

How to Apply for Aid to Pay Your Bill

Federal Financial Aid

How do you Apply?

- Application begins with the Free Application for Federal Student Aid or more commonly known as the FAFSA.
- The FAFSA collects information about the student (and parents for dependent students) regarding income, number of family members, number of family members in college and plans for college and determines a level of financial need for the student and his or her family. It is this information that Columbia College uses to determine the amount of assistance provided to the student for their education.

How do I complete the FAFSA?

- Completing the FAFSA application is very easy and convenient. The application is online and you can complete it at anytime from any computer. It is recommended that you complete your FAFSA every year after January 1st. We recommend that you do not complete your FAFSA any later than March 1 every year. This is because many types of assistance are time sensitive and also are limited in funding.
- When completing your FAFSA you will need you and your parents' (if you are dependent) income information for the previous year, a [PIN](#) to sign the FAFSA electronically and Columbia's school code (001665). When you have this information simply go to www.fafsa.ed.gov and begin the process.

What do I do next?

- After you have completed your FAFSA, you will receive a STUDENT AID REPORT (SAR) from the Federal Department of Education in the mail or email if you included it on your FAFSA. Carefully review your SAR and make sure that all of your information is complete and correct. Be on the look out for special messages from the Department of Education on your SAR.
- Columbia College will send you an official Award Letter and brochure outlining your financial aid options and next steps within 7-10 business days from successful completion of your FAFSA. If you are a new student the packet will be mailed to you if you are a continuing student it will be emailed to your MyOASIS email account. Please note: new students also need to have an admission application on file with the Columbia College Admission Office (Graduate or Undergraduate) to receive an Award Letter.

Scholarships

Columbia College Chicago itself offers both general scholarships and departmental scholarships. Columbia College Chicago also accepts external scholarships. Please contact [Student Financial Services](#) via the web or call the office at 1-866-705-0200 to discuss scholarship opportunities.

Private Educational Loans

Private loans are offered by private lenders to assist Students with educational and living expenses not covered by Federal Financial Aid and Scholarships. It is important that you carefully review your expenses before deciding if you need to borrow. Please refer to the Estimate Your Costs worksheet found within your award brochure.

If you decide to borrow a Private loan, you will need to choose a lender and complete their application process. The lender will run a credit check for you and your cosigner before they agree to grant you a loan. In many loans, the minimum you can borrow is around \$500.00 and the maximum is the cost of attendance minus any other financial aid/loans you have received. Please contact Student Financial Services to discuss the private educational loan process.

How to Secure Your Aid

Carefully review your Award Letter and your Columbia Award Letter Brochure. Complete the “**Estimate Your Costs Worksheet**” and the “**Checklist for Securing Your Finances**” to make sure you complete all the steps necessary to secure your financial aid.

Student financial aid processes including federal financial aid, private educational loans and scholarships are ongoing. All financial aid types have several steps at different stages of the process. It is important that you complete these steps within the deadlines given and stay in touch with Student Financial Services to ensure you will receive the aid you are entitled to.

Student Financial Services is located at:

600 S. Michigan Ave.
Suite 303
Chicago, IL 60605

Phone: 1-866-705-0200

