

Graduate Financial Aid

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The purpose of the student aid program is to help make higher education a reality for persons who would be unable to attend without financial assistance. However, financial aid is awarded only to eligible students who have been admitted to the University. Transient students are not eligible for financial aid. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) may be submitted at any time after the applicant has applied for admission.

Financial aid applications are accepted and processed throughout the academic year, but priority is given to those submitted by April 1.

This material was prepared in advance of the 2013-2014 academic year and is subject to changes in state or federal laws or regulations.

Graduate students must maintain a minimum graduate grade point average of 2.5 to be eligible for financial aid.

Grants

Vocational Rehabilitation Assistance

Vocational Rehabilitation provides assistance to students with physical limitations. Usually, fees are paid for eligible students. Apply through your local Office of Rehabilitation Services.

Other Federal Programs

Veterans Financial Aid Services

The Veterans Affairs Office, a part of the Office of Financial Aid, is located in the University Center. A full-time counselor assists all veterans in completing applications for educational benefits, making adjustments in payments, providing tutorial assistance, updating enrollment certifications, and with other services to assist veterans with their education.

Veterans Administration Assistance

Veterans, service personnel, and eligible dependents may qualify to receive benefits through the Veterans Administration. Applications may be made through the VSU Office of Veterans Affairs.

Post-9/11 GI Bill

The Post-9/11 GI Bill provides financial support for education and housing to individuals with at least 90 days of aggregate service on or after September 11, 2001, or individuals discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days. You must have received an honorable discharge to be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill. The Post-9/11 GI Bill became effective for training on or after August 1, 2009. The amount of support that an individual may qualify for depends on where they live and what type of degree they are pursuing. Approved training under the Post-9/11 GI Bill includes graduate and undergraduate degrees, and vocational/technical training. All training programs must be offered by an institution of higher learning (IHL) and approved for GI Bill benefits. Additionally, tutorial assistance, and licensing and certification test reimbursement are approved under the Post-9/11 GI Bill. The Post-9/11 GI Bill will pay your tuition based upon the highest in-state tuition charged by an educational institution in the state where the educational institution is located. The Post-9/11 GI Bill also offers some service members the opportunity to transfer their GI Bill to dependents.

Montgomery GI Bill (Active Duty)

This program of education benefits is for students who enter active duty for the first time after June 30, 1985. The student must, with certain exceptions, serve continuously on active duty for three years of a 3-year enlistment or, for a lesser benefit, two years of an initial active duty obligation of less than three years. A student also may qualify for benefits by initially serving two continuous years on active duty, followed by four years of Selected Reserve Service.

Montgomery GI Bill (Selected Reserve)

This program of education benefits is for reservists of the armed forces as well as the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard. For eligibility, a reservist must have a 6-year obligation to serve in the Selected Reserve, complete Initial Active Duty for Training, have a HS diploma or its equivalent, and remain in good standing in a drilling Selected Reserve Unit. If a student has a parent who is a military veteran, the student may qualify for help from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Benefits may be awarded for pursuit of associate, bachelor's, or graduate degrees. Details are available in the VSU Office of Veterans Affairs.

Loans

The Federal Direct Loan Program

These loans allow students enrolled at least half-time to borrow money at low interest for educational expenses. There are two types of Federal Direct Stafford/Ford Loans for graduate students: (1) Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford/Ford Loans (2) Federal Graduate PLUS Loans.

The Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford/Ford Loans are non-need-based, and the Federal Government does not subsidize or pay the interest on this loan while the student is in school or during the six-month grace period. The student either pays the interest while in school and during the six-month grace period or it is added to the balance of the loan.

The Federal Graduate (PLUS) Loan is an educational loan for graduate students enrolled at least half-time. Financial need is not an eligibility requirement, but an acceptable credit rating is required. Loan eligibility is based on the Cost of Attendance minus all other aid received.

A completed Free Application for Federal Student Aid is required for either loan.

VSU Short-Term Loans

Short-term emergency loans are available from the Office of Business and Finance each semester. Apply to the VSU Office of Student Accounts in the Bursary.

Employment Opportunities

Federal Work-Study Program (FWSP)

The University participates in the Federal Work-Study Program. Eligible students may work part-time during the academic year. To be placed on FWSP, the student must complete and submit all required financial aid documents to the VSU Office of Financial Aid. Priority is given to those students who have completed financial aid applications by May 1.

Graduate Assistantships

The University provides a limited number of graduate assistantships. Interested applicants should apply to the Graduate School. An out-of-state student who holds a graduate assistantship is given a waiver of out-of-state tuition.

Student Assistant Program

On-campus jobs, financed by the University, are also available. Each department has its own funds for this program. Inquiries should be made to Student Employment, located in Langdale Hall or visit the web site (<http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/finance-admin/human-resources/student-employment>).

Other Employment

The Job Location and Development Program, administered through the Office of Career Services, Langdale Hall West, 2nd Floor, assists students in obtaining part-time employment off-campus. For more information, visit the web site (<http://www.valdosta.edu/student/student-services/career-services>).

Scholarships

Regardless of your family's income or your potential for a scholarship, complete all financial aid applications required by the VSU Office of Financial Aid. Application forms and information about VSU General Scholarships are available on line (<http://www.valdosta.edu/admissions/financial-aid>).

