

A Message from the Springfield College Office of Financial Aid

We know that financing a graduate-level education is a major challenge. As you contemplate your enrollment plans, you should be aware that the funding for graduate-level education is heavily loan dependent. Many students borrow through the federally sponsored loan programs. You must assess not only your willingness to borrow, but your ability to manage expected graduate-level debt when combined with existing undergraduate and personal debt. Graduate students may borrow up to \$20,500 each academic year through the federal Direct Stafford Loan Program (subsidized and unsubsidized). The federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loan is an additional financial resource to supplement the Direct Stafford Loans. Eligibility for these programs is contingent upon a review in accordance with federal regulations by the Office of Financial Aid. Your projected costs for the academic year, prior borrowing at the graduate-level, and prior defaults on student loans can impact eligibility. Note: graduate students enrolled less than half-time (5 credits per semester) are not eligible for federal loans. A list of non-federal loan programs is available upon request.

Financing a graduate education is a process that requires careful attention. You must plan for your academic and personal costs by taking responsibility for researching the options appropriate to your needs and by completing the variety of application procedures in a timely manner. The Office of Financial Aid staff is prepared to assist and advise you in this process.

Please feel free to contact us with your questions and concerns. We look forward to working with you!

SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID PROCESS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

- **All applicants must file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).** You are encouraged to file the FAFSA on the Web (www.fafsa.ed.gov). If you do so, you will receive a PIN, which will serve as your electronic signature. The electronic format allows for expedited processing. You may choose to file a paper FAFSA. The FAFSA format you use has no impact on your eligibility. If you filed in the preceding award year, the federal processor may send you a Renewal FAFSA. Simply update the application and return it to the processor. Make sure that Springfield College, Springfield, Mass. is on the list of schools you want to receive your eligibility information (FAFSA Step 6.) **Springfield College Federal Code: # 002211**
- **Do not submit anything but the FAFSA to the federal processor.** Send all other information to the Springfield College Office of Financial Aid.
- **Send the completed Springfield College Financial Aid Application to the Springfield College Office of Financial Aid.** The form is available online at: www.spfldcol.edu/home.nsf/admissions/financialaid
Please be sure to download the application pertaining to the academic year for which you are applying for financial aid.
- **Income verification may be required if your application is selected for verification.** Refer to follow-up letters from Springfield College to see if you need to send tax returns or other income documentation. *Tax filers who use the Telefile option must submit a signed/dated copy of the Telefile worksheet with the six digit IRS confirmation number.* IRS form 8453 is not acceptable as a federal tax return for financial aid purposes.
- **Your name and Springfield College ID number must be clearly and correctly written on all documents submitted.** Complete all parts of all forms. Do not leave any questions blank. Keep copies of all forms.
- **If there are circumstances which impact your ability to finance a college education, you may submit a signed statement detailing the circumstances.** Be as specific as possible when detailing changes in family income and/or significant expenses.
- **Be sure to allow adequate mailing and processing time.** The earlier your application is completed, the earlier you will receive a financial aid decision. Awards are not final until verification of application data is completed.
- **Incoming graduate students should note they must be accepted for admission prior to receiving a financial aid eligibility decision.**
- **Grant funding at the graduate level is very limited.** There are no federal or state grants for graduate students. Information on graduate associateships is available from the Graduate Admissions office and the Office of Graduate Studies.
- **Students accepted on probation are eligible for federal loan assistance.** Students continued on probation or who are placed on probation during their graduate program are not eligible for financial assistance.
- **Graduate students must maintain a 3.0 cumulative average and complete 75 percent of coursework attempted in order to maintain financial aid eligibility.**
- **Advise the Springfield College Office of Financial Aid, in writing, of any enrollment changes.**

INCLUDE THE STUDENT'S NAME & SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE ID NUMBER ON ALL FORMS & LETTERS.

REQUIRED FORMS

- ... Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- ... Springfield College Financial Aid Application
- ... *If selected for verification, submit a signed copy of your corresponding Federal Tax Return & W2s*
- ... Other information may be requested during the review of your application.

IMPORTANT DATES

- March 1 Mailing of financial aid decisions to accepted incoming students begins
- May 1 Priority date for receipt of required forms for returning students
- June 1 Mailing of financial aid decisions to returning students begins
- July 1 Review of late applications begins
- July 15 Loan processing begins
- Dec. 1 Priority date for receipt of required forms for students entering in January
- Dec. 20 Mailing of decisions to accepted students entering in January

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- Incoming students** must be accepted for admission before a financial aid decision is issued. It is not necessary to wait for acceptance to complete the financial aid forms.
- Investigate alternative sources of financial support.** There are many resources on the Internet. Springfield College offers a number of other programs which may be of interest to you.
 - ❖ **Springfield College All College Graduate Scholarship** is awarded on the basis of academic and professional merit. Applications are available in the Graduate Admissions office (413-748-3225).
 - ❖ **Springfield graduate associateships** (campus employment in teaching, administration, or research) award tuition remission & monthly stipends. Contact the Graduate Admissions office for information.
 - ❖ **Springfield College resident director** positions offer tuition remission/housing. Contact the Office of Housing and Residence Life for information (413-748-3102).
- Employment opportunities** (on-and off-campus) may provide financial support, as well as professional experience. Contact the Office of Cooperative Education in the Career Center for information (413-748-3222).
- Meeting the application priority date gives you the opportunity to receive your financial aid decision with ample time for loan processing and payment arrangements to be finalized prior to enrollment.
- We expect you to take responsibility for the financial aid process. Contact us if you have questions.

Springfield College Office of Financial Aid
263 Alden Street
Springfield, MA 01109-3797
TEL: 413-748-3108 FAX: 413-748-3462
E-mail: finaid@spfldcol.edu

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Staying organized is an important part of the process. Before you send any information, check for completeness. We suggest that you record the date you complete each step and that you keep copies of all information submitted.

_____ FAFSA sent to federal processor (___ *U.S. mail* OR ___ *Internet*)

- Do not enclose any other information with the FAFSA

_____ Federal Student Aid Report (*SAR*) received from federal processor

_____ Springfield College Financial Aid Application mailed to the Springfield College Office of Financial Aid

_____ Student's Federal Tax Return mailed to the Springfield College Office of Financial Aid (*if required*)

- *Check for signatures and that all schedules and W2s are included*
- *If married and filing separately, include a signed copy of spouse's return*

_____ Other information mailed to the Springfield College Office of Financial Aid

_____ Financial aid decision letter received from Springfield College

_____ Award Reply completed and mailed to Springfield College Office of Financial Aid

_____ Federal Direct Loan Master Promissory Note completed (www.studentloans.gov)

_____ Federal Direct Loan Entrance Counseling completed (www.studentloans.gov)

_____ Advise the Springfield College Office of Financial Aid, *in writing*, of any changes in enrollment plans