

Financial Aid Frequently Asked Questions

1 What is your Title IV School Code?

006656

2 How do I apply for Financial Aid?

Your **first** step is to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to determine your eligibility for Federal, State, and Institutional grants, as well as Federal Stafford Loans and Federal Work Study. You can apply online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Once we receive your results from the FAFSA, our office will contact you to request additional paperwork. You may also be required to fill out the FAFSA for certain scholarship applications. A copy of the application can be obtained on the Scholarship website at: www.cod.edu/fin_aid/

3 I am independent - why do I need my parent's information?

According to the federal government, you will be considered dependent if:

You are under 24 years of age

You are not married

You do not have any children and/or dependents

You are not an orphan and/or a ward of the court/state

You are not a veteran of the armed forces

4 Is the FAFSA the only form I have to fill out for Financial Aid?

The FAFSA is your first step. After your FAFSA, you will need to complete College of DuPage's financial aid forms and any required verification documents as determined by the Federal Processor.

5 I have my Student Acknowledgement Reports (SAR), what do I with it now?

Review the information on your SAR and make sure it is error-free. Any errors must be corrected and be re-submitted via your SAR or online. Making corrections online will expedite the process. The College also receives your corrected SAR electronically.

6 Who can I talk to? I need help filling out my forms.

You can contact our office to speak with a financial aid specialist. We have walk-in counselors available Monday through Thursday. Our office hours are Monday through Thursday 8am to 6pm and Friday 8am to 5pm.

7 I don't understand this bill?

Contact the Cashiers Office.

8 I want to drop a class, will this affect my Financial Aid?

YES. Depending on when you drop the class you could end up owing money to not only the College of DuPage, but also to the Department of Education, or your lender. A student's financial aid award is normally based on the enrollment status at the mid-quarter date of the term. If your financial aid is processed after mid quarter, your financial award could be based your enrollment hours at that time.

If you completely withdraw from all your classes before the 60% date of the term, according to the Department of Education's Refund Policy, you will be required to pay back a portion of your grant and/or loan to the College of DuPage, the federal government, and/or your lender.

Students must also be in compliance with College of DuPage's Minimum Academic Requirements for Financial Aid Policy, which states students must be completing at least 67% of all their attempted hours. Dropping classes may put you at risk of losing your financial aid.

Please check with the Office of Student Financial Aid prior to dropping classes!!

9 Is a Pell Grant and a MAP Grant the same?

The Pell Grant is a need based grant offered through the Federal Government. The Pell Grant can cover tuition, fees, and books. The MAP Grant is a need based grant offered through the State of Illinois. The MAP grant can cover a portion of your tuition only.

10 When do I get my Pell Grant refunds?

Any Pell grant money that is left over after paying tuition, fees and books is mailed out to the student around mid-semester. It is the student's responsibility to keep the Registration Office up to date with your current address.

11 How do I apply for Federal Stafford Loans?

When you fill out the FAFSA, there is a question asking if you are interested in applying for loans. By indicating yes, our office will determine your loan eligibility and notify you via an award letter of what you are eligible to borrow. After the student then completes and returns the enclosed Stafford Loan Accept/Decline form, you will then need to fill out a Master Promissory Note (MPN) with the lender. Also, if you are a first time borrower at the College of DuPage you are required to complete Stafford Loan Entrance Counseling.

12 Why didn't someone tell me I needed to complete Stafford Loan Entrance Counseling?

We provide you with this information when you complete the College of DuPage Financial Aid Data Confirmation Sheet, as well as on the back of the Stafford Loan Accept/Decline Form and Stafford Loan Request Form. This is a federal requirement.

13 When will I receive my loan funds?

Upon completion of the Master Promissory Note (MPN) the lender will send your loan funds electronically to the College of DuPage according to the dates listed on your Notice of Guarantee. Any remaining loan funds in excess of your educational costs will be mailed to your address within approximately 14 days of being placed on your account and no earlier than the start of the term. Any excess PLUS loan funds will be mailed to the student within approximately 14 days of being placed on the student's account and no earlier than the start of the term.

