



Paying for Grad/ Professional School

To do toward graduate school funding:

1. Target a subject and a degree to be most productive
2. Identify school programs that match your needs- learn specialities and labs and related programs. How? Poll professors, use web sites (<http://www.gradschools.com> and <http://www.petersons.com>, professional organization web sites), use books, review journals related to field and note credentials of writers.

Divide into groups: good chance schools// probably-maybe schools// hard to obtain schools.

Talk to these schools: --visit

Look at the department web page: read about department, classes, faculty.

Faculty: identify their specialities: research, publications, where went to school--- YOU ARE LOOKING FOR A SPONSOR—identify 2 or 3, not just one and apply to specific professor. NEVER call or visit a professor without reading some of their works first. Remember that this is their life. You may have to be persistent to be able to talk to a professor.

Get clarification of program (would it be a good place to study what you want to study?”, comment of research, propose further study and see if would fit their program—always name you advisor or supervisor for your research. “in the course of my research, I came across your name often...”

Talk to current students and learn of their projects. Be serious about your undergraduate research.

3. Apply as early as possible. 50% of all candidates apply in the last 10 days: much better to apply 30 to 90 days ahead.
4. Search web sites for outside funding: links are on <http://www.samford.edu/cardev>.

- **Research Assistant (RA):** A research assistantship is a form of college funding. Typically, RAs are when students perform research duties for their supervisors or professors. In exchange, there is usually relief in tuition costs.
- **Teaching Assistant (TA):** Similar to research assistantships. Provides a partial/full tuition waiver and a small stipend to supplement the cost of graduate student living.
- **Residence Life positions:** Resident Assistant, Resident Director
- **Fellowships:** aid awarded that does not require repayment. Usually cover full or partial tuition and reasonable living expenses. Recipient displays academic promise in his field of study.
- **Scholarships:** Forms of aid based on merit. Many corporations, organizations, foundations, etc. will award scholarships to students based on grades, community involvement, extracurricular activities, athletics, arts, etc. This form of funding does not have to be repaid.
- **Grants:** need-based financial aid that does not have to be repaid.
- **Tuition Waivers** by the university for: TA, RA, fellowships
- **Waive of out of state tuition:** check Academic Common Market: <http://www.sreb.org>.
- **Funding** from Professional Organizations

- **Full-time and Part-time jobs:** on or off campus
- Possible **tuition reimbursement** from companies
- **Loans:** must be repaid
- **Direct Loans:** Certain institutions are provided federal government funds to use as direct loans for students. This is referred to as “Direct Lending.” If a student attends a school that is a Direct Lender, the student does not apply to private lenders for federal loans.
- **Federal Loan:** A guaranteed loan by the federal government.
- **Federal Stafford Loan:** Stafford loans are low-interest rate loans for students. They are subsidized (need-based) and unsubsidized (non need-based). The government pays interest as long as student is in school (plus six-month grace period). Interest accrues on unsubsidized Stafford Loans from the disbursement date. A student can receive both a subsidized and unsubsidized loan.
- **Federal Work-Study:** Provides jobs for undergraduate and graduate students with financial needs, allowing them to earn money to help pay educational expenses. Encourages community service work and work related to a student’s course of study.
- **Renewable Scholarships:** These are scholarships awarded more than one year. Some are automatically renewed, while others you must re-submit paperwork. Make sure any or all necessary paperwork has been filed each year.

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid): Can obtain copy on web page- <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>. Some schools use other forms: check the financial aid offices.

Merit-based aid: not based on need, but on special talent or ability.

Need: The US Department of Education defines “need” as the following: your expected family contribution (EFC) subtracted from the cost of attendance (COA) equals financial need.

COA is a student’s total cost of college: books, fees, room and board, supplies, transportation, tuition, and other miscellaneous personal expenses. COA also depends on marital and residency status.

Professional Judgment: This occurs when a financial aid administrator adjusts the COA, EFC, or dependency status of a student or family. This can be done when extreme changes occur in student or family situation.

Unmet Need: The remaining monies needed for a student’s total cost of attendance, including financial aid.

Dependency Status: For the purpose of federal aid, this determines whether or not the student is financially dependent on his/her parents. All students are considered parental dependents unless the student is at least 24 years of age as of January 1, or is married, or is a graduate or professional student, or has a legal dependent other than a spouse, or is a Veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces, or is/was an orphan or ward of the court (or was a ward of the court until 18 years of age.)

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