

FINANCIAL AID

PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the Financial Aid Office at Westfield State University is to assist eligible students in meeting their educational expenses through a variety of federal, state, institutional and private programs. Financial assistance can be in the form of gift aid (grants and scholarships) and self-help programs (loans and work-study). The Financial Aid Office is available to assist students throughout the financial aid process.

POLICY

The policies and criteria for awarding financial aid are as follows:

- The philosophy of financial aid is that the family has the primary responsibility to meet as much of the educational costs of their children as is reasonably possible. Financial Aid is a supplement to the family resources.
- The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the required application. The FAFSA is filed electronically at www.fafsa.gov.
- The FAFSA is available on October 1st and the Westfield State University priority filing deadline is March 1st. Students who file after March 1st will be awarded on a funds available basis.
- In addition to the FAFSA, a student may be selected by the U.S. Department of Education or the Financial Aid Office at Westfield State University for a process called Verification. If selected, federal tax return transcripts and a verification worksheet will be required.
- New students admitted for the fall semester will be offered a financial aid award by April 15th.
- Continuing students will be awarded in mid-June after grades have been processed.
- Day Division students must be enrolled in at least 12 semester hours of credits each semester. This determination is made by the Registrar's Office at the close of the Add/Drop period each semester. Financial Aid awards are adjusted proportionately for those students enrolled less than full time.
- Students are required to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress toward a degree. This means that students must complete at least 21 credits each academic year (10.5 if enrolled for one semester). This standard is adjusted proportionately for students enrolled on a part time basis. Students who fail to meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirement at the close of the spring semester will be notified by the Financial Aid Office of their ineligibility

Westfield State University

Policy concerning:

Section Administrative

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for financial aid in the next academic year.

- Students who do not meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirement are instructed to repair their academic record or if extenuating circumstances exist, to request a one-time waiver from the Satisfactory Academic Appeal Committee chaired by the Director of Financial Aid.
- Financial Aid awards are not automatically renewed. Students must file the FAFSA each year to be considered for an award.
- The staff at Westfield State University is committed to the highest standards of professional conduct. We are members of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators and follow their code of conduct.

REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed annually by the Director of Financial Aid and the Vice President of Enrollment Management.