



**Welcome to the Graduate School at Buffalo State!** The contents of this handout describe the types of aid available to assist you with your graduate studies. The Financial Aid Office (FAO) is available to answer your questions in-person, over the telephone, or through email.

## How to Apply for Financial Aid

Students enrolled in an eligible program (see reverse) may be eligible for federal financial aid. To apply for federal aid, file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) annually at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov). Buffalo State's federal school code is 002842. New York State TAP is only available to students in a teacher certification program taking undergraduate coursework.

More information: [financialaid.buffalostate.edu/apply-aid](http://financialaid.buffalostate.edu/apply-aid)

## Types of Aid Available

**Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans** are available to students enrolled at least half-time (6.0 credits hours) in required coursework per semester. Students enter repayment six months after they graduate or cease half-time enrollment (6.0 credits hours).

More information: [financialaid.buffalostate.edu/subsidized-and-unsubsidized](http://financialaid.buffalostate.edu/subsidized-and-unsubsidized)

**Federal Graduate PLUS Loans** are available to master's degree and graduate certificate students who need funding beyond the Direct Unsubsidized Loan.

More information: [financialaid.buffalostate.edu/grad-plus](http://financialaid.buffalostate.edu/grad-plus)

**Assistantships, Fellowships, and Scholarships** are available through The Graduate School.

More information: [graduateschool.buffalostate.edu/assistantships](http://graduateschool.buffalostate.edu/assistantships)

**TEACH Grants** are available to students in certain education majors pursuing a master's degree; other eligibility requirements and a service obligation apply.

More information: [financialaid.buffalostate.edu/teach-program](http://financialaid.buffalostate.edu/teach-program)

## Maintaining Eligibility for Federal Aid

Students that use federal financial aid, including loans, must comply with Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) rules to maintain aid eligibility each semester. Buffalo State reviews SAP after each semester. SAP consists of the following three components:

1. **GPA:** Graduate students must maintain a minimum overall GPA of 3.0.
2. **Pace:** Graduate students must successfully complete 66.67% of all courses for which they register. Courses not completed, failed, or withdrawn from negatively affect pace.
3. **Maximum timeframe:** Graduate students must be able to complete their program of study within 150% of the published program length, as measured in credit hours. For example, a student enrolled in a degree program that requires 30 credits to graduate must be able to complete the program within 45 credit attempts. Students cannot appeal the maximum timeframe standard for any reason.

Students that do not meet GPA or Pace standards will be placed on Financial Aid Warning for one semester. Students may receive federal aid during their warning semester, but must meet all the SAP standards at the conclusion of the warning semester or else forfeit future aid eligibility. In exceptional cases, students may appeal to have their aid reinstated for one semester if they fail to meet the GPA or Pace standard after their warning semester.

More information: [financialaid.buffalostate.edu/graduate-federal-sap-policy](http://financialaid.buffalostate.edu/graduate-federal-sap-policy)

## Tips to Stay on Track!

► **Required Coursework.** Enroll only in courses required for your program of study. Note that graduate students are not permitted to receive federal aid for undergraduate coursework (exception: teacher certification students).

► **Changing Majors** may result in your ineligibility for federal aid. Consult with the FAO before changing your major.

► **Federal Loans** require students to enroll in a minimum of six (6) credit hours of required course-work each semester to maintain eligibility.

► **Meet with your adviser** before you complete 12 credit hours and use *Degree Works* to monitor your progress toward graduation.

► **Monitor Banner and your Buffalo State email** account regularly.

► **Textbook Deferments** are available to students that have more financial aid than their charges. Apply a few weeks before each semester in Banner or at the FAO.

## Additional Resources

► **Cost Calculator:** A web-based tool to help estimate your costs. [financialaid.buffalostate.edu/costs](http://financialaid.buffalostate.edu/costs)

► **SUNY Smart Track Financial Literacy Program:** A free online program to learn about managing your personal finances.

► **Banner Navigation Guides:** Guides explain how to use Banner to review outstanding requirements and accept aid.

**Above resources are available at:** [financialaid.buffalostate.edu](http://financialaid.buffalostate.edu)

## Eligible Programs through The Graduate School

**Post-Baccalaureate Teacher Certification:** Students with bachelor's degrees who are matriculated into a teacher certification program may be eligible to borrow Federal Direct Subsidized and/or Unsubsidized Loan funds even though they are not actually pursuing a degree. Maximum loan limits are \$12,500 for the academic year for an independent student and \$5,500 for the academic year for a dependent student. A student may be eligible for TAP if it was not exhausted as an undergraduate student and they are registered full-time (12 or more hours) in undergraduate coursework. Teacher certification students are not eligible for Graduate PLUS loans or TEACH Grants. The chart below displays which aid types are available to teacher certification students.

	Unsubsidized Loans	Subsidized Loans	Grad PLUS loans	TEACH Grant	Assistantships	NYS TAP
Eligible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Graduate Degrees:** Students who are matriculated into a master's degree program and are taking graduate level courses may be eligible to borrow a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan. The maximum loan limit for full-time graduate students is \$20,500 for the academic year. Students attending year-round may be eligible for the Federal Graduate PLUS Loan as well. The chart below displays which aid types are available to students in a graduate degree program.

	Unsubsidized Loans	Subsidized Loans	Grad PLUS loans	TEACH Grant	Assistantships	NYS TAP
Eligible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

**Graduate Certificates:** Students who are matriculated into a graduate advanced certificate program in Art Conservation, Adult Education, Creativity and Change Leadership, Educational Leadership, Human Resource Development, Museum Studies, or Public Management may be eligible to borrow a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan at the same limits as students pursuing graduate degrees above. The chart below displays which aid types are available to students pursuing a graduate certificate.

	Unsubsidized Loans	Subsidized Loans	Grad PLUS loans	TEACH Grant	Assistantships	NYS TAP
Eligible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

**Graduate Pre-Major:** Students admitted into a pre-major status may receive up to \$12,500 as an independent student and \$5,500 as a dependent student in Federal Direct Subsidized and/or Unsubsidized Stafford Loans. Students required to take graduate level coursework in the pre-major status may receive loans for one semester. Students admitted into a pre-major status to take undergraduate preparatory coursework have 12 consecutive months of loan eligibility. Preparatory coursework does not include courses taken solely to raise one's grade point average and/or to meet graduate admission standards. For students not eligible for a Federal Direct Stafford Loan please see the Financial Aid Office for information on private student loans. The chart below displays which aid types are available to students in a graduate pre-major status.

	Unsubsidized Loans	Subsidized Loans	Grad PLUS loans	TEACH Grant	Assistantships	NYS TAP
Eligible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				

**Visiting and Non-Matriculated Students:** Visiting students and non-matriculated students are not eligible for federal aid. Contact the Financial Aid Office for information on alternative/private loans.

## Reasons to Visit the Financial Aid Office

- ❖ Any time you have questions or concerns about financial aid package or about your aid eligibility.
- ❖ You have questions about outstanding requirements or you need to turn in documents.
- ❖ You need help applying for aid or would like to apply for a textbook deferment.
- ❖ You are considering withdrawing from courses, withdrawing from the college, or you want to take a leave of absence.
- ❖ You are considering changing your major.
- ❖ You are not meeting SAP standards or are at risk of not meeting SAP standards (see reverse).
- ❖ You want to map out your aid eligibility for the duration of your academic program.
- ❖ To learn about the J-Term or summer semester.
- ❖ To learn about loan consolidation and/or to review your loan history.