

# FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Office of Financial Aid  
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The Office of Financial Aid at Clark Atlanta University assist students in finding ways to pay for their college education. The philosophy of the Office of Financial Aid reflects that of the Department of Education. To the extent possible, the primary responsibility for paying for schooling rests with the student and his/her family. The University will attempt to provide financial assistance to those families who have been determined eligible based on the formula approved by Congress and used by the Department of Education. CAU will provide informational resources to all students and families regardless of eligibility. Such resources will enable students and parents to seek sources of financial aid outside the institution.

The mission of the Office of Financial Aid is to assist students and parents in navigating the financial aid process in order to identify adequate funding that will enable them to become financially enrolled at Clark Atlanta University. The vision of the Office of Financial Aid is to provide students with access to financial resources and student-centered services while ensuring compliance with federal, state, and institutional regulations. The Office will meet expectations from internal and external constituents.

## Students' Rights and Responsibilities

Students have the right to know:

- The cost of attendance.
- The financial assistance available from federal, state, and institutional sources.
- Procedure and deadlines for submitting applications for financial aid.
- How financial aid recipients are selected.
- How financial eligibility is determined, including resources the Office of Financial Aid considered available to the student.
- When and how financial aid funds are disbursed.
- An explanation of each type of award the student receives.
- The refund policy for students who withdraw.
- For any federal or state student loan received: the interest rate, the total amount to be repaid, when repayment begins, the length of the repayment period, and the cancellation or deferment provisions of the loan.
- For any Federal Work-Study job: a description of the job, the hours a student is eligible to work, the rate of payment, and how and when payment is made.
- The criteria used to determine satisfactory academic progress for financial aid purposes.
- How to appeal a decision by the Office of Financial Aid concerning an award.

Students have the responsibility to:

- Read directions thoroughly, complete all forms accurately, and comply with all deadlines.
- Submit any additional information or documents required by the Office of Financial Aid or other agency if applicable.
- Contact the Office of Financial Aid if an award letter is not received within two weeks of submitting all required documents.

- Read, understand, and keep copies of any forms the student is required to sign.
- Repay any student loans that are received.
- Complete Entrance and Exit Loan Counseling if federal loans are received while attending Clark Atlanta University. Loan Counseling can be completed at [www.studentaid.gov](http://www.studentaid.gov) (<https://studentaid.gov/>).
- Notify the Office of Financial Aid of any change in enrollment status or financial status, including any scholarships or grants received from outside sources.
- Notify the lender of any changes in your permanent address and enrollment status.
- Satisfactorily perform the work agreed upon in a federal work-study job.
- Know and comply with all requirements for continuation of financial aid, including Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements.
- Check the status of your account each semester using BannerWeb student self-service to verify that all eligible aid is applied to your account.
- Verify and update your permanent mailing address with the University Registrar each semester.

## Application Procedures for Financial Aid

### Complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

To receive financial aid at Clark Atlanta University, all students must complete the FAFSA prior to the beginning of each school year. **The preferred method of completing the FAFSA is online.** Students who have access to the Internet should complete the FAFSA on the Web at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) (<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa/>). Students who received federal financial aid in the previous school year may receive a Renewal Application. The Renewal Application may also be completed online. When completing the FAFSA, students must list Clark Atlanta University's name and school code "001559" in the section that asks you to list the school you plan to attend. The address for Clark Atlanta University is 223 James P. Brawley Drive, S.W., Atlanta, GA 30314.

- **Priority Deadlines:** Students should complete and transmit their FAFSA by February 1, preceding the year for which they wish to receive financial aid. Other documents should be completed and submitted to the Office of Financial Aid by February 1, regardless of the semester in which students plan to enroll. Students who complete their FAFSAs and submit all other required documents by February 1, will receive priority consideration and will be notified of their financial aid awards by April 15. Students who apply for financial aid after April 1, should allow 4 to 6 weeks to receive award letters. Students applying after June 15, should be prepared to pay their fees during registration and may be reimbursed based on their financial aid eligibility. Financial aid applications for spring semester must be completed no later than November 1.

### Important Dates to Remember

- **Student Aid Report (SAR):** Students should receive an electronic SAR in approximately 3 to 5 days following submission of their electronic FAFSA and should carefully review the SAR to make sure the information is completely correct. If the information is incorrect, make the corrections online to the SAR and return it to the processor. Failure to comply may result in the student's application

being delayed. The Office of Financial Aid will only receive your SAR information if Clark Atlanta University is listed in the school section.

