

Miscellaneous Policies and Procedures

Policy/Procedure

Estimated State Grants

If an estimated state grant is listed on your award, be sure to file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by your state's deadline and complete any supplemental state grant application required by your home state. Our estimate is based upon the information that you submitted to Dickinson and on states' previous awarding practices; it does not reflect any official notification by the granting agency. If actual state grants are less than our estimate, the Dickinson grant will be increased by that amount; however, if state grant funds are lost or reduced because you have submitted a late, incomplete, or inaccurate application, the estimated state grant will be deleted from your package and the resulting gap will not be covered with Dickinson Grant assistance.

Estimated Federal Pell Grant

Your eligibility for a Pell Grant is determined by the US Department of Education using the information provided on your FAFSA. The Pell Grant will be credited to your account after you submit all requested verification materials to the College and you have made any necessary corrections to your FAFSA through the Federal processor.

Adjustment for Unanticipated Grants

When an unanticipated **federal or state grant** is received after the financial aid package has been developed, the Dickinson Grant will be reduced by the amount of the new award unless there is unmet need for institutional aid. Ordinarily, total grant/scholarship aid will not change.

Adjustment for ROTC Awards

New recipients of an ROTC Scholarship also will receive a Dickinson College Grant (up to \$7500 depending upon academic qualifications). ROTC **scholarship** students also receive a book stipend and a monthly subsistence allowance. If an ROTC cadet has demonstrated need in excess of the total of these awards, the cadet may be eligible for additional need-based assistance from federal, state and institutional sources. In most cases, the ROTC awards and Dickinson merit award will replace any previous award that had been made to the student.

Receipt of Outside Scholarships

Students are **required** to notify the financial aid office when they receive outside scholarships from non-governmental organizations (local scholarships or tuition benefits from a parent's employer, for example). The financial aid office must include such awards as a part of the financial aid package. First, the scholarship will fill any unmet financial need. Then, the financial aid package will be adjusted by decreasing self-help (loan and work). Dickinson Grants and scholarships will not be affected unless the total of the student's gift aid exceeds tuition, fees, room and board.

Federal Work-Study

Job Assignments

Your package may contain an opportunity to work on campus through the Federal Work-Study (FWS) Program. Most freshmen will be employed by Dining Services. Students who have specific skills such as lifeguard certification, athletic training experience or interest/experience in community service may be placed in alternative positions. Returning students may apply for any available work-study position. Job opportunities are posted on the website, student employment.

Work-Study Earnings

The work-study amount listed on your Award Notice reflects the maximum you may earn for the academic year. You may earn all or any portion of that amount depending on the number of hours you arrange to work with your departmental supervisor. To earn \$2000, you would have to work approximately 12 hours per week throughout the academic year. The money you earn will be credited to your bank account every two weeks and may be used to pay for any education-related costs. Since earnings are paid directly to you, **the work-study amount listed on your financial aid award will not be deducted from your Dickinson bill.** You may, however, apply work-study earnings to your account at any time.

The Decision not to Work

If you decide not to work, your awards from other programs will be unaffected. If you don't work, you and your parents will be responsible for any costs your employment may have covered.

Federal Stafford Loans

Annual Loan Maximums

A student may borrow up to \$3,500 as a freshman, \$4,500 as a sophomore and \$5,500 as a junior or senior through the Federal Stafford Loan Program.

Interest Rate

The interest rate for new Stafford loans will be fixed at 6.8% effective July 1, 2006.

Subsidized and Unsubsidized Stafford Loans

Subsidized Stafford Loans are need-based, and the government pays the interest both while the student is enrolled in school at least half-time and during grace periods.

Unsubsidized Stafford Loans are available regardless of financial need. The borrower pays the interest, either while in school or after graduation. Deferred interest is capitalized, meaning that unpaid interest is added to the principal balance of the loan. Capitalization increases both the

Financial Aid: Miscellaneous Policies and Procedures

total amount to be repaid and the monthly payment. The financial aid office always calculates subsidized loan eligibility first.

How to Apply for a Stafford Loan

First Year and other new borrowers: Do not complete a paper loan application!

First-time Stafford Loan borrowers must complete a loan entrance interview to learn about their rights and responsibilities. This can be accomplished online at www.aessuccess.org.

Dickinson College is required to **pre-certify** all Federal Stafford loans. We do this by creating an electronic loan record for all students who have submitted a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). After pre-certification is completed, you will receive an email from our office directing you to a secure web site where you will complete your Entrance Counseling and Master Promissory Note (MPN). This will occur sometime during the summer preceding your enrollment. In early September, we will notify American Education Services (AES) of your loan eligibility. Funds will then be disbursed to Dickinson College on your behalf. If you are a first-time first year borrower, your first loan disbursement will be 30 days after the beginning of the fall semester.

Previous borrowers do not need to complete another MPN. During the summer, a loan in the amount listed on your award letter will be processed for you unless you notify the financial aid office that you do not wish to borrow or would like to borrow a lesser amount.

