

FINANCIAL AID TERMS TO KNOW

BUDGET	All students have a budget based on the cost of attendance. This refers to how much financial aid a student can receive.
COST OF ATTENDANCE	The total cost to attend a school comprised of both DIRECT and INDIRECT costs. DIRECT costs are billable; INDIRECT costs are incidental.
DEPENDENCY STATUS	Students can be DEPENDENT or INDEPENDENT for financial aid purposes. Most of our students are considered DEPENDENT. This does not relate to a student or parent's tax filing status. Students can be INDEPENDENT for limited reasons including, but not limited to, being over the age of 24; both parents are deceased, and the student has not been adopted by the age of 13; and homelessness. Students with extenuating circumstances outside of what are typically accepted may request a DEPENDENCY OVERRIDE (DO) to be considered INDEPENDENT.
DIRECT LOANS	Federal loan program administered by the US Department of Education. Direct SUBSIDIZED and UNSUBSIDIZED loans are available to students by completing the FAFSA. SUBSIDIZED loans do not accrue interest while the student is enrolled. UNSUBSIDIZED loans begin accruing interest after disbursement to the student's account. The DIRECT PARENT PLUS loan is a loan that a parent may take on behalf of their student.
ENROLLMENT STATUS	The number of credits or classes the student is enrolled in, or whether they have withdrawn, graduated, etc. Enrollment status affects eligibility for and the amount of financial aid a student may receive. It also affects when student loans enter repayment status. Full-time enrollment status is at least 12 credits per semester.
FAA	Financial Aid Administrator. Someone who works in the financial aid office.
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid. This is the online form created by the Department of Education to assess students' financial need. This is the main source of financial information that Ursinus uses for aid consideration.
FEDERAL AID	Aid offered to students through the US Department of Education by filling out the FAFSA.
FEDERAL WORK STUDY (FWS)	Federal Work-Study provides funding for part-time jobs for students with financial need. Unlike grants and loans, FWS is paid to students as they earn the funds by working.

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FINANCIAL AID OFFER LETTER	Document outlining the amounts and details of the financial aid being offered to the student, which may include scholarships, grants, loans, employment, or other forms of financial assistance to pay for college expenses.
FINANCIAL NEED	The basic calculation to find financial need is to subtract a student's SAI from the total Cost of Attendance. Financial need is also used to determine eligibility for financial aid.
GIFT AID	Financial aid that does not need to be repaid. These include scholarships and grants.
INSTITUTIONAL AID	This includes scholarships and grants given to a student by the college. These are based on academics and need.
ISIR	Institutional Student Information Record. An ISIR is a school's copy of a student's FAFSA.
MERIT AID	Aid offered to students based on academic performance. Merit aid is most often awarded by the Admission office in the form of merit scholarships.
NET COST/OPC	Out of Pocket Cost. What the student will be expected to pay once financial aid is applied. Our financial aid letters differentiate between Net Cost with and without loans.
NEED-BASED AID	Financial assistance provided to students based on their financial situation, determined by completing the FAFSA. Need-based financial aid can take different forms, including grants, work-study programs, and low-interest loans, like the federal Direct subsidized loan.
ORIGINATION FEE	An upfront fee charged by a lender for processing a new loan application. Origination fees are quoted as a percentage of the total loan.
PELL	Federal student grant program administered by the Department of Education. Pell grants are most often based on a student's SAI. Pell grants do not need to be paid back.
PHEAA	Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency. PHEAA administers the PA state grant program.
PJ	Professional Judgment. This allows an FAA to make adjustments to a student's ISIR/FAFSA based on extenuating circumstances. FAA will collect documents to perform the PJ as needed.
PRIVATE LOAN	A student or parent loan from a bank, credit union, private company, or a nonprofit or state-affiliated lender directly to pay for educational costs. Interest rates and repayment terms are determined between the lender and borrower.

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SAI	Student Aid Index. Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, the FAFSA will calculate an SAI. (SAI has replaced the old EFC.) This is the figure calculated by the FAFSA and used to determine eligibility for financial aid.
SAP	Satisfactory Academic Progress. A student must meet SAP requirements each year to maintain their eligibility for financial aid.
SELF HELP AID	Financial aid that a student must take action to use. The two main forms of self-help aid are loans, which must be repaid, and work study, in which a student works a job and earns a paycheck.
SEOG	The Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant. Award is administered by UC based on Pell eligibility and funds available each year. SEOG funds do not need to be paid back.
SFS	Student Financial Services. Oversees financial aid for prospective and current students and billing for current students.
VERIFICATION	Process in which the Department of Education requires the student to submit additional information to confirm that FAFSA is accurate. FAAs are required to collect forms and make adjustments to certain fields on the ISIR/FAFSA if they have been misreported. Students may also be required to submit ID for this process. Verification is selected at random and approximately 1 out of every 3 FAFSAs are selected.