

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 2017-2018 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 Stafford/Ford Loan

This loan allows students enrolled at least half-time to borrow money at low interest for educational expenses. The Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford loan is not need-based. This loan was created for borrowers who do not qualify for federal interest subsidies. 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. A FAFSA is required.

The Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loan

This loan is an educational loan for graduate students enrolled at least half-time. Financial need is not an eligibility requirement, student borrowers must be credit worthy to qualify. Loan eligibility is based on the cost of attendance minus other aid received. A FAFSA is required.

VSU Short-Term Loans

Short-term loans are available to qualified students, for assistance in paying tuition and fees. Applications are accepted in the University Bursary. For more information about Short-Term loan qualifications and the application process, click here (<http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/finance-admin/financial-services/students/services/short-term-loans.php>).

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 Opportunities, in the University Center at Entrance 5, 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/off-campus-part-time-jobs.php>).

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/scholarships>). Other scholarship information is also available at this website.

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 (<https://www.valdosta.edu/admissions/financial-aid/forms/scholarships/claire-philips-martin-scholarship.php>).

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 ("SAP"), both in quality and quantity, to qualify for and continue to receive Title IV federal financial aid. The satisfactory academic progress standards for federal financial aid recipients at Valdosta State University are as follows:

Graduate Students

Qualitative

All undergraduate students are expected to maintain at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA for all courses taken at Valdosta State University, or which have been accepted for credit toward their program of study from a prior institution.

Quantitative

In addition to maintaining the specified grade point average, students receiving financial aid must complete their degree within an acceptable number of attempted hours and successfully complete a minimum percentage of credit hours cumulatively.

Students must successfully complete 67% of the courses for which they register at Valdosta State University or which have been accepted for credit toward their program of study from a prior institution. 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.

To maintain financial aid eligibility at Valdosta State University, a student must complete his or her degree program by the time he or she has attempted 150% of the number of semester hours required to earn the degree. Examples: Students pursuing a degree that requires 120 semester hours may not receive financial aid after they have attempted 180 hours. If the degree requires 130 semester hours, students will be expected to have earned the degree after having attempted no more than 195 hours.

Monitoring of Satisfactory Progress

All quantitative and qualitative academic requirements will be checked at the end of each Spring semester. Students who are found to be in violation of the 3.0 GPA rule, the 67% completