

The logo for Georgia College & State University, featuring the words "GEORGIA COLLEGE" in a large, bold, serif font, with "& STATE UNIVERSITY" in a smaller font below it. The logo is centered over a black and white photograph of a classical building with a large dome and a portico with columns.

GEORGIA
COLLEGE
& STATE UNIVERSITY®

Financial Aid Guide

2008-2009



Office of Financial Aid • Campus Box 30 • Milledgeville, GA 31061
(800) 342-0471 • (478) 445-5149 • www.gcsu.edu/financialaid



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Registrar's Office

(800) 342-0471
(478) 445-6286

University Housing

(478) 445-5160

University Career Center

(478) 445-5384

Federal Processor

(FAFSA Status; Duplicate
Student Aid Reports)
(800) 433-3243
(319) 337-5665

HOPE Information

(800) 546-HOPE
www.GAcollege411.org

GCSU Financial Aid Office

(800) 342-0471
(478) 445-5149
www.gcsu.edu/financialaid

Business Office

(478) 445-5254

Admissions Office

(800) 342-0471
(478) 445-2774

FAFSA On The Web

www.fafsa.ed.gov

PAWS Information System

paws.gcsu.edu

Welcome Students

Dear Student:

We are pleased that you are interested in studying at Georgia College & State University, Georgia's Public Liberal Arts University. We are aware of your concerns for financing your education and want to assist you in making the appropriate decisions. Our staff's goal is to meet individual needs in a timely, efficient, and equitable manner by providing you with exceptional service and up-to-date information.

For new and returning students, the majority of communication regarding financial aid will be through e-mail using your University assigned eCats e-mail account. For new students who have not yet been assigned an e-mail account, we will use the e-mail address reported on your admission or financial aid application. We are pleased to be able to offer you immediate access to financial awards over the web at <http://paws.gcsu.edu/>. Once your award eligibility has been determined, you will be sent an e-mail with instructions on how you can view them on our website.

By completing the federal application process, you will be considered for federal and state aid including the HOPE Scholarship. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) may be completed online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Students and parents may obtain a PIN from the U.S. Department of Education at www.pin.ed.gov, which can be used as an electronic signature. Students whose files are complete by the March 1, 2008, priority date will receive full consideration for federal and state aid programs with limited funding.

Students who wish to apply only for the HOPE Scholarship may do so by visiting www.GAcollege411.org.

The most important factor in applying for financial aid is to apply early. Once we have received your application, we will notify you if additional information is needed. Keep in mind that students must be accepted for admission to the University before aid offers are made. The Financial Aid Office at GCSU has a staff of well-trained counselors available to assist you, Monday - Friday from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Best wishes in your academic pursuit, and we look forward to serving you.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Pittman

Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management
E-mail: suzanne.pittman@gcsu.edu

GCSU Financial Aid
(800) 342-0471
(478) 445-5149

www.gcsu.edu/financialaid



Table of Contents

Important Telephone Numbers and Websites	1
Application Process	3
Steps for Applying for Aid	3
Applying for the HOPE Scholarship	3
How Financial Aid is Determined	4
Basic Eligibility Requirements	4
Financial Aid Procedures	5
Important Dates – Application and Semester Deadlines	5
Outside Scholarships	5
Summer Session Financial Aid	5
Study Abroad	5
Transient Status	5
Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy	6
Academic Requirements for Receiving Financial Aid	6
Review Process	6
Academic Standards and/or Incremental Progress	6-7
Financial Aid Warning	7
Conditions for Reinstatement	7
Appeal	7
Types of Aid	8
Grants/Scholarships	8
Federal Pell Grant	8
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)	8
ACG	8
SMART	8
HOPE Scholarship	8
HOPE Promise and HOPE Teacher Scholarships	8
Georgia’s HERO Scholarship	8
Loan Programs	9
Federal Stafford Loan	9
Federal PLUS Loan	10
Federal Perkins Loan	10
Employment	10
Federal Work-Study	10
GCSU Student Employment Program	10
Change of Information	11
Enrollment Status	11
Disbursement of Financial Aid	11
Refund Policies and Procedures	12
Financial Aid Programs Chart	13



Application Process

STEPS FOR APPLYING FOR AID

APPLYING FOR THE HOPE SCHOLARSHIP

Students who wish to apply only for the HOPE Scholarship may do so by visiting www.GAcollege411.org. Once a "profile" has been completed at this website, students should complete the GSFAPPS from the "Application & Transcripts" menu. Financial awards for returning students will be made after Spring Semester 2008 grades are reported.

STATUS OF FINANCIAL AID APPLICATIONS

Students are encouraged to check with the Financial Aid Office regarding the status of their application. This may be done by visiting or calling the office or checking the GCSU PAWS website at <http://paws.gcsu.edu/>.

Students may check the status of their FAFSA by using the Department of Education's automated system (touch tone phone required) at 1-800-4FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) and selecting option #1. Students who do not wish to use the automated system or who have a rotary phone should call 1-319-337-5665.

