

SETTING
SAIL

Fall



PEN HOUSE

Financial Aid and Scholarships

What is Financial Aid?

- Scholarships – a reward for things you have already accomplished and/or an encouragement to do some more of the same!
- Grants – dollars used to support your studies because you demonstrated the talent to be in college and demonstrated that you cannot afford to pay for your studies out of your own resources.
- Loans – the monies that you borrow and must repay but can use to pay expenses not covered by scholarships, grants and personal funds. Loans are an opportunity but one that you must pay back.
- Work Opportunities – two kinds – the Federal Work-Study program and on campus, self-help wages.

How Do I Apply For Financial Aid?

- Students that are interested in receiving financial assistance need to complete the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid** each year.
- You can complete the FAFSA starting **October 1st** prior to the academic year that begins the following August.
- **Priority filing date is March 1st** each year. However, we do not have a deadline for applying and being awarded.
- Applications received after the priority deadline may not be completed in time before the tuition payment deadline.
- **EVERY** state has an office like the State Education Assistance Authority – check with your state for scholarships and grants that may ‘travel’ with you.

Completing the FAFSA

The screenshot shows the studentaid.gov website. The address bar displays 'studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa'. The page header includes 'An official website of the United States government' and navigation links for 'Help Center', 'Feedback & Ombudsman', and 'Eng'. The main navigation menu features 'Federal Student Aid' with the subtitle 'AN OFFICE OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION', and dropdown menus for 'UNDERSTAND AID', 'APPLY FOR AID', 'COMPLETE AID PROCESS', and 'MANAGE LOANS'. The main content area has a dark green background with an illustration of three students. The primary heading is 'Complete the FAFSA® Form', followed by the text 'Use the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) form to apply for financial aid for college or graduate school.' Below this is a 'Start Here' button. To the right, there are two sections: 'New to the FAFSA® Process?' with the text 'Completing the FAFSA form is free. Fill it out now.' and a 'Start Here' button; and 'Returning User?' with links for 'Correct info | Add a school' and 'View your Student Aid Report (SAR)', along with a 'Log In' button. At the bottom of the page, there is a section for 'FAFSA® Announcements'.

- Free Application for Federal Student Assistance
- You may complete the FAFSA online at www.studentaid.gov
- ECU school code is 002923-00

North Carolina Residents:

- Be sure to review the College Foundation of North Carolina website – www.CFNC.org
- Create a student profile to be considered for state grants and scholarships.



The screenshot shows the CFNC website with the following elements:

- Header:** CFNC logo, College Foundation of North Carolina logo, and navigation links: ESPAÑOL, EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS, RECURSOS EN ESPAÑOL, ABOUT US, CONTACT US, LOG IN.
- Secondary Navigation:** Plan Your Future, Apply to College, Pay for College, Save for College, and a search icon.
- Hero Section:** A dark green banner with the quote: "An investment in **knowledge** pays the best interest. – Benjamin Franklin". To the right is an image of a student and a teacher.
- Content Area:**
 - Pay for College:** A sidebar menu with links: Apply for Financial Aid, FAFSA Assistance, Grants and Scholarships, Scholarship Search, Work-Study Programs, Student Loans, NC Assist Loans, Loan Repayment, and Manage My Loan.
 - Get Help Paying for College:** A main section with the text: "What is financial aid? Financial aid is money that is given or borrowed to help pay for college. It can come from federal, state, local, school and private entities. North Carolina and the federal government award millions of dollars each year to help students pay for college. So where to start?" Below this are two buttons: "FAFSA" and "Grants & Scholarships".
 - Already Have a Loan?:** A section with the text: "Get information and manage your payments" and a "Manage My Loan" button. Below this is an image of three students.

FAFSA Hints

- Use your name as it is written on your Social Security card.
- Remember to save your username and password – write it down, keep it safe. THIS is now your electronic signature and you use it each year!
- Make sure you put correct information – parent / student – each has their OWN username and password. DON'T share this!
- When possible, use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool for faster processing.
- Make sure you select the correct filing status and type of return you filed.
- Calculate household size correctly.
- **DO NOT pay to file the FAFSA** or pay anyone to file it for you – CFNC has some great information on its webpage AND you can contact your local community college or university for assistance – even if you don't plan to attend that institution.

Things to Remember

- Read ECU email regularly
- Respond promptly to requests for information – Financial Aid is a PROCESS
- Banner ID – KNOW IT – Include it on all documents
- Buckley Waiver – Student must complete this to give us permission for Parent/Guardian/Other to get specific student financial information
- Students must authorize Financial Aid to pay for expenses other than Direct Costs, this release must be completed in order for Federal aid to cover other charges on the Cashier's student account (health service fees, parking fines, etc...)

How Do I Find Out What I Have Been Awarded?

- The Office of Student Financial Aid will send out Award Notifications beginning in early March to home mailing addresses.
- Students may also log into Pirate Port / Banner Self Service and select Financial Aid to view/accept the award(s) at any time.
- **The amount of aid the student accepts is for the full academic year. Please keep that in mind when accepting student loans.**
- Financial Aid awards are completed for the full academic year. Students will receive their funds in 2 disbursements, once at the beginning of each term (fall and spring semesters).

Am I Required to Accept Loans?

- No student is required to accept a student loan.
- Students may accept all or some portion of the loan as needed.
- Students who find they need more than the maximum Stafford Loan amount for the year may:
 - Have a PARENT apply for the Plus loan OR
 - With a co-signer, apply for an alternative loan
 - Information about these types of loan can be located on our web page at www.financialaid.ecu.edu
- Monitor your loan debt at https://nslds.ed.gov/nslds/nslds_SA/
 - Create a student account.

Federal Work Study

- Federal Work Study (FWS) is an employment program for students with a demonstrated financial need and who are qualified by the ECU Financial Aid office.
- Work on-campus with ECU departments or off-campus with approved community service agencies.
- Undergraduates earn \$8-\$10/hour based on experience.
- Student employees are paid twice a month through direct deposit for actual hours worked each pay period.
- Students who do not qualify for FWS or did not receive an FWS award can learn more about other employment opportunities through the Office of Student Employment.
- Search part-time job opportunities (on and off campus) via our online jobs database at www.ecu.edu/hireapirate.

How to Finish in Four Years

- Many Financial Aid programs have limitations on the number of semesters you may receive funding.
- Students need to take 15/16 hours a semester to graduate in 4 years.
- Work closely with your Academic Advisor to make sure you are meeting your goal to graduation.



Residency Determination Service

- All students seeking “in-state” tuition must file an application with the NC-RDS.
- Visit the RDS web site for more information and for any questions
 - <https://ncresidency.cfnc.org/residencyinfo/>

Scholarship Eligibility Requirements

- **The student must be....**
 - Enrolled or accepted for enrollment
 - Typically enrolled in at least 12 hours of classes
 - 12 hours is considered full time
 - 15/16 hours per semester are needed to graduate in 4 years
- **The scholarship may be....**
 - Merit-based
 - Need-based
 - Or a combination of the two

Scholarship Application Process

- Scholarship opportunities are available throughout a student's college career...whether you are an incoming freshman or a continuing student.
 - College and Departmental Scholarships
 - ECU Alumni Association Scholarships
 - Division of Student Affairs Scholarships
- Annual competitive application process is held each year.
- **Scholarship Portal opened in August and closes January 15** for most opportunities. However, there are a few exceptions (Nursing & Medical School) so make sure to visit the portal and review the requirements and deadlines.



Scholarship Application Process

- All scholarship opportunities reside on the university's on-line portal – ECUAWard – which can be accessed at www.ecu.academicworks.com or via a student's Pirate Port.
- Log-in uses your campus credentials (Pirate ID and password) that work with all campus platforms such as email, Canvas, and other campus-based systems.
- Make sure you check your student email and scholarship portal regularly.
- If you have questions, send them to scholarships@ecu.edu.

Things you must remember!

- You must apply for admission for the Financial Aid Office to download your FAFSA data.
- You must be admitted to be offered a Pirate ID. With that, you can create a password which will allow you to access the scholarship portal.
- Use your legal name as written on your Social Security Card – short names or nicknames will cause confusion and can delay your admissions, access, and awards.
- Write down your log-ons, passwords, and access information
 - DO NOT SHARE THIS INFO!!!

Contact Us

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