If you are a first-time Stafford Loan borrower at College of DuPage, disbursement of your loan funds will be delayed until 30 days after the start of the term.

14 Why was my Financial Aid taken away?

Federal law mandates financial aid recipients maintain a certain standard of academic performance in order to qualify for and retain financial aid eligibility. Failure to meet these requirements can result in the loss of a student's financial aid. For more detailed information regarding the [Minimum Academic Requirements for Financial Aid Policy](#), please contact the Office of Student Financial Aid or visit us online at www.cod.edu/fin_aid.

15 How come I wasn't told that I had attempted 96 semester hours?

While our office does attempt to notify students, it is the student's responsibility to be aware of and ensure compliance with the Minimum Academic Requirements for Financial Aid Policy.

16 What if this is the first time I am using Financial Aid?

Federal regulations require that Minimum Academic Requirements for Financial Aid Policy be applied to a student's academic performance without regard to whether or not aid has previously been received.

17 I appealed my discontinuance of financial aid, but I was denied. What else can I do?

You can always look into scholarships. For more information, please check out our scholarship information online at www.cod.edu/fin_aid.

There are also alternative loans available to students who are no longer eligible for financial aid through the FAFSA. Please contact the Office of Student Financial Aid for more detailed information about these programs.

18 How do I transfer my financial aid from my previous school to College of DuPage?

If students wish to use their financial aid at College of DuPage, they must add College of DuPage to their FAFSA application. This will send your FAFSA information to our office, at which point we will re-process your information to determine your eligibility at the College of DuPage.

19 Did you receive my financial aid from my previous school? They said they would transfer it?

Your financial aid does not "transfer" from one school to the next. When you add a new school to your FAFSA, your FAFSA information is sent to the new school, in this case, College of DuPage. Our office will then re-process your FAFSA information and determine what eligibility remains for use at the College of DuPage, based on our Cost of Attendance. Since each school varies in their Cost of Attendance, your awards may vary from school to school, so that is why your financial aid does not "transfer" from one school to the next. Each student is processed through our office to determine eligibility.

20 I got fired from my job, why do I have to get information from them? They won't give it to me - what else can I do?

The purpose of a Special Condition review is to consider a loss of income due to an involuntary circumstance, such as termination, lay-off, company closing, etc. A person who voluntarily leaves a job does not qualify for a Special Condition review. Therefore, it is the student's responsibility to document that the job loss was not voluntary. A student filing a Special Condition based on loss of employment must submit a copy of the Unemployment Benefits statement. The initial statement issued, showing either approval or denial of benefits, indicates the reason for loss of employment. That statement may be used as documentation in lieu of a statement from the employer.

21 How long does it take to process a Special Condition?

The review and processing of a Special Condition or Dependency Appeal may take approximately four weeks from the date all required information has been received by our office. Depending on the circumstances presented, it may be necessary to request additional information after the initial review is done. In those cases, the amount of time taken by the student to provide the additional information to the Financial Aid Office would affect the total processing time accordingly. The student is responsible for documenting any income earned prior to unemployment.

22 How can I apply for a Dependency Appeal? I don't live with my parents.

A student who does not meet the criteria for independent status based on the dependency questions on the FAFSA may submit a Dependency Appeal if that student's personal situation involves unusual circumstances. Please note that, in accordance with federal guidelines, parents' unwillingness to assist the student financially isn't, in and of itself, grounds for a dependency override. Nor can an override be approved solely because the parents will not provide information needed for completion of the FAFSA or for verification. Also, a student who is financially self-sufficient and/or lives apart from parents cannot be considered for independent status based on those circumstances alone.

If, after reading the explanation above, a student believes there are special circumstances to be considered, a Dependency Appeal form may be completed and submitted to the Financial Aid Office with the appropriate documentation needed to support the student's claim.