- 1** Apply and be accepted for admission to Georgia College & State University.
- 2** Apply for financial aid by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Students who have previously applied for aid also may apply by using a Renewal FAFSA form sent to them from the U.S. Department of Education. If on a previous application, the student supplied the Department of Education with an email address, all future notifications will be sent electronically via e-mail, including the renewal application notice.
- 3** When completing the FAFSA, be sure to list Georgia College & State University in the school section of the application using our Federal School Code of **001602**. This will allow us to receive an electronic copy of the application. Students should also be certain that all necessary signatures are included.
- 4** Be sure to report to the Financial Aid Office, in writing, any pending outside scholarships.
- 5** In no more than four weeks, the student will receive an e-mail notification with a direct link to the student's online Student Aid Report (SAR). If an e-mail address was not provided on the application, the information will be mailed to the student. An electronic copy will also be sent to GCSU if so indicated. Please carefully read the comment section on the SAR to determine if any further action is required to complete the application process. If any information is incorrect, follow the instructions provided on the SAR.
- 6** Please verify with the GCSU Financial Aid Office that an electronic copy of the Student Aid Report (SAR) has been received.
- 7** Verification is the process by which the U.S. Department of Education requires schools to check a certain percentage of their financial aid applications for accuracy. If the application is selected, the student will be asked to submit additional information to the Financial Aid Office. At a minimum, this will include a completed verification worksheet, student's federal tax return, and if applicable, the parent's or spouse's tax returns.
- 8** Parents of dependent students who apply for the PLUS Loan must complete a PLUS application as well as the other listed requirements. PLUS applications are available from the Financial Aid Office or may be downloaded from www.gcsu.edu/financialaid.
- 9** Students will be notified of their eligibility for financial aid through either an electronic Award Letter or explanation of ineligibility not more than two weeks after they complete the application process.



Determining Eligibility

HOW FINANCIAL NEED IS DETERMINED

Financial need is the difference between the estimated Cost of Attendance at GCSU and the Expected Family Contribution. The Cost of Attendance, which is determined by GCSU, is an estimate of tuition, fees, room, board, books, supplies, personal, and miscellaneous expenses. This estimate is used in financial aid calculations and is prepared in advance of actual fees being established. The financial aid Cost of Attendance includes costs paid directly to GCSU and also indirect costs that the student may incur associated with attending school.

Expected Family Contribution

is derived from a formula that is applied to your family's income as reported on the FAFSA. By subtracting the Expected Family Contribution from the Cost of Attendance, financial need is determined. The Federal Pell Grant, ACG, SMART, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Federal Work-Study, Federal Perkins Loan, and Federal Family Subsidized Loans are awarded on the basis of financial need.

BASIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- 1** Be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
- 2** Be in compliance with the Academic Requirements for Receiving Aid. (See page 6.)
- 3** Be fully accepted for admission at GCSU in a degree-seeking program. Exception: (Applicable to Stafford or PLUS.) A non-degree seeker may be eligible for a loan under one or more of these programs if (s)he is enrolled or accepted for enrollment as at least a half-time (6 credit hours) student in a program that is necessary for either a professional credential from a state, if that credential or certification is required for employment in the state as an elementary or secondary school teacher or to qualify him/her for enrollment in a degree or certificate program. The latter is restricted to length of program, verified by Chairman of the Department. For federal aid purposes, these students are considered fifth-year undergraduates.
- 4** Non-degree, transient, conditional, and/or unclassified students are not eligible for Federal Pell Grant, Federal Perkins Loan, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, Federal Work-Study, Federal Family Stafford Loan, and Federal PLUS.
- 5** Transient students may receive HOPE Scholarship funds, if eligible.
- 6** Not be in default on any loan or have borrowed in excess of loan limits at any institution.
- 7** Not owe a refund on any grant at any institution.
- 8** Certify registration with Selective Service, if required.
- 9** Demonstrate financial need for need-based programs.

Effective July 1, 2000, students are ineligible for Title IV federal financial aid funds if convicted of an offense involving the possession of an illegal substance that occurred during a period of enrollment for which the students were receiving federal student aid (grants, loans and/or work-study). The ineligibility period is:

- First Offense = 1 year
- Second Offense = 2 years
- Third Offense = Indefinite

For convictions involving sale of an illegal substance, the ineligibility period is:

- First Offense = 2 years
- Second Offense = Indefinite

A student may regain eligibility by successfully completing a drug rehabilitation program that complies with criteria established by the U.S. Department of Education. Contact the Financial Aid Office for further details. Report any convictions involving an illegal substance on question #31 of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Financial Aid Policies



IMPORTANT DATES

PRIORITY PACKAGING DEADLINE	MARCH 1, 2008
FALL SEMESTER DEADLINE	JULY 1, 2008
SPRING SEMESTER DEADLINE	NOVEMBER 1, 2008
SUMMER SEMESTER DEADLINE	APRIL 1, 2009

Students must submit complete financial aid applications by the above "Priority Package Deadline" to be considered for programs that have a limited supply of funds.

Students must submit complete financial aid applications by these dates in order to use financial aid funds to pay for the semester's bill. Students whose files are not complete by this date should be prepared to pay costs until applications are processed and eligibility is determined.

The Federal Processing Center must receive the application(s) before June 20, 2009, and all verification processes must be completed before August 1, 2009, for the student to receive consideration for the academic year 2008-2009 or Summer 2009. Electronic Student Aid Reports must be submitted to GCSU before the student's enrollment period ends in order to be considered for aid.

OUTSIDE SCHOLARSHIPS

Any resources that a student receives or expects to receive should be reported in writing to the Financial Aid Office. The receipt of other resources may result in reduction, cancellation, and/or repayment of need-based aid.

SUMMER SESSION FINANCIAL AID

Students who wish to receive financial aid for the Summer Session 2009 must complete a Summer Aid Application as well as the FAFSA. Students who are receiving HOPE only must also complete a Summer Aid Application. Summer Aid Applications are available in March 2009 via the CSU PAWS website, coinciding with course registration.