While most scholarships are limited to undergraduate students, graduate students are eligible to apply for the following VSU Scholarships:

Gail Aberson Scholarship

This endowed scholarship was created to honor the memory of Gail Aberson and to assist teachers at the graduate level in their professional development/certification as Teacher Support Specialists (mentors) and science teachers K-12. The award will provide assistance to teachers from member school systems in the Okefenokee RESA. Qualified recipients may contact the College of Education for application information.

Elizabeth Darlene Sikes Scholarship

This scholarship was established to recognize an outstanding graduate student in Communication Disorders.

Louise S. Chastain Scholarship

This fund was established by Mrs. Chastain for students pursuing a Master's degree in Social Work. Preference is given to residents of Thomas County, Georgia.

Clare Philips Martin Scholarship

This scholarship is available to a student currently enrolled at VSU who has completed no fewer than 60 semester hours at VSU with a GPA of 3.5 or higher. To qualify, a student must have demonstrated intellectual growth and leadership through involvement in clubs, organizations, projects, and work experience while in college. This award is presented during the University Honors Day program, during spring semester. The deadline for application is April 1. For an application form, click here (<http://www.valdosta.edu/admissions/financial-aid/scholarships>) .

Frances Wood Wilson Foundation, Inc. Scholarship

This scholarship is intended to benefit students in good academic standing and with demonstrated financial need (must have a FAFSA on file). Apply to the Office of Financial Aid by completing a VSU General Scholarship Application.

Financial Aid Academic Requirements

In accordance with the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, students must be making satisfactory academic progress, to qualify for and continue to receive Title IV federal financial aid.

Graduate students are expected to maintain the academic standards outlined in the official catalog of Valdosta State University. Students who fail to meet the standards will be dismissed from their program of study and will have their financial aid terminated. Financial aid applicants who were dismissed at the end of the last semester they attended are not eligible for financial aid.

Qualitative Requirement: Graduate students must maintain a cumulative grade point average of not less than 2.5 in order to be eligible for financial aid.

Quantitative Requirement: Graduate students must maintain a 67% completion pace in all courses attempted at VSU. The grades of "A," "B," "C," "D," and "S" count as the successful completion of a course. The grades of "F," "W," "WF," "I," "IP," "U," "NR," and "V" do not count as the successful completion of a course.

Graduate students must also complete their program of study before they have attempted more than 150% of the hours required for their program of study. This is the maximum time frame allowed by the U.S. Department of Education.

Monitoring of Satisfactory Progress

Compliance with the qualitative and quantitative academic requirements will be checked at the end of each semester and at the time the student applies for financial aid. Students who are dismissed from their academic program will be immediately ineligible for aid. The 2.5 GPA and 67% completion pace requirements will be checked at the end of each semester. Students who are found to be in violation of the 2.5 GPA requirement and the 67% completion requirements will be placed on warning and will receive a warning letter notifying them that they have one semester to graduate or bring their GPA and completion rate up to the required levels. Students who reach the maximum time frame or who not come into compliance with the 2.5 GPA and 67% completion pace requirements within one semester of being placed on warning will have their financial aid terminated.

The grade point average of students who apply during the academic year, the limitation on the total hours attempted, the 2.5 GPA requirement, and the 67% completion pace requirement will be checked at the end of the last semester attended.

Summer Session

Courses taken during the summer are counted exactly the same as courses taken any other semester.

Reinstatement of Aid

Reinstatement of Financial Aid depends upon availability of financial aid funds at the time of the application for reinstatement and other factors:

Students who lose eligibility for financial aid for failure to maintain the required 2.5 GPA or maintain the required 67% completion pace can apply for reinstatement of their financial aid once their GPA reaches 2.5 or higher and their completion pace increases to the required 67%.

Appeals

Students wishing to appeal may do so by filling out a Satisfactory Progress Petition and presenting it to the Office of Financial Aid, along with any supporting documentation. The Office of Financial Aid staff may take into consideration illness, death in the immediate family, or any other extenuating circumstances. Students will be notified, in writing, of the decision.

Students wishing to appeal the decision of the Office of Financial Aid may do so, by writing to the Student Financial Aid Committee.

Academic Renewal

The US Department of Education does not recognize academic amnesty or academic renewal in relation to financial aid satisfactory academic progress. VSU is required to include all courses and grades in evaluating a student's satisfactory academic progress. However, if there were special circumstances involved VSU may be able to approve an academic appeal and place a student on probation or an academic plan.

Financial Aid for International Students

Outstanding students may qualify for a waiver of the out-of-state tuition fees; such a waiver greatly reduces the cost of study at Valdosta State University. Interested international applicants should include with their applications a formal statement requesting consideration for a waiver of out-of-state tuition fees.

In addition to the tuition waivers, a limited number of graduate assistantships are available each year. Recipients work a specified number of hours in an academic department or with a faculty member and receive a partial waiver of tuition plus a small amount of money to help them with their living expenses. Students interested in information about graduate assistantships should write directly to: The Graduate School, Valdosta State University, Valdosta, GA 31698 USA.