dropping below six credits, or leaving school)

Interest-Only Option—7.09 percent  (Interest payment starts 45 days after final disbursement)

- 4 percent origination fee with co-borrower
- 7 percent origination fee without co-borrower
- Student and/or co-borrower must meet MEFA's credit standards

Apply online for a MEFA Graduate Loan at mefa.org/collegeloans or call 1-800-449-MEFA (6332).

ALTERNATIVE LOAN OPTIONS FOR STUDENTS

Why would a student apply for an alternative loan?

Because all educational expenses may not be covered by the financial aid received and the student or family is unable to pay for the remaining expenses out of pocket. An alternative loan is an option to finance the remaining educational expenses after all federal, state and institutional opportunities for scholarships, grants, and loans are exhausted.

Alternative education loans are private non-government loans made from a lender to an individual for the purpose of paying for college expenses like tuition, fees, room and board, and other associated expenses. Because alternative loans are not guaranteed by the federal government, they must be insured privately. This extra cost is passed on to the borrower in the form of higher fees and interest rates. Alternative loans are used to cover unmet need or costs not covered by grants, scholarships, or other loans given by the school. An alternative loan should be your last option for funding after you have exhausted all other types of federal and state grants and loans.
We strongly recommend that you apply with a creditworthy co-signer to improve your chances for approval, as well as receive a lower interest rate and better terms on your loan. Please visit our website at umass.edu/umfa for detailed information on alternative loan programs. UMass Amherst is required to certify these loans to ensure that the loan amount does not exceed the cost of attendance less all other financial aid.

**Below is a list of important questions to ask a prospective lender before applying for an alternative loan. As with all borrowing, students and parents must carefully consider the terms of an alternative loan before applying.**

- What types of loans do you offer and which one is best for my situation?
- What is the enrollment eligibility? Find out if you must be enrolled at least half time and/or in a degree-seeking program.
- How much in total loan fees will I pay? Find out if there is a fee at disbursement, additional fees at repayment, etc.
- How much will my payment be if I borrow $__________?
- Do I need or should I use a co-signer?
- What is my interest rate and how is it calculated?
- How and when do you capitalize interest? Accrued interest is periodically capitalized (added) to the principal balance of your loan. The fewer times your lender capitalizes, the lower your costs will be.
- Do I have a grace period after graduation or leaving school before repayment begins?
- What are my deferment (postponement of repayment) options?
- How long do I have to repay the loan? If you are worried about high monthly payments after graduation, find a lender with a long repayment period (typical periods are 10, 15 or 20 years) and no penalty for early repayment.
Expense Worksheet for Undergraduates and CPE Students

What Will I Owe?

1. Enter your total billed costs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room &amp; Board</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental Health Insurance</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A. Total Direct Costs** $ ________

Enter financial aid for the academic year and/or payments (do not include Federal Work-Study):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Aid Type</th>
<th>$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any Payment Made to UMass</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMass Amherst Scholarship</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Pell Grant</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Grant</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal SEOG</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Perkins Loan</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Direct Loan*</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Scholarships/Grants</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent/Alternative Student Loans</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B. Total Financial Assistance** $ ________

* Multiply amount borrowed by 0.98 to calculate net disbursement.

2. Subtract Total Financial Assistance (B) from your Total Direct Cost (A) to arrive at the total amount you will owe to UMass Amherst and/or the amount of Parent or Student Alternative loan you will need to cover all your expenses.

**Total amount you will owe to UMass Amherst (A-B)** $ ________

Please remember that in addition to the direct-billed charges, UMass Amherst students will also need to purchase books and supplies and cover weekly living expenses including transportation throughout the year. Students who receive financial aid from UMass Amherst are budgeted $1,000 for books and supplies and $1,400 for personal expenses and transportation per year.
FINANCIAL AID RESOURCES AND TECHNOLOGY

**Financial Aid Home Page**
**umass.edu/umfa**
The University of Massachusetts Amherst Financial Aid Services home page includes financial aid deadlines, application information, contact information and links to outside resources. All our forms are available for download in PDF format.

**Job Listing Service**
**umass.edu/umfa/seo**
Financial Aid Services provides students with current listings of on-campus and off-campus jobs. These work-study and non-work-study job listings are accessible on the home page and are also posted outside Financial Aid Services (243 Whitmore Administration Building).

**University of Massachusetts Scholarship Opportunities**
**massachusetts.edu/scholarships**
This application allows current and prospective students to search listings of scholarships available at each of the five UMass campuses. Using a search form, you can narrow your search by criteria such as one particular campus, undergraduate or graduate scholarships, or by keyword.

**Graduate Assistantship Office (GAO)**
**umass.edu/gradschool/assistantship**
The GAO posts assistantship opportunities and processes graduate appointments and associated waivers. This office does not assign or determine who gets assistantships. GAO is located in 517 Goodell Building, and can be reached at (413) 545-5287 or (413) 545-5294 or via email: gradappt@grad.umass.edu.

Visit **umass.edu/gradschool/funding-support** for additional graduate funding opportunities and information.

**UMass Amherst OIT**
**oit.umass.edu**
Information about computing resources on campus.

**The UMass SPIRE System**
**spire.umass.edu**
The SPIRE system is a service available to enrolled students with online access to verify their financial aid, look up bills, register for classes, and check grades.

**U.S. Department of Education Web Sites for Students:**
Complete your Direct Loan Master Promissory Note (MPN) at: **studentloans.gov**

File your FAFSA at: **fasa.gov**

Get a Federal PIN at: **pin.ed.gov**

Get information on Student Financial Assistance at: **studentaid.gov**

Learn about Direct Consolidation Loans: **loanconsolidation.ed.gov**

Learn about Public Service Loan Forgiveness at: **studentloans.gov**

Get your federal loan borrowing history at: **nslds.ed.gov**

Get a Department of Education contact number list at: **www2.ed.gov/about/contacts/tollfree**
Other Resources

Federal Student Aid Information Center
1-800-433-3243
federalstudentaid.ed.gov

The Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA)
(617) 391-6070
osfa.mass.edu

UMass Amherst Financial Services Helpful Links and Resources
umass.edu/umfa/links

How to reach us

Financial Aid Services
243 Whitmore Administration Bldg.
Phone: (413) 545-0801
Fax: (413) 545-1700
Hours of operation:
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 8:30 am to 5 pm
Wednesday 10 am to 5 pm
umass.edu/umfa
finaid@finaid.umass.edu

UMass Amherst Offices:
Dean of Students Office
(413) 545-2684

Dining Services
(413) 545-2472

UCard Office
(413) 545-0197

Undergraduate Admissions
(413) 545-0222

Graduate Admissions
(413) 545-0722

Career Services
(413) 545-2224

Snow Day Hotline
(413) 545-3630

Office of the Bursar
(413) 545-2368

Residential Life
(413) 545-2100

University Health Services
(413) 577-5000

Registrar’s Office
(413) 545-0555

Graduate Records
(413) 545-0024

Continuing & Professional Education (CPE)
(413) 545-3653

Parking Services
(413) 545-0065