STUDY ABROAD

The International Education Center (IEC) provide information on the various approved study abroad and exchange programs offered by Georgia College & State University, the University System of Georgia, and other accredited academic institutions. Studying abroad enables students to increase knowledge of a foreign language, provides the opportunity to gain insight into and appreciation for the cultures and institutions of other people;

facilitates the development of relevant career skills; and contributes to personal maturity, a sense of independence, self-knowledge, and confidence. Georgia College & State University students who are eligible for financial aid may use that aid to participate in study abroad and exchange programs approved by the IEC. For specifics on transferability, contact the Financial Aid Office, 103 Parks Hall, (478) 445-5149 for guidelines. In addition, a number of study abroad scholarships are available through the International Education Center in Lanier Hall or call (478) 445-4789.

TRANSIENT STATUS

Georgia College & State University students who are planning on taking transient coursework with another institution may qualify for financial aid. In order for students to receive federal funds or other aid for transient coursework, a Consortium Agreement must be obtained from the GCSU Financial Aid Office and completed by the host institution. Students are required to pay all costs at the host institution and receive aid as reimbursement. HOPE eligible students may receive HOPE if attending an eligible institution. HOPE funds are paid by the host institution. For specifics on qualifying, contact the Financial Aid Office, 103 Parks Hall, (478) 445-5149.



Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

Academic Requirements for Receiving Financial Aid

The Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, mandates institutions of higher education to establish a standard of satisfactory academic progress for students who receive financial aid. This standard must apply to the student's entire academic history, whether Title IV financial aid was received or not. In order to remain eligible to receive aid at Georgia College & State University, students must meet the standards specified for acceptable academic performance and for satisfactory progress toward the completion of their program of study. The standards are established within the framework of applicable federal regulations specifically for the purpose of determining the eligibility of students to receive aid under the generally funded Title IV programs, including ACG, SMART, Federal Pell Grant, Federal Perkins Loan, Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant, Federal Work-Study, Georgia's HOPE Scholarship, and Federal Family Education Loan Programs (Stafford, PLUS). They should not be confused with Probation or Good Standing as defined by academic regulations.

COMPONENTS

The GCSU definition of satisfactory academic progress for receiving financial aid includes the following components:

I. QUALITATIVE STANDARDS

GCSU uses the 4.0 grade point average and numerical code:

4.0 = A	1.0 = D
3.0 = B	0.0 = F
2.0 = C	0.0=WF

Students are expected to maintain the following overall institution grade point average (GPA) based on the number of semester hours earned:

A) UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Semester Hours Earned (Exclusive of Learning Support; Inclusive of Transfer work)	Required Institutional Average on GCSU Hours Attempted (No Transfer Grades Included)
0-30	1.40
31-60	1.60
61-over	1.80
Graduation	2.00

B) GRADUATE STUDENTS

Any student who's institutional GPA falls below a 3.0 will be on financial aid probation.

II. QUANTITATIVE PROCESS

Students are expected to successfully complete 67 percent of all GCSU enrolled course work.

The Student Financial Aid Office staff will verify enrollment status three days after classes begin according to the following table:

	Full-time	Three-quarter time	Half-time
Undergraduate	12-up	11-9	8-6
Graduate	9-up	8-6	5

III. MAXIMUM TIME FRAME

Students who attended on a full-time basis at GCSU will have the following time frame (subject to individual program regulations) in which to receive consideration for financial aid:

Undergraduate Students	12 Semesters or 190 Attempted Hours
Graduate Students (Master's Degree)	6 Semesters or 55 Attempted Hours
Graduate Students (Specialist in Education)	4 Semesters or 41 Attempted Hours

The time frame for students who attend other than full-time will be determined on a yearly basis taking into account the enrollment status of the student. Students who begin their education at another institution and then transfer to GCSU will have their standing classified by the appropriate office. For these students, financial aid eligibility is identical to that of GCSU students with

comparable hours. (i.e., Transfer students who are classified as juniors will have the same eligibility as GCSU juniors.) Students who are required to take learning support courses may have their time frame extended. Students may be considered to receive financial aid for learning support and other non-credit coursework up to 30 semester hours provided they meet GCSU requirements for making satisfactory progress in the program.

REVIEW PROCESS

I. ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND/OR INCREMENTAL PROGRESS

With the exception of those students on Financial Aid Warning (see below), the Financial Aid Office staff will determine whether the student has successfully completed the minimum expected number of hours with the required GPA and shown progress toward the educational degree for all completed semesters at the end of each academic year (Spring Semester). The review, which will occur during the summer, will include all hours attempted during the student's attendance period.

The following will be considered as semester hours successfully completed:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. "A" through "D" grades | 3. "K" credit |
| 2. "S" satisfactory | 4. "IC" institutional credit |

The following shall not be considered as semester hours completed:

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. "F" failing | 5. "V" audit |
| 2. "I" incomplete | 6. "WF" withdrew failing |
| 3. "W" withdrew | 7. "IP" used in Learning Support |
| 4. "U" unsatisfactory | |

FINANCIAL AID WARNING

A student will be automatically placed on financial aid warning in the event that the student fails to meet the institutional GPA and/or incremental progress requirements. A student in this category may receive financial aid for the next academic year, but will be reviewed at the end of that year. Students must have completed both the aggregate number of semester hours required and attain the overall institutional GPA required to establish satisfactory academic progress. If the student does not make up the deficiencies and remove himself/herself from financial aid warning, the student is considered to be making unsatisfactory academic progress and is placed on financial aid suspension. Financial aid suspension means the termination of all financial aid until the student has returned to a satisfactory academic progress standing.

A student who does not meet the time frame requirements will, without warning, become ineligible for financial aid.

SUSPENSION

A student whose financial aid has been suspended for failure to meet the institutional GPA and/or incremental progress requirements can become eligible for consideration

for financial aid by, without financial aid, attend GCSU and reestablish satisfactory academic progress.

(a) A student who fails to meet satisfactory progress requirements a second time will become ineligible for any further aid.

(b) A student who returns to GCSU after being on financial aid suspension remains on financial aid suspension.

APPEAL

A student whose financial aid has been suspended may appeal in writing to the Director of Financial Aid. In the appeal, the student should state the reason(s) why satisfactory academic progress was not maintained, explain why aid should not be terminated, and list any extenuating circumstances that should be considered. Examples of these circumstances may include illness, death in the family, or other extenuating circumstances. Upon receiving a written letter of appeal, a meeting will be scheduled with the Director. The Financial Aid Office will notify the student of the date and time of the meeting. A student wishing to appeal the decision of the

Director may do so, in writing, to the Financial Aid Internal Review (FAIR) Committee. A student wishing to appeal the decision of the FAIR Committee may do so, in writing, to the Vice President for Institutional Research and Enrollment Management.





Types of Aid

Grants, Loans, Federal Work-Study and a **limited number of scholarships** are available through this office to help with educational expenses at Georgia College & State University. Grants do not have to be repaid. Most loans must be repaid in cash. Federal Work-Study awards are earned during period of enrollment. Students must be enrolled at least half-time to receive a Federal Stafford Loan or Federal PLUS Loan. Federal Pell Grants are available for less than full-time students depending on need. HOPE Scholarships are available for one or more hours of enrollment. All student aid will be awarded based on anticipated full-time enrollment unless otherwise noted on your Award Letter. The following programs are available at GCSU.

GRANTS/SCHOLARSHIPS

FEDERAL PELL GRANT PROGRAM is designated for undergraduate students working toward a first undergraduate degree. The amount of the grant is determined by the Cost of Attendance, the Expected Family Contribution provided by the U.S. Department of Education, and your enrollment status. Students who are enrolled full-time (12 or more credit hours) will receive full eligibility. Students enrolled nine to eleven credit hours will receive three-fourths of eligibility. Students who are enrolled six to eight credit hours will receive one-half of eligibility.

FEDERAL SUPPLEMENT EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY GRANT (FSEOG) is designed for undergraduate students who demonstrate exceptional financial need. There is a limited supply of these funds, so they are awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis.

ACADEMIC COMPETITIVENESS GRANT (ACG) provides funding for traditional first and second year undergraduate study. Recipients must be US citizens, eligible for the Federal Pell Grant, enroll full-time and have successfully completed a rigorous high school program no earlier than January 1, 2005, as determined by the state or local education agency and recognized by the Secretary of Education. Further, second year recipients must have maintained a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 and earned 30 semester hours.

NATIONAL SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS ACCESS TO RETAIN TALENT (SMART) GRANT provides funding for each of the third and fourth years of undergraduate study to full-time students who are US citizens, eligible for the Federal Pell Grant, and majoring in physical, life or computer sciences, mathematics, technology, or engineering, or in a foreign language determined critical to national security. Recipients must have maintained a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 in coursework required for the major and earned between 60 and 120 semester hours. Continued eligibility is reviewed upon completion of each semester.

HOPE SCHOLARSHIP (Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally) is funded by the Georgia Lottery for education and is available to eligible Georgia residents. HOPE covers the cost of tuition, some fees, and a book allowance. Students may not receive HOPE after attempting 127 semester hours.

Eligibility Requirements

- Georgia resident. Students receiving a tuition waiver must also have graduated from a Georgia high school.
- Grade point eligibility for entering freshmen is based on a final high school grade point average of 3.0 or better as reported by the high school and determined by the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC).
- Regardless of high school graduation or high school grade point average, students may be eligible for a HOPE Scholarship after attempting 30, 60, or 90 semester hours with a 3.0 cumulative grade point average.
- Students must maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average while in college. The grade point average is reviewed at the 30th, 60th, and 90th attempted semester hour, and as well as at the end of each Spring Semester. This covers all prior colleges attended as well as GCSU.
- Students, who lose the HOPE Scholarship due to grade point average dropping below a 3.0, are eligible to reapply at the 60th or 90th attempted semester hour, provided their cumulative grade point average is a 3.0.
- Full-time enrollment is not a requirement.

Students who have any questions may contact the Financial Aid Office at (478) 445-5149 or out of state at 1-800-342-0471 or contact the GSFC at 1-800-505-4732.

HOPE PROMISE AND HOPE TEACHER SCHOLARSHIPS are also funded by the Georgia Lottery for Education and are components of the HOPE Scholarship Program.

HOPE Promise Scholarship: The purpose of this Program is to attract high-achieving undergraduates into the teaching profession and provide them with financial assistance beginning their junior year and continuing their senior year. Scholarship recipients agree to teach in a Georgia public school at the preschool, elementary, or secondary level after graduation. If a recipient fails to meet this obligation, the scholarship becomes a loan, which must be repaid in cash, with interest.

