

Overview

Approximately 85 percent of Buffalo State students receive some form of financial aid. When working with a student, there is a high probability they are depending on financial aid to defray at least a portion of their educational costs. A student's academic performance and decisions have a direct impact on their aid eligibility, therefore, it is critical that all those that advise students have a familiarity with financial aid rules and know when to refer a student to the Financial Aid Office. Should any questions or concerns arise pertaining to a student's eligibility, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Federal SAP

Satisfactory Academic Progress ([SAP](#)) is the process used to determine if a student is making acceptable progress toward a degree or certificate. Buffalo State monitors SAP at the end of each semester (except J-Term). Below summarizes the major components of SAP, as mandated by federal regulation.

Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA): Undergraduate students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 (Buffalo State's GPA only). Graduate students must maintain a 3.0.

Cumulative Pace: Pace is the percentage of courses the student has successfully completed of all those attempted (earned credit hours/attempted credit hours). All students must successfully complete two-thirds (66.67%) of all attempted credit hours. The only exception is for new freshmen who need to complete fifty percent their first two semesters. The following designations are considered to be unsuccessful attempted credit hours: I, N, X, W, U, E, EV, F grades and courses removed through the academic clemency process.

Maximum Timeframe: Students must complete their degree program within 150 percent of the normal time needed, as measured in credit hours. In other words, for a bachelor's degree that requires 120 credits, students must be able to complete the degree within 180 credits or else they forfeit aid eligibility. Notably, aid is terminated at the point in time this determination is made. Both undergraduate and graduate students are held to the maximum timeframe rule.

Our Numbers

- ☑ In 2015-16, over **\$103,000,000** federal, state, institutional, and private aid was processed by the Financial Aid Office.
- ☑ Over **8,700** students received some sort of aid.
- ☑ **5,004** students received a Pell Grant or about 55% of our undergraduate population.
- ☑ Ranked the **#1** Financial Aid Office in SUNY by the 2012 and 2015 SUNY Student Opinion Survey (SOS).

Tips for Students

1. **Email.** Students need to check their Buffalo State email regularly to review important notices from the Financial Aid Office and other campus offices.
2. **Banner.** Students need to monitor Banner which is used to [accept aid and view requirements](#).
3. **Electronic Billing.** All billing is electronic via Banner.
4. **Academic Standing.** Different standards exist for financial aid and academic standings (e.g. probation). Therefore, it is possible for a student to be ineligible for aid while in good academic standing.
5. **Course Withdrawals.** For federal and state aid, withdrawing from courses can significantly impact a student's aid eligibility in the current semester and in future semesters. Withdrawing from the entire semester may result in the student owing money to the college. Students should consult with the FAO.
6. **FAFSA and TAP.** Must be filed **annually** beginning October 1st for the following academic year.
7. **Full-Time vs. Part-Time.** Students can receive aid for less than 12 credit hours. Students should visit the Financial Aid Office for an estimate of their aid eligibility if they attend part-time.
8. **Required Coursework.** Federal and state aid may only be used for required courses (e.g. major courses and general education requirements).
9. **Federal Loans.** Students must enroll in at least six (6) credit hours of required coursework to be eligible for federal loans.
10. **Mailing Address.** Remind students to keep their [address](#) current with the Registrar's Office.

Ways to Help

- Make a referral. We are happy to assist all students through the aid process. The following populations are especially encouraged to visit our office to discuss their situation:
 - Students on financial aid warning
 - Students considering withdrawing from the college or individual courses
 - Students changing majors later in their academic career
 - Students that have not completed their FAFSA and TAP applications
- Remind students to regularly check their Buffalo State email and Banner accounts
- When submitting failing final grades, be sure to report the student's last date of attendance (LDA) in Banner. For students that never attended, use the EV grade.
- Encourage students to complete I and N grades.

Aid Limits

| Aid Program | Lifetime Limit |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Pell Grant (UG only) | The earlier of: 12 Full-Time Semesters (or part-time equivalent); or 1st bachelor's degree is earned. |
| Federal Direct Student Loans | \$31,000 for Dependent Undergraduate students; no more than \$23,000 may be subsidized |
| | \$57,500 for Independent Undergraduate students (or dependent students whose parents cannot borrow a PLUS Loan); no more than \$23,000 may be subsidized |
| | \$138,500 for Graduate students (inclusive of any UG loans) |
| Perkins Loan | \$27,500 (UG); \$60,000 (GR) |
| TEACH Grants | \$16,000 (UG); \$8,000 (GR) |
| NYS TAP Grant (UG only) | 10 semesters; EOP students 8 semesters; Regular students |
| Excelsior Scholarship | 8 semesters |

Website Tools

- Estimate Semester Costs**
<http://financialaid.buffalostate.edu/cost-calculator>
- View and Apply for Scholarships using CAPS**
<http://financialaid.buffalostate.edu/scholarships>
- Help Navigating Banner Financial Aid Screens**
<http://financialaid.buffalostate.edu/banner>
- Download forms and handouts**
<http://financialaid.buffalostate.edu/forms>
- Learn about Financial Literacy**
<https://fa.financialavenue.org/>

Financial Aid Timeline

Below is a timeline of major financial aid events that occur over the course of a typical academic year.

| Month | Events / Tasks |
|------------|---|
| Aug | Book deferments available for Fall (through first week of school). Apply in Banner or in Moot Hall. |
| Sep | Fall aid begins to disburse. Students that file their applications late or fail to monitor their email or Banner may experience delays in receiving aid and/or refunds. |
| Oct | FAFSA and TAP Applications are available for the following academic year. |
| Nov | J-Term aid applications available |
| Dec | December graduates must have all their aid in place prior to graduating. |
| Dec | FAO begins awarding aid to new Spring admits. |
| Dec | FAO begins awarding newly accepted students for the upcoming academic year. |
| Jan | SAP is reviewed for students that attended in the Fall. Students are notified in writing if they are on financial aid warning or ineligible. |
| Jan | Book deferments available for Spring (through first week of class). |
| Feb | Spring aid begins to disburse. |
| Mar | Continuing students packaged for upcoming academic year |
| Apr | Summer Aid Application available. |
| May | May graduates must have their aid in place prior to graduating. |
| May | SAP is reviewed for Spring attendees. |
| Jul | August graduates must have their aid in place prior to graduation. |
| Aug | SAP is reviewed for summer attendees. |