- **Special Instructions:** Federal regulations require that Clark Atlanta University verify the accuracy of information provided by applicants for financial aid whom the Department of Education selects for a process called “**verification**.” If the information on the SAR states that “**Your application has been selected for a review in a process called verification**,” students can either submit to the Office of Financial Aid a copy of the Tax Transcripts or they can use the IRS data retrieval to request their tax information. The Office of Financial Aid will not be able to accept the 1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ for completing the verification process. Students will also have to complete a **Verification Worksheet** that can be obtained from the Financial Aid section of the CAU website or from the Office of Financial Aid. Contact the Office of Financial Aid to find out about additional information or documentation that may be needed. Students who do not complete the verification process as required **will not** be eligible to receive financial aid awards.

**Note:** The University's review of documentation may result in an adjustment to the aid award. Thus, it is in the student's best interest to notify the Office of Financial Aid regarding changes in information originally reported on the FAFSA.

- **Other Requirements:** New graduate students must be accepted for admission to Clark Atlanta University before their applications for financial aid can be processed. All students applying for financial aid (e.g., loans, work study, scholarships, grants, stipends) must complete the FAFSA and be admitted to Clark Atlanta University.
- **International Graduate Students and Noncitizens:** Federal and state financial aid programs are for United States citizens or permanent residents of the United States. International students are typically not eligible for federal and state aid. They may, however, qualify for institutional scholarship programs. International graduate students are warned that, in many instances, these programs provide only enough financial aid to cover some of the college expenses. At Clark Atlanta University, the financial responsibility of attending the University will be on the student and his family.

## Eligibility Criteria for Financial Aid Awards

To receive funds administered by the Office of Financial Aid, a student must:

- Be admitted or enrolled as a regular student in a degree-granting program
- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen
- Have a valid social security number
- Be making Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) toward completion of his/her degree
- Not owe a refund on any federal grant and not be in default on any student loan previously received unless he/she can provide proof that satisfactory arrangements having been made with the lender
- Be registered with the Selective Service and the Immigration and Naturalization Service if required by law to do so
- Not have been convicted of drug related offenses

## Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy for Financial Aid Recipients

Federal regulations and Clark Atlanta University policies require that students receiving federal financial aid must maintain **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**, while progressing toward successful and timely completion of degree requirements. The financial aid programs affected by

SAP requirements include those offered by federal and state governments and the University. Students receiving funds from any of these sources must maintain SAP or face financial aid probation or denial of aid from all sources. Students awarded scholarships based upon merit must comply with the University's academic requirements in order to maintain their eligibility to continue to receive support. All students receiving financial aid must be evaluated to ensure they are satisfactorily progressing toward completion of their degrees. SAP is measured annually in the following two ways:

1. **Qualitative:** Graduate students must maintain a minimum CGPA of 3.0.
2. **Quantitative:** All students must successfully complete a minimum of sixty-seven percent (**67%**) of all credits attempted. Graduate students **cannot** attempt more than 150% of the number of credits needed for award of the graduate degree. Both quantitative measures are cumulative.

### The following policies apply in determining attempted credits:

- **Transfer Credits:** Transfer credits accepted from another college or university will be counted as attempted hours and will be applied to the maximum attempted hours allowed to complete a degree program. Transfer student must complete and pass 67% of courses taken for degree program.
- **Incomplete Courses:** Any course in which the “I” grade is given is counted in credit hours attempted. However, it is not included in credit hours earned until such time as the course is completed and a final grade has been awarded.
- **Maximum Period for Completion of a Degree:** Students are given a maximum period for completion of a degree that may not exceed 150% of the total credit hours required for the degree. A student who has completed the academic requirements for the degree or certificate he/she is pursuing but has not yet received the degree or certificate cannot receive further financial aid for that program.
- **Withdrawals:** All courses from which students officially withdraw (“W’s” will be posted to students’ academic transcripts) are included in the total number of credits attempted. ***Excessive withdrawals from courses may result in the loss of financial aid as withdrawals count as credit hours attempted but not earned.***
- **Audit Courses:** Students do not receive academic credit for audited courses and are therefore not eligible to receive financial aid for courses which they audit.

## Financial Aid Suspension

Students not meeting the standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) are automatically placed on financial aid suspension whereby he/she is not eligible to receive financial aid until he/she brings up the minimum required academic standards (outlined above). Students on financial aid suspension can appeal the decision.

### Appeal of Financial Aid Suspension

Students not meeting the financial aid eligibility requirements by maintaining SAP may appeal the decision to terminate financial aid if extenuating circumstances were present. The student must adhere to the following requirements:

- Complete the Financial Aid Appeal Form available in the Office of Financial Aid or on the University's website ([www.cau.edu](http://www.cau.edu) (<http://www.cau.edu>)).

- Provide documentation of the extenuating circumstance(s). The documentation must be directly related to the event(s) that affected the student's ability to achieve Satisfactory Academic Progress.
- Submit appeal to the Financial Aid Appeals Committee by July 1, prior to the start of the Fall Semester. Letters of appeals should be typed, signed by the student and include all supporting documentation. The decision of the Financial Aid Appeals Committee is final.

## Financial Aid Probation

A student who successfully appealed their **Financial Aid Suspension** may be placed on financial aid probation. Financial aid probation cannot exceed one semester. During this period, a graduate student is expected to improve his/her academic progress so that they are again meeting the minimum standards of 67% credit hour completion rate and a minimum CGPA of 3.0.

- **Reinstatement of Financial Aid Eligibility:** If a student loses eligibility for award of financial aid because he/she failed to achieve minimum required SAP academic standards and does not have extenuating circumstances, the student may have his/her financial aid eligibility reinstated by taking action that brings them into compliance with the minimum standards of 67% credit hour completion rate and a minimum CGPA of 3.0.
- **Academic Plan:** Students who are evaluated and it is determined that it would take more than one semester of probation to get them back to the minimum standards will be placed on an academic plan. The academic plan will outline how the student can get themselves back to the minimum academic standards to be eligible for financial aid within one year or two semesters. Students on an academic plan will be evaluated at the conclusion of every semester. Graduate students must contact their Academic Departments directly to obtain the Satisfactory Academic Progress Planning Form.

## Cost of Attending Clark Atlanta University

The cost of attending Clark Atlanta University for an academic year (fall and spring semesters) may vary from student to student, depending on the level of enrollment, dependency status, and the amount each individual requires for personal and living expenses. These estimated education-related expenses make up the **Cost of Attendance**. It includes, but is not limited to, the amount the student must pay directly to the University to register for classes and room and board.

The Office of Financial Aid uses standard budgets (**Cost of Attendance**) for all students based on enrollment status which include tuition, fees, books and supplies, living (room and board) expenses, transportation, and personal expenses. If special circumstances exist such as expenses related to catastrophic losses or unusual medical bills, a student may request special treatment of the information reported on the FAFSA.

**Note:** Credit card bills, prior debts, automobile payments, maintenance and other personal discretionary expenses are not grounds for special treatment.

## The Financial Aid Award

The Office of Financial Aid attempts to assist as many Clark Atlanta University students as possible by using available funds provided by multiple sources. Financial assistance is awarded to meet educational expenses only and the aid is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. The priority deadline for applying for financial aid is February 1, therefore students should complete their FAFSA at least four (4) weeks prior to the February 1, priority deadline to ensure that the Office of Financial Aid receives their electronic Student Aid Report (SAR) by the priority date. Students who comply with published priority deadlines for completing

financial aid applications will receive consideration for all available funds. Students who apply after the published priority deadlines may receive financial aid awards if available. An application is complete when the Office of Financial Aid receives all required documents.

## Awards Based on Hours of Enrollment

In determining the amount of the student's award, the financial aid staff assumes that the student will be enrolled full-time (at least 12 hours per semester) for fall and spring unless indicated otherwise. The aid award is subject to adjustment should the hours of enrollment change by the end of the Drop/Add Period for the term.

**Note:** Award revision may affect your billing statement from the Office of Student Accounts.

## Understanding the Online Award Notification

The online financial aid notification represents an offer that is based upon provided information and funds available to the University at the time of the award. The availability of funds from federal programs is subject to Congressional appropriations and to changes in federal legislation. Total Cost of Education represents the estimated cost of educational expenses for the award period (including tuition, fees, books and supplies, room, board, and miscellaneous). This is an estimate. Where the student lives and what he/she pays for transportation and personal expenses could cause the actual cost of education to be higher or lower.

**Expected Family Contribution (EFC)** includes total family contributions, which are determined from information provided by the student and his/her family on the FAFSA. Annual financial aid awards are usually divided into semester amounts and will be applied to the student's bill according to the way they are listed on the award letter. Students entering for the spring term only may be eligible to borrow their full annual Stafford loan amounts if loan funds were not used during the fall semester. The student may accept or decline any portion of the award online.