HOPE Teacher Scholarship: This scholarship provides financial assistance to teachers, counselors, and individuals who are seeking advanced degrees in critical fields of study. Scholarship recipients agree to teach in a Georgia public school at the preschool, elementary, or secondary level after graduation. If a recipient fails to meet this obligation, the scholarship becomes a loan, which must be repaid in cash with interest.

Applications for HOPE Promise and HOPE Teacher Scholarships will be available in late Spring, 2008. Students may contact the Financial Aid Office or the GSFC at that time. For additional information about HOPE Promise or HOPE Teacher Scholarships, please call the Georgia Student Finance Authority at (770) 414-3085 or toll-free at 1-800-505-4732 or visit www.GACollege411.org.

GEORGIA'S HERO (HELPING EDUCATE RESERVISTS AND THEIR OFFSPRING) SCHOLARSHIP: This program provides assistance to members of the Georgia National Guard and US Military Reservists who served in combat zones or the children of such members. Recipients may receive up to \$2,000 per academic school year for a maximum of \$8,000 for the equivalent of four years of study. Applications for the HERO program are available to download from the Georgia Student Finance Commission at www.GACollege411.org or applicants may contact their office at (770)414-3085 or toll-free at (800)505-4732.

INSTITUTIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS: Entering Freshman scholarships are awarded to qualified students on an annual basis. Scholarship amounts vary. Using the GCSU Admissions applications, students who participate in the Early Action Admissions application (November 1) process will be given preference for all academic scholarships. Based on availability, students admitted by February 1 will be given consideration. The Vera Lucille Vincent and Distinguished Scholars Award require additional applications which may be downloaded at www.gcsu.edu/financialaid/scholarships.html.

The selection process is highly competitive. Generally, students should meet all the following criteria to be competitive:

- Be admitted to Georgia College & State University
- Score 1300 or better on the SAT or 29 on the ACT
- Graduate from high school with a 3.5 Grade Point Average based on a 4.0 scale
- Possess strong academic record
- Students must be enrolled full-time during both fall and spring semesters in order to receive their scholarships.

Continuing students will be considered for scholarships administered by GCSU by completing the GCSU Scholarship Application located on the PAWS website. Students should access their PAWS account at www.paws.gcsu.edu and select "GCSU Scholarship Application" from the Financial Aid menu. The application will be available from mid-December 2007 until February 1, 2008.

There are several other opportunities to explore. Be aware that hometown churches, clubs, professional organizations, and civic groups sometimes offer scholarships. Students who are awarded a scholarship from a source other than GCSU should contact the Scholarship Coordinator in the Financial Aid Office for further information.

Loan Programs

FFELP (Federal Family Education Loan Program) STAFFORD

Federal Stafford Loans are made in the student's name and can be either subsidized or unsubsidized.

A **subsidized** loan is awarded on the basis of financial need. Students will not be charged any interest before they begin repayment or during authorized periods of deferment. The federal government "subsidizes" the interest during these periods. This loan must be repaid.

An **unsubsidized** loan is not awarded on the basis of need. Students will be charged interest from the time the loan is disbursed until it is paid in full. Any interest that accumulates will be capitalized—that is, the interest will be added to the principal amount of the loan and additional interest will be based upon the higher amount. This will increase the amount that will have to be repaid.

By completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), students will be considered for the Federal Stafford Loan. Our office will determine students' eligibility and award the maximum amount students' are eligible to receive. After applications are processed, students will receive an email notification with instructions to view awards online. Having eligibility determined for a Federal Stafford Loan does not commit students to accepting the loan or the amount (students may borrow less than full eligibility).

Students should pay close attention to any additional requirements including Entrance Counseling and Promissory Notes.

Under federal law, students must complete a **Loan Entrance Counseling** session before funds may be disbursed. It is important that students know and understand their rights and responsibilities as a student borrower. Students should contact our office if they have any questions.

Further, students must complete a **Master Promissory Note (MPN)**. In most cases, students will sign only one promissory note that will be used for all loans at Georgia College. Students choosing to complete the MPN electronically may do this upon selecting their lender. By signing the MPN, students are confirming their understanding that Georgia College may make new loans for the duration of their education (up to 10 years), provided their choice of lender does not change, without having to sign another MPN. Each academic year, GCSU will disburse loan proceeds to students' accounts as indicated on the on-line Award Letter viewed from the GCSU Web Student Information System. Students are also agreeing to repay the lender all loans made under the terms of the MPN. Therefore, it is very important to completely read and understand all of the information on the MPN before signing it.

If a student is a first-time Stafford loan borrower at GCSU, they will need to select a lender of their loan. Suggested lenders will be provided on the electronic award letter based on borrower benefits and customer service. Neither Georgia College & State University nor the GCSU Financial Aid Office benefits in any way from your lender selection.

The lender is the institution from which the money is actually borrowed, but the interest rates and terms of the loan are set by the U.S. Department of Education. Some lenders offer special incentives that reduce loan fees, interest rates and/or loan balances.

While we will have a list of lender suggestions, students have the right to select any lender that participates in the Federal Family Education Loan Program. If a student has borrowed a student loan previously, and are satisfied with the lender's service, then we encourage them to stay with the same lender throughout their college career. Multiple loans from multiple lenders could require students to make multiple repayments at the same time. **If a student has previously borrowed at GCSU**, we will automatically assign their loan to their previous lender. If they wish to change their lender, they should contact our office in writing or email us immediately.

