

# FINANCIAL AID

## Office of Student Financial Aid

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The Office of Student Financial Aid provides a variety of services to help students finance their education; including, financial aid advising, exploring funding resources, and financial assistance. Student financial aid awards may consist of grants, scholarships, work-study, and loans. Awards are based primarily on financial need, although there are some alternative financial aid sources available for those who may not qualify for need-based financial assistance.

The Office has a comprehensive listing of various scholarship opportunities for students to research on the Office of Student Financial Aid's website (<https://www2.gmu.edu/financial-aid/>). Students are encouraged to review the scholarship information often due to the listings being updated continuously and apply early in order to meet deadlines.

The Office is open 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Financial Aid Counselors are available daily by phone, e-mail or personal appointment. Students can also receive financial aid services through the Mason Student Services Center (MSSC (<https://mssc.gmu.edu/>)).

Each year, to apply for financial aid, both new and currently enrolled students must complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). **George Mason University's Federal Title IV school code for the FAFSA is 003749.** Priority consideration for all sources of financial aid is given to those students whose financial aid applications and all required verification documents are on file with the Office of Student Financial Aid by **March 1 (for new students and new transfer students)**. To meet this priority filing date, students should file the FAFSA as soon as possible, after the application is made available (e.g. December 2023 for the 24-25 academic year). The FAFSA is filed online (<http://www.studentaid.gov>).

Financial aid for summer is generally limited to students who have remaining Federal Loan eligibility for the year, or who are eligible for Federal Pell Grant. Summer is considered a "trailer" term at the university. Contact the Office of Student Financial Aid for specifics regarding eligibility and availability of aid.

## Financial Aid Programs

The University administers the following federal, state, and other aid programs:

### Federal Programs

These include the Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Federal Work-Study (FWS), Federal Subsidized Direct Loans, Federal Unsubsidized Direct Loans, Federal PLUS Loans for parents of dependent students (DPLUS) and Federal Grad PLUS Loans for Graduate students (DGPLUS). For more information, go to the Office of Student Financial Aid home page (<http://financialaid.gmu.edu>).

## State Financial Aid Programs for Undergraduate Virginia Residents

Eligibility for all state programs is determined based on the student's FAFSA and financial need. State grant funds are limited, so adherence to the March 1 priority filing date is critical.

### Virginia Commonwealth Award

This program is open to undergraduate students who have demonstrated financial need, are enrolled at least half-time, and are domiciliary residents of Virginia.

### Virginia Guaranteed Assistance Program (VGAP)

This program is a component of the Virginia Commonwealth Award Program that is open to students who have demonstrated academic achievement in high school and have graduated from a Virginia high school. VGAP awards are renewable for up to four years. Students must advance a grade level before receiving a subsequent VGAP award. Students must be enrolled full-time to receive VGAP.

## Graduate Student Assistance

Assistantships, fellowships, and scholarships exclusive of the federal financial aid programs identified earlier are administered by the individual graduate programs. Students interested in pursuing graduate assistantships, fellowships, or scholarships should contact their graduate program directly.

All financial aid recipients are responsible for becoming familiar and complying with applicable federal and state regulations, and university policies.

All students receiving financial aid must be enrolled in an eligible degree or certificate program; maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP) as defined by the Office of Student Financial Aid in accordance with federal guidelines (see below); be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen as defined by the U.S. Department of Education and all male students must be registered with Selective Service.

## Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Standards

Federal legislation governing the administration of federal programs requires colleges and universities to define and enforce standards of academic progress for students receiving or applying for financial aid. To comply with this legislation, the Office of Student Financial Aid has established a formal satisfactory academic progress policy. For detailed information, go to the Office of Student Financial Aid home page (<http://financialaid.gmu.edu>) or contact the Office of Student Financial Aid directly.

## Return of Title IV Funds

The Office of Student Financial Aid is required by federal law to re-calculate federal financial aid eligibility for students who completely withdraw from all classes, drop out, are dismissed, or take a leave of absence prior to completing a payment period or term. According to the regulations, the amount of Federal Title IV awarded to a student must be re-calculated in these situations and any portion of the financial aid received that is considered to be "unearned" must be returned to the Title IV Program(s) from which it was received. Any student considering dropping or withdrawing from all courses, should contact their assigned

Financial Aid Counselor immediately regarding possible adjustments to their financial aid.

## Emergency Loan Programs

George Mason University has established an emergency loan account funded by the Gerson Trust.

This emergency loan is designed for enrolled students that encounter unexpected emergencies and is not meant to pay for tuition and fees. This is a short-term, interest free loan and students may borrow up to \$1000. Repayment is due in 90 days. Applications may be obtained from the Office of Student Financial Aid.

## Certificate Programs that Qualify for Financial Aid (Gainful Employment)

The qualifying undergraduate certificate programs include:

- Accounting Undergraduate Certificate
- Food and Beverage Management Undergraduate Certificate
- Health Practice Management Undergraduate Certificate
- Secondary Education - Biology (6-12) Undergraduate Certificate
- Secondary Education - Chemistry (6-12) Undergraduate Certificate
- Secondary Education - Computer Science (6-12) Undergraduate Certificate
- Secondary Education - Earth Science (6-12) Undergraduate Certificate
- Secondary Education - English (6-12) Undergraduate Certificate
- Secondary Education - Mathematics (6-12) Undergraduate Certificate
- Secondary Education - Physics (6-12) Undergraduate Certificate

The qualifying graduate certificate programs include:

- Advanced Biomedical Sciences Graduate Certificate
- Applied Behavior Analysis Graduate Certificate
- Art Education Licensure Graduate Certificate
- Assistive Technology Graduate Certificate
- Autism Spectrum Disorders Graduate Certificate
- Blindness and Visual Impairments PK-12 Licensure Graduate Certificate
- Business Analytics Graduate Certificate
- Cell and Molecular Biology Graduate Certificate
- College Teaching Graduate Certificate
- Computing Foundations Graduate Certificate
- Counseling Graduate Certificate
- Data Analytics Graduate Certificate
- Early Childhood Education PK-3 Graduate Certificate
- Early Childhood Special Education Graduate Certificate
- Education Assessment, Evaluation, and Data Literacy Graduate Certificate
- Education Leadership Graduate Certificate
- Education Policy Graduate Certificate
- Foreign Language Licensure Graduate Certificate
- Forensics Graduate Certificate
- General Curriculum Concentration within the Special Education Graduate Certificate
- Geospatial Intelligence Graduate Certificate
- Gifted Education Graduate Certificate

- Global Economic Policy Graduate Certificate
- Health Informatics and Data Analytics Graduate Certificate
- Higher Education Administration Graduate Certificate
- Information Security Management Graduate Certificate
- International Baccalaureate (IB) in Teaching and Learning Graduate Certificate
- International School Leadership Practice Graduate Certificate
- Learning Technologies: E-Learning Graduate Certificate
- Linguistics: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages Graduate Certificate
- Literacy and Reading Instruction Graduate Certificate
- Music Education Licensure PK-12 Graduate Certificate
- Nutrition Graduate Certificate
- Publishing Practice Graduate Certificate
- Research Methods Graduate Certificate
- School Psychology Graduate Certificate
- Science Policy Graduate Certificate
- Secondary Education Licensure Graduate Certificate
- Specialized Reading Instruction for Student with Special Learning Disabilities Graduate Certificate
- Sports Management Graduate Certificate
- Tactical Athlete Strength, Conditioning, and Injury Prevention Graduate Certificate
- Teaching English as a Second Language Graduate Certificate
- Teaching Theatre PK-12 Graduate Certificate