**Note:** If any portion of the award is declined, Clark Atlanta University will not replace it with other funds.

By accepting the award notification, the student is certifying that he/she understands and accepts his/her rights and responsibilities as an aid recipient at Clark Atlanta University as outlined in this publication. The student must notify the Office of Financial Aid if he/she does not accept the award as listed on the online award notification.

## External Scholarships and Resources

Financial aid recipients must notify the Office of Financial Aid if any awards are extended to them from sources other than Clark Atlanta University. Receipt of external awards may result in a revision of financial aid from Clark Atlanta University. It is also the student's responsibility to notify the Office of Financial Aid of any special instructions or billing information regarding external scholarships. No credit will be entered on the student's account before the check arrives. It is also the policy of the Office of Financial Aid to divide external scholarships equally between fall and spring semesters unless specified by the donor.

**Note:** The student should maintain a file containing all financial aid correspondence and information, all bills from the Student Accounts Office, and all promissory notes for loans accepted. It is possible that some of the financial aid received will be subject to federal income tax, particularly scholarships and grants that exceed the cost of tuition and related expenses. Keeping complete and accurate records now may save the student time later.

## Funding for Summer Session and Study Abroad

Depending upon the program and the student's final aid award, financial aid may be available to regularly enrolled students who choose to attend summer session or a summer study abroad program. Students planning to study abroad should meet with their financial aid advisor as far in advance as possible. Students who receive full eligibility of aid fall and spring semesters will not have eligibility for summer. The priority deadline for applying for summer financial aid is April 15. Contact the Office of Financial Aid for application information.

## Types of Available Aid

### Federal Grants

- **Teacher Education Assistance College and for Higher Education (TEACH) Grant:** Does not have to be repaid unless student fails to carry out service obligation, in which case student must repay TEACH Grant as Direct Unsubsidized Loan with interest accrued (accumulated) from date grant was disbursed (paid out to student) For undergraduate, post-baccalaureate, and graduate students who are or will be taking course work necessary to become elementary or secondary teacher; recipient must sign Agreement to Serve saying he/she will teach full-time in designated teacher shortage area for four complete years (within eight years of completing academic program) at elementary or secondary school serving children from low-income families (Up to \$4,000 a year; total amount may not exceed \$16,000; Graduate student total amount may not exceed \$8,000)

For more information see the Teach Grant Fact Sheet at [www.teachgrant.ed.gov](http://www.teachgrant.ed.gov) (<https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/grants/teach/>)

### Institutional Scholarships

Clark Atlanta University offers a number of graduate scholarships in most areas of study. To be eligible for graduate scholarships, students must be in a degree-seeking program, enrolled full-time and making satisfactory academic progress. Students must maintain a Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 3.0 to retain their scholarships. Information regarding these scholarships is available on the CAU Website and through the Schools and Departments of the respective graduate programs as well as the Office of Financial Aid.

### Federal Self-Help and Loan Options

Most financial aid awards for graduate students include student loans and/or work-study employment. If the student wishes to exchange a loan for employment or employment for a loan, he/she should contact a financial aid advisor. Adjustments will be contingent upon the student's eligibility according to program regulation and on the availability of funds.

## Student Employment Programs

Employment is an award for which a student must work. Employment opportunities may be available both on and off campus.

- **Federal Work Study (FWS):** Federal Work Study (FWS) is an employment program awarded to students based on federal eligibility using the information provided on the FAFSA. Work-study students gain valuable work experience and skills and earn income while attending school to meet educational expenses. Students are given the opportunity to interview for a variety of jobs on campus before placement in a position. FWS students earning is based on the actual hours worked each pay period. The average work-study employee works 15 hours per week and can earn up to \$4,200 annually. Students should expect to receive pay checks bi-weekly. The

amount of the FWS is the amount the student is eligible to earn for the academic year. FWS is not available to be applied to institutional charges and the earnings do not have to be repaid. FWS awards will not appear as credits on the bill from the Office of Student Accounts.