Federal Stafford Loan interest rates are fixed at 6.8% effective July 1, 2006. There are also loan fees up to 2.5% (Origination and Default fees) that may be deducted proportionately from each delivery of loan proceeds. This money is passed on to the federal government to help reduce the government's cost of supporting these low interest loans. Repayment must begin no later than six months following graduation or termination of at least half-time enrollment.

Federal Stafford loan maximums are \$3,500 per year for freshmen, \$4,500 per year for sophomores and \$5,500 per year for junior and seniors. The cumulative total of Subsidized and Unsubsidized Stafford loans for all undergraduate study is \$23,000. Graduate students may borrow \$8,500 per year not to exceed the Cost of Attendance (COA). The cumulative total Federal Stafford Loan amount for undergraduate and graduate study combined is \$65,000.

Independent students and dependent students whose parents are denied under the Federal PLUS Loan may borrow additional Unsubsidized Stafford Loan funds. Freshmen and sophomores may borrow an additional \$4,000 per year; juniors and seniors may borrow an additional \$5,000 per year. Both may not exceed the student's COA.

The yearly maximum for the Federal Stafford Loan will cover Fall, Spring and Summer Semesters. If the maximum has been received over Fall and Spring semesters, students will not be eligible to borrow additional funds for the Summer term.

Students **must be enrolled at least half-time** (6 or more hours for undergraduate students and 5 or more hours for graduate students) in order to have these funds disbursed to their student account. When the loan is approved, the funds will be disbursed directly into the system to go toward paying the balance of the account with the Business Office at the beginning of each semester. Please see the section entitled *Disbursement of Financial Aid* for specific details.

Students, currently receiving or who have received a loan through Georgia College & State University, who graduate, transfer, drop below half-time enrollment status, or otherwise leave school must arrange for an Exit Interview for the Federal Stafford loan at the GCSU Financial Aid Office.

Service Cancelable Stafford Loans

Georgia Student Finance Authority (GSFA) offers Federal Stafford Service Cancelable Loans for students who are pursuing a Bachelor or Master of Science in Nursing. Bachelor's degree students must be juniors or seniors already accepted into the Nursing Program. Once borrowers go into repayment, loans may be cancelled with GSFA with verification of employment. Borrowers must be working in the Nursing field in the State of Georgia.

Students must have completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid for eligibility to be determined as these loans are Federal Stafford

funds with cancellation options. Funds are limited, therefore, awards are made on a first come, first serve basis. These applications are usually available in the late Spring for the upcoming academic year and must be downloaded from GSFA's website at www.GAcollege411.org

FFELP PLUS (Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students)

PLUS Loans enable parents with good credit histories to borrow monies. These funds are designated to help pay the educational expenses of each child who is a dependent undergraduate student enrolled at least half-time (6 semester hours). The yearly limit on a PLUS loan is equal to the student's Cost of Attendance (COA) minus any other financial aid the student is receiving.

Effective July 1, 2006, Federal PLUS loan interest rates are fixed at 8.5%. Repayment usually begins within 60 days after the final loan disbursement for the period of enrollment for which the funds are borrowed. Applications for the PLUS loan may be obtained from the GCSU Financial Aid Office or students may download the application and fax or mail it to the GCSU Financial Aid Office. Students must have completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for eligibility to be determined.

Parent borrowers will need to select a lender for their loan. Suggested lenders are provided on our website based on borrower benefits and customer service. Neither Georgia College & State University nor the GCSU Financial Aid Office benefits in any way from the borrower's lender selection. While we have provided lender suggestions on our website, parent borrowers have the right to select any lender that participates in the Federal Family Education Loan Program. If parents have borrowed under the Federal PLUS program previously, and are satisfied with the lender's service, then we encourage borrowers to select the same lender each year. Multiple loans from multiple lenders could require you to make multiple payments at the same time.

The lender is the institution from which the money is actually borrowed, but the interest rates and terms of the loan are set by the U.S. Department of Education. Some lenders offer special incentives that reduce the borrower's loan fees, interest rates and/or loan balance.

Federal PLUS Loans will be disbursed after a Master Promissory Note has been electronically signed. The PLUS MPN has a multi-year feature. This multi-year feature allows a parent of a dependent student to only have to sign one promissory note that can be used for up to 10 years.

A parent will need to complete an application each year in order for this loan to be awarded to the student. Passive confirmation will be used after the request for a PLUS Loan has been completed. The borrower must take action only if he or she does not want the loan, or wants to change the loan amount. With passive confirmation, loan funds will be disbursed after the borrower has been notified of the new loans.

Funds will first be used toward the student's bill at the Business Office. Any funds remaining can be used to purchase books at the GCSU PawPrints Bookstore approximately three days prior to the first day of classes through the end of the drop/add period. Any remaining funds will be disbursed in a check payable to the student approximately seven days after the end of the drop/add period each semester.

FEDERAL PERKINS

The Federal Perkins Loan is a low-interest loan for students with exceptional financial need. Georgia College & State University is the lender. The loan is made with government funds with a share contributed by GCSU, so your payments are through the university.

Eligibility for this loan program will be determined on a first-come, first-serve basis upon completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

The aggregate amount of funds eligible students may borrow is (1) \$4,500 for students who have not completed two academic years of study toward a bachelor's degree and (2) \$9,000 for students who have completed two academic years of study for a bachelor's degree but have not received a degree.

Repayment begins nine months after the student graduates or leaves school. The student may be allowed up to ten years to repay the loan. During the repayment period, the student will be charged 5 percent simple interest on the unpaid balance of the loan principle. The minimum monthly payment is \$40.

Recipients must sign a promissory note in the Student Loan Collections Office, Wooten-Garner House, prior to receiving funds.

Students, currently receiving or who have received a Federal Perkins Loan through Georgia College & State University, who graduate, transfer, drop below half-time enrollment status, or otherwise leave school must arrange for an Exit Interview at the Student Loan Collections Office, Wooten-Garner House.

LOAN CANCELLATION

Borrowers who use these funds to finalize Business Office bills may elect to cancel their loans and use another form of payment within 30 days of disbursement. The Financial Aid Office must be notified in writing of the cancellation within 30 days of disbursement to the student's account.

STUDENT FINANCIAL AID OMBUDSMAN

If a problem or dispute regarding a student's federal education loan(s) arises that cannot be resolved through reasonable efforts, the student may contact the Student Financial Assistance Ombudsman. The Ombudsman's office can propose solutions that may help all parties come to a final agreement. The student should make sure good records of conversations and people involved are documented prior to calling this office. Students can reach the Ombudsman at:

Office of the Ombudsman
SFA US Department of Education
4th Floor, UCP-3/MS 5144 830 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20202-5144
1-877-557-2575
www.ombudsman.ed.gov

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

FEDERAL WORK-STUDY

Federal Work-Study (FWS) eligibility is based on established financial need and at least half-time enrollment. Jobs are located on campus and work schedules are planned around the student's class schedule. FWS money is not available at registration to pay fees. Students are paid bi-weekly for actual hours worked.

All FWS recipients will be able to view their award amount at <http://paws.gcsu.edu>. The FWS Coordinator facilitates placement of students in specific positions. Community service positions are also available through the FWS Program.

GCSU STUDENT EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

The University Student Employment program provides additional opportunities for students to secure campus employment. While financial need is often not a factor, earnings under this program could affect other aid received. Students are interviewed and hired by the various administrative offices, departmental offices, and other offices at the University.



Financial Aid Policies

DISBURSEMENT OF FINANCIAL AID

CHANGE OF INFORMATION

Awards are based on the information students provide on applications for aid. Change to that information (marital status, number of dependents, place of residence, withdrawal from period of enrollment, reduction in the number of hours carried, change in academic program, Social Security or Veteran's benefits, etc.) must be reported promptly in writing to our office for a determination of the impact, if any, on the amount of funds awarded to you. It is often necessary to revise awards, especially if federal or state funds are a part of the award, in order to avoid exceeding your demonstrated financial eligibility. We must, therefore, reserve the right to review and /or modify your award at any time. Failure to contact us may jeopardize continuation of your aid, cause cancellation of aid, or require repayment of funds already disbursed to you. All awards are contingent upon the availability of funds.

ENROLLMENT STATUS

Requirements for the number of semester hours of credit you must maintain for loans, scholarships, grants, and work may vary. At Georgia College & State University, most financial aid is packaged based upon anticipated full-time enrollment: 12 hours for undergraduate, 9 hours for graduates.

REPAYMENT

Students who register, then withdraw, drop out, are expelled, or change enrollment status are subject to the University's Refund and Repayment policy (page 12), and may have to repay a portion or all of the aid received to the University.

A. General Information

1. Student must be enrolled before funds may be disbursed.
2. Student eligibility must be confirmed by the Financial Aid Office before funds are disbursed.
3. Students are expected to have sufficient funds for miscellaneous expenses when they arrive on campus.
4. Students who are eligible for Federal financial aid must have submitted a valid Student Aid Report in electronic form to the Financial Aid Office before funds are disbursed.
5. Students must be fully accepted for admission to GCSU before funds may be disbursed.
6. Specific questions on individual cases should be addressed to the Financial Aid Office at (478) 445-5149.

B. Loans (Students must be enrolled at least half-time.)

1. Federal Perkins Loan: Students awarded this loan must sign a promissory note in the Student Loan Collections Office, Wooten-Garner House, before funds may be disbursed.
2. Federal Stafford Loan: Under Federal Law: Students must complete a Loan Entrance Counseling session before funds may be disbursed.
3. Federal PLUS Loan: Parents who are awarded a Federal PLUS Loan must receive an approved credit decision from the lender and complete an electronic Master Promissory Note (MPN) before funds may be disbursed.
4. Federal Perkins, Federal Stafford, Federal PLUS Loans: Borrowers who use these funds to finalize Business Office bills may elect to cancel their loans and use another form of payment within 30 days of disbursement. The Financial Aid Office must be notified in writing of the cancellation within 30 days of disbursement.

C. Disbursement Procedures

Once all requirements have been met:

1. Funds awarded from the following may be applied directly to the student's Business Office account:

GRANTS	LOANS
Federal Pell	Federal Perkins Loans
Federal SEOG	Federal Stafford Loans
HOPE Scholarship	Federal PLUS Loans
ACG/SMART	

2. These awards will be authorized to the student's Business Office account once classes have been reserved.
3. Any remaining balance to the student's account must be paid to the GCSU Business Office prior to the published deadline in order to reserve classes.
4. Eligibility is reviewed again at the end of the drop/add period (census date), and appropriate funds are disbursed to the student's Business Office account.
5. Once the Business Office bill has been settled, remaining aid with the exception of the HOPE Book Allowance, which is released in a check, may be used toward the purchase of books at the GCSU Bookstore beginning approximately 3 days prior to the first day of classes through the end of the drop/add period.
6. If the amount of financial aid awarded exceeds tuition and fees due at registration, the difference will be disbursed in the form of a check by the GCSU Business Office, 111 Parks Hall, approximately seven days after the end of the drop/add period.
7. Students who use personal funds to pay for tuition and fees may receive reimbursement checks from the GCSU Business Office approximately seven days after the end of the drop/add period.
8. Financial aid awards made after the student's bill is satisfied will be disbursed within 10 days after awards are made.
9. Other. GHEAC Service Cancelable Loans and loans made by Georgia Student Finance Authority. Funds are sent electronically to GCSU and then disbursed to the students who have been awarded these loans. Once the Business Office bill has been settled, remaining funds will be released in a check. Permitted funds may be used toward the purchase of books at the GCSU Bookstore beginning approximately three days prior to the first day of classes through the end of the drop/add period.



Refund Policies and Procedures

FEDERAL TITLE IV REFUNDS

Students who are entitled to a refund for withdrawal and are receiving student financial aid (SFA) are subject to having all or part of the refund returned to the appropriate financial aid programs. For those students who withdrew prior to 60 percent of the enrollment period elapsing, a pro-rated schedule is used to determine how much SFA funds were earned at the time of withdrawal. The University must return to SFA Programs the lesser of:

- The amount of SFA Program funds that the students do not earn; or
- The amount of institutional costs that students incurred for the period of enrollment multiplied by the percentage of funds unearned.

However, students are not required to return 50 percent of the grant assistance received.

SFA funds must be returned in the following order:

- Unsubsidized Stafford Loans
- Subsidized Stafford Loans
- Perkins Loans
- Federal PLUS Loans
- Federal Pell Grants
- ACG
- SMART
- Federal Supplement Educational Opportunity Grants
- State Scholarships

If more aid is received that could have been reasonably spent for non-institutional costs (excluding Federal Family Loan Programs), the unearned portion must be returned to SFA Programs.

Per federal regulations, students who fail to earn a passing grade in any course are considered to have unofficially withdrawn from GCSU.

HOPE-ONLY REFUND

If a refund is due and the student received HOPE funds only (no federal aid), then such amounts must be refunded to HOPE, rounded to the nearest dollar, by applying the institution's refund policy to the student's original HOPE award for tuition and HOPE-approved mandatory fees. The book allowance is not part of the refund calculation.

TITLE IV and HOPE REFUND

If the student received Federal Title IV funds in addition to HOPE funds, the school must follow the Title IV Return of Funds policy for any federal aid received. To determine the refund to HOPE, the school must then follow their institutional refund policy, if different from Title IV Return of Funds. If all or part of the student's Title IV aid was disbursed directly to the student, the school may not have funds on hand to refund HOPE. In this case, the school must bill the student for the refund. The school must notify the Authority of the amount of refund due HOPE, and the Authority will put a refund due on the student's record. This will prevent the student from receiving any additional scholarships or grants from the Authority until the refund is paid.

Financial Aid Programs

Name of Aid Resource	Type of Aid	Eligibility Requirements	Application Deadline	Award Amount
Federal Pell Grant	Grant	Citizen or eligible non-citizen; Undergraduate; Exceptional need	July 1 for Fall Semester	Maximum \$4,310 (2007-2008)
Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)	Grant	Citizen or eligible non-citizen; Exceptional need	Priority – March 1	Maximum \$1,500
ACG Grant	Grant	US Citizen; eligible for Federal Pell Grant; enroll full-time; 3.0 GPA	July 1 for Fall Semester	Up to \$750 for First-year and \$1,300 for Second-year
Smart Grant	Grant	US Citizen; eligible for Federal Pell Grant; enroll full-time; designated area of major; 3.0 GPA	July 1 for Fall Semester	Up to \$4,000 per 3rd and 4th Academic Year
HOPE Scholarship	Scholarship	Legal resident of Georgia; Graduate of an eligible high school with a “B” average; Maintain a 3.0 GPA	July 1 for Fall Semester	Tuition and approved fees; Book Allowance
HOPE Promise Program	Scholarship	Junior or senior in education major; Have a 3.0 GPA	To be announced	\$3,000 for Junior year and \$3,000 for Senior year
HOPE Teacher Program	Scholarship	Legal resident of Georgia; graduate student in critical shortage field; Maintain 3.0 GPA	To be announced	\$125 per semester hour
Georgia’s HERO Scholarship	Scholarship	Member of the Georgia National Guard and US Military Reservists who served in combat zones or the children of such members	To be announced	Up to \$2,000 per academic year with a maximum of \$8,000
Federal Work Study	Employment	Established financial need	Priority – March 1	Maximum \$2,500
Federal Perkins Loan	Loan	Established financial need	Priority – March 1	Maximum \$4,000
Federal Subsidized Stafford Loan	Loan	Established financial need; Enrolled six or more hours	July 1 for Fall Semester	\$3,500 Freshman \$4,500 Sophomore \$5,500 Junior and Senior
Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loan	Loan	Enrolled six or more hours; non-need based	July 1 for Fall Semester	\$4,000 Freshman and Sophomore \$5,000 Junior and Senior
Federal Direct PLUS Loan	Loan	Parent of dependent, undergraduate student	July 1 for Fall Semester	COA minus other aid received



Office of Financial Aid • Campus Box 30 • Milledgeville, GA 31061
(800) 342-0471 • (478) 445-5149 • www.gcsu.edu/financialaid