



CASE STUDY¹: Student B applies for federal financial aid by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at <https://studentaid.gov/>. The federal government determines her Expected Family Contribution (EFC) to be \$3,070. The EFC represents a family's ability to contribute toward the student's

education and is used by all schools to determine a student's federal aid eligibility. Student B's family consists of 4 people (mom, dad, and one sibling) and her parents earn about \$59,000 per year. Student B compares the cost of living on-campus versus commuting from her parents' home:

| ON CAMPUS | |
|--|--------------------|
| Tuition | \$3,535.00 |
| Fees | \$708.00 |
| Housing - Standard Double | \$4,381.00 |
| Meal Plan - Freedom 19 | \$3,481.00 |
| Total Charges | \$12,105.00 |
| Federal Pell Grant | \$2,173.00 |
| Federal SEOG Grant | \$0.00 |
| NYS TAP Grant ² | \$965.00 |
| SUNY Tuition Credit | \$247.85 |
| NYS Excelsior Scholarship ³ | \$149.15 |
| Bengal Promise Grant ⁴ | \$1,500.00 |
| Bengal Experience Grant ⁵ | \$500.00 |
| Federal Subsidized Loan ⁶ | \$1,750.00 |
| Federal Unsubsidized Loan ⁶ | \$1,000.00 |
| Parent PLUS Loan ⁷ | \$0.00 |
| Total Aid | \$8,285.00 |
| Amount Due | \$3,820.00 |

| COMMUTER | |
|--|--------------------|
| Tuition | \$3,535.00 |
| Fees | \$708.00 |
| Housing - Standard Double | \$0.00 |
| Meal Plan - Freedom 19 | \$0.00 |
| Total Charges | \$4,243.00 |
| Federal Pell Grant | \$2,173.00 |
| Federal SEOG Grant | \$0.00 |
| NYS TAP Grant ² | \$965.00 |
| SUNY Tuition Credit | \$247.85 |
| NYS Excelsior Scholarship ³ | \$149.15 |
| Bengal Promise Grant ⁴ | \$0.00 |
| Bengal Experience Grant ⁵ | \$0.00 |
| Federal Subsidized Loan ⁶ | \$1,750.00 |
| Federal Unsubsidized Loan ⁶ | \$1,000.00 |
| Parent PLUS Loan ⁷ | \$0.00 |
| Total Aid | \$6,285.00 |
| Refund | -\$2,042.00 |

DISCUSSION: Although Student B qualifies for the NYS Excelsior Scholarship, she still owes \$3,820 per semester if she lives on-campus (the Excelsior Scholarship does not cover fees or living on-campus). Student B's options to pay the remaining amount due include: enroll in a payment plan to divide the balance into four monthly payments; ask her parent to apply for a federal Parent PLUS loan; or borrow a private student loan (after securing a creditworthy co-signor). Student B is unable to afford the payment plan and determines she would need to borrow a total of \$13,140 to cover her charges for one year (\$3,500 subsidized loan, \$2,000

unsubsidized loan, and \$7,640 private loan between the fall and spring semesters). She has saved money from working the past few summers to pay for her textbooks out-of-pocket.

COMMUTING from home, Student B has enough aid to cover her bill and will receive a refund of \$2,042 per semester. In one year, she would borrow \$5,500. However, if she does not need a refund, she could choose to reduce the amount of loans she borrows (always reduce or decline unsubsidized loans before subsidized).

DOWNLOAD THE "BILL ESTIMATOR" AT <https://financialaid.buffalostate.edu/costs>

NOTES AND DISCLAIMERS

¹ Case study assumes the student is a first-time, full-time freshmen, a NYS resident, and a U.S. Citizen or eligible non-citizen; student is considered "dependent" for financial aid purposes and is working on their first bachelor's degree.

² New York State TAP is based on NYS taxable income, not the student's EFC

³ Students must submit an online Excelsior Scholarship application with HESC and meet annual income and academic requirements to retain eligibility. See more at <https://www.hesc.ny.gov/excelsior>.

^{4, 5} Buffalo State Grants are not refundable and are only applicable to new first-time, full-time freshmen, effective fall 2023. The Promise Grant requires living on-campus; the Experience Grant is available to students that participate in an admissions recruitment event. Other stipulations apply: <https://financialaid.buffalostate.edu/first-year>

⁶ All loans must be repaid after the student graduates or after he/she is no longer enrolled half-time.

⁷ PLUS loans are only available to parents of dependent students; separate application required.

All figures are estimated for the 23-24 academic year.

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