## Loan Programs

Loan funds from federal and private organizations must be repaid. Some loans require interest payments while the student is in school; others begin repayment after the student ceases to be enrolled at a postsecondary institution at least half-time. Some of the loans may be disbursed to the student in the form of checks that should be endorsed and used to pay any charges owed to the University. Most loan funds will be credited directly to the student's account after completion of the promissory note and other required documents. All loans are subject to cancellation if the student does not endorse checks promptly or fails to complete the required documents in a timely manner. When a student decides to take out a student loan, he/she is making a commitment to repay it. Repayment is mandatory whether or not the education program is completed. All first-time borrowers must participate in online Entrance Loan Counseling provided by the Office of Financial Aid. Before leaving Clark Atlanta University, all borrowers must have an exit interview to discuss repayment, deferment and cancellation provisions. Eligibility for loans will be based on the information received on the Student Aid Report (SAR). Students do not have to complete a separate loan application but will have to complete a promissory note agreeing to repay the loan.

**Note:** Loan awards typically increase as the student progresses toward degree completion.

1. **Direct Unsubsidized Loan (Stafford):** For undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at least half-time and meet all Stafford program requirements other than demonstrated need. Financial need is not required. The range is \$5,500-\$20,500, less any subsidized amounts received for same period, depending on grade level and dependency status. Loan must be repaid with interest. Current interest rate is 6.08% for graduate or professional students. The interest rate is subject to change.
2. **Direct PLUS Loan:** Loan is a credit driven loan made to creditworthy parents of dependent undergraduate students and for eligible graduate and professional students enrolled at least half-time. PLUS Loans are not based on need and may be used to replace the expected family contribution if the student also receives need-based financial aid. Maximum amount is cost of attendance minus any other financial aid student receives; no minimum amount. Students are required to file a FAFSA. Loan must be repaid with interest. Current interest rate is 7.08. Students should contact the Office of Financial Aid for application information.

## Veterans Benefits

Clark Atlanta University is approved for eligible nation's veterans, veterans with disabilities, active service personnel, reservists, and qualified dependents of deceased veterans (widows, war orphans, etc.) to receive VA Educational Benefits while attending the University. Students using the VA Educational Benefits to attend Clark Atlanta University must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). Veterans, as well as, widows, war orphans, etc. who fall below the minimum acceptable standing for two consecutive semesters will have their benefits terminated for failure to achieve satisfactory progress. While the student may continue to matriculate at the University, federal funds through the Veterans Affairs Administration will not be available until such time as the minimum acceptable cumulative grade point average has been reached.



To change from one school or training program to another, individuals receiving benefits under the Post-9/11 GI Bill, MGIB-AD, MGIB-SR, VEAP, or REAP will need to submit a VA Form 22-1995 "Request For Change of Program or Place of Training" to the Regional Processing Office serving your state. Individuals receiving benefits under the Dependents Educational Assistance Program will need to submit VA Form 22-5495. Both forms can be submitted online at [www.gibill.va.gov/apply-for-benefits/application/](http://www.gibill.va.gov/apply-for-benefits/application/) (<http://www.gibill.va.gov/apply-for-benefits/application/>). For submitting a paper copy of the form visit our forms page link at [www.va.gov/vaforms/search\\_action.asp](http://www.va.gov/vaforms/search_action.asp) ([http://www.va.gov/vaforms/search\\_action.asp](http://www.va.gov/vaforms/search_action.asp)).

### **The Yellow Ribbon Program and the Post-9/11 GI Bill**

The Yellow Ribbon GI Education Enhancement Program (Yellow Ribbon Program) is a provision of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008. The Post-9/11 GI Bill provides education benefits for service members who have served a minimum of 90 combined days on active duty after September 10th, 2001. This program allows institutions of higher learning (degree granting institutions) in the United States to voluntarily enter into an agreement with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to fund tuition expenses that exceed maximum tuition and fee reimbursement per academic year. The institution can contribute up to 50% of those expenses and the VA will match the same amount as the institution. This award is meant to bridge the gap between Post-9/11 benefits and private university tuition and fees.

The current maximum tuition and fee reimbursement per academic year for the Post-9/11 GI Bill to eligible undergraduate students attending private institutions of higher learning can be found at [www.benefits.va.gov/gibill](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill) (<http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/>). This rate changes every year on August 1.

**Note:** The student's tuition and fees may exceed the amount of the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit if the student is attending a private institution.

Institutions that voluntarily enter into a Yellow Ribbon Agreement with the VA choose the amount of tuition and fees that will be contributed. The VA will match that amount and issue payment directly to the institution. Clark Atlanta University has agreed to extend the Yellow Ribbon to 25 students on a first come first serve basis from fall through spring semesters. This agreement does not include summer session. To apply for Yellow Ribbon Benefits contact CAU's VA Certifying Officer, located in the Office of the University Registrar.