Hurwitz or Federal Perkins Loans

If you have been awarded a Hurwitz or Perkins Loan you will be contacted by the Student Accounts office shortly after you arrive on campus to complete the necessary paperwork and sign your promissory note. A limited amount of money is available through these programs. The interest rate on these loans is 5%.

Other Financing Options

Payment Plan

The TMS Monthly Payment Option permits families to budget their payments over the course of the summer and the academic year. Families pay the balance remaining after scholarships, financial aid and/or other credits have been subtracted in monthly installments. To learn more about this interest-free monthly payment plan, visit www.afford.com.

PLUS Loan

Dickinson College recognizes that families often need to look outside their immediate resources in order to help their student take the fullest advantage of the Dickinson College experience. Therefore, families may want to consider borrowing through the federal PLUS program (Parent Loan for Undergraduate Studies)

Financial Aid: Miscellaneous Policies and Procedures

Loan Terms

PLUS is a component of the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP), which is guaranteed by the federal government. In accordance with the recently passed Deficit Reduction Act, effective July 1, 2006, the interest rate on new PLUS loans will be fixed at 8.5%. Families have the option to make payment during a student's enrollment or to defer payment until the student graduates or ceases to be enrolled.

Amount Available

Eligible parents may borrow an amount equal to the Cost of Education plus the origination fee on the loan minus any other aid awarded. The combination of aid received and PLUS Loan, then, can cover the full cost of attendance at Dickinson College.

The Cost of Education includes tuition, fees, room, board, and standard allowances for books, supplies, transportation, and living expenses.

Tuition and Fees

To view the current tuition rate and fees, visit www.dickinson.edu/departments/finops/annualfees.html.

Change in Financial Circumstances

Please call the Financial Aid Office if your family experiences a death, loss of employment or other major change in family circumstances. We will assist you in documenting your change of circumstances and reevaluate your current situation to determine whether additional assistance, if available, is warranted.

Crediting Financial Aid to a Student's Account

Most financial aid is credited directly to the student's College account. These funds include those received from College grants and scholarships, Federal Perkins Loans, Federal SEOG, Federal Pell Grants, Federal ACG/SMART and state grants. Perkins Loans are credited after the student completes an entrance interview and signs a Master Promissory Note. Federal Stafford and Perkins Loans, Pell, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, ACG, and SMART Grants cannot be credited to the student's account earlier than ten days before the beginning of the semester provided that all required verification has been completed. According to Dickinson's policy, funds from all of the Federal Title IV financial aid programs (Pell Grant, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, ACG, and SMART Grants, Perkins Loan, Stafford Loan, Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students) are the first credits applied against a student's charges, regardless of the order in which funds are actually received. If a credit balance is created by these awards once they are applied against charges for tuition, fees, room and board, the College is required to refund the balance to the student and/ or parent unless signed permission has been granted to keep the funds on account for other charges such as bookstore bills. The exact amount of an award must be known before a credit can be applied to the account. State and federal grant amounts are generally estimated on award notices for entering students; actual grant amounts

are credited only after official notification is received from the awarding agency and all required forms have been submitted to the Financial Aid Office. Any necessary adjustment to the awarded amount will occur at that time. See Section 9, "Does the Amount of Aid ever Change?" for more details. It is important to remember that Federal Stafford Loan amounts do not appear as a credit on a student's account until the endorsed check or electronic funds transfer (EFT) has been received by the Student Accounts Office. Since it usually takes about six weeks from application to disbursement, it is important to complete the loan processing steps as early as possible. Information and instructions for applying for the Stafford Loan are sent to incoming first year students during the summer. **Federal Work-Study earnings do not appear as a credit on a student's account.** Students are paid every two weeks for the hours worked during that period and may use the money as they choose to meet educational costs. Amounts borrowed through PLUS or alternative loans will not appear as credits on the student's account until funds are received. Accounts not settled by the due date are subject to a late payment fee of 1.5 % per month interest on the unpaid balance. The Student Accounts office may remove late payment charges from the account if arrangements have been made for deferral of an anticipated amount from an outside source. Late payment charges will continue to appear on the bill until the anticipated amount is received. Any student whose payment arrangements are not completed before registration will not be permitted to register for the next semester.

Changes in Financial Aid Packages

Dickinson College reserves the right to reduce or eliminate awards if the student receives additional assistance from an outside source. Awards also may be reduced if the family financial information reported on the application for financial aid is inaccurate. Such changes are made not only to protect the equity of awarded packages but to conform to federal and/or state regulations. Students can prevent a good deal of frustration and inconvenience by correcting application errors immediately. Parents sometimes use estimated data when filing financial aid applications. Estimates should be as accurate as possible. Any aid package awarded on estimated data will be considered tentative until the verification process is completed.

Aid Limitations

Satisfactory Progress

Students are expected to complete enough courses to move to a new grade level each year. Normally, students complete the B.A. or B.S. degree in four academic years by taking four courses per semester. Matriculated students are required to complete at least 32 courses for graduation. First year students become sophomores when seven courses creditable toward graduation are completed. Sophomores become juniors after 15 courses, and juniors achieve senior status after 24 courses. Details concerning College policies on incomplete courses, withdrawals, and other academic matters can be found in the College Bulletin.

Satisfactory progress is measured at the end of each academic year. For students who fail to progress one grade level, and for part-time students, satisfactory academic progress will be measured by comparing the number of courses attempted to the number completed successfully. Attempted courses include all withdrawals, incompletes, and failures. Students must successfully complete the following percentage of courses attempted:

Financial Aid: Miscellaneous Policies and Procedures

- First year students 60%
- Sophomores 70%
- Juniors, Seniors 80%

Students also must meet a minimum grade point average for each level of study in order to remain in good standing at Dickinson. The minimum grade point average for a first year student to be in good academic standing at the end of the academic year is 1.75. Sophomores must achieve a minimum of 2.0 for the year or a cumulative grade point average of 2.0. Juniors and seniors must earn a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0 by the end of the academic year to remain in good standing and to graduate. Any variations from these standards must be approved by the Committee on Academic Programs and Standards which, in some cases, will allow students to remain at Dickinson on a period of academic probation. Students on academic probation are considered to be making academic progress under institutional policies and are eligible to receive financial aid. A student who does not progress to the next grade level, or does not remain in good academic standing, may lose eligibility for some aid programs. Eligibility will be reinstated once satisfactory progress is regained. In the interim, the Financial Aid Office may be able to suggest alternative financing options which would enable the student to continue enrollment.

Maximum Financial Aid Eligibility

Dickinson students entering as first semester first year students are eligible to receive Dickinson grant assistance for up to eight semesters of attendance. The eight-semester limit includes any semesters spent off-campus in non-Dickinson programs as well as semesters in which a student does not receive or apply for financial assistance. Dickinson grant assistance is normally not available for summer study. Students, however, may choose to use one of their eight semesters of eligibility for full-time attendance during the summer. Need-based aid will be awarded in proportion to the summer cost of attendance. The summer merit scholarship for students receiving merit-only packages will not exceed the total summer tuition cost (merit awards are tuition scholarships). Transfer students are limited to the number of semesters initially determined to be needed to complete their course of study. For example, a student entering as a first semester sophomore would be eligible for institutional assistance for up to six semesters of attendance. Federal aid may be available to students who have exceeded their maximum number of semesters for institutional aid. A complete discussion of maximum aid eligibility in the federal financial aid programs can be found in Guide to Student Federal Aid, available at http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/student_guide/index.html. Students may receive federal financial aid at Dickinson College for an absolute maximum of six years of full-time study (48 attempted courses for part-time students who matriculated in the fall of 2000 or later).

Other Limitations

Students on academic probation may find that the amount of institutional grant assistance in their financial aid package has been reduced from its previous level. A smaller grant is consistent with the College's policy of allocating limited resources to those students with financial need who are

Financial Aid: Miscellaneous Policies and Procedures

the most qualified. On-time applications are given priority for institutional funds. Students who submit applications or other required supporting documents after the established deadlines may find that the remaining funding is inadequate for their needs. See Section 5, "What are the Deadlines?" for details. Dickinson grant assistance is provided to full-time degree candidates only. Some federal programs are available to part-time, matriculated students. Continuing Education students are not eligible for financial aid with these exceptions: students pursuing teacher certification, or those who are REQUIRED by Dickinson to take several courses as a condition of acceptance as a regular student, may be eligible to borrow money through the Federal Stafford Loan program. Students with questions about financial aid eligibility are encouraged to discuss their situation with their financial aid counselor.

Taxation of Financial Aid Awards

U.S. Citizens

Income earned from Federal Work-Study or institutional employment is subject to federal and state income taxes just as are any other earnings. Money received from grants and scholarships may be subject to Federal income taxation if grants and scholarships from all sources exceed the cost of tuition, fees, books, and required equipment and supplies. Money received from loans is not taxable. For more detailed information, contact the Internal Revenue Service (www.irs.gov) or your personal tax advisor.

International Students

Grant and scholarship aid in excess of tuition may be subject to U.S. taxation unless the student's home country has a formal tax agreement with the U.S. government.

Appeal Process

Students who have a concern regarding Dickinson's financial aid policies should first discuss these issues with their financial aid counselor. Most concerns can be addressed at that level. If a satisfactory outcome cannot be reached, the student may submit an appeal for variance from the institutional policy to the Financial Aid Committee. The appeal must be in writing and include:

- 1) The additional dollar amount of aid which the student believes would make continued enrollment financially feasible; and
- 2) The specific financial circumstances which have occasioned the request (please use dollar amounts wherever applicable and provide supporting documentation).

Appeals concerning satisfactory academic progress should be addressed to the Chair of the Committee on Academic Programs and Standards.

Related Information

History/Revision Information

Responsible Office/Division:

Effective Date:

Last Amended Date:

Next Review Date:

Also Found In: Information on Policies and Procedures - Financial Aid Office;
Financial Aid Web Site (www.dickinson.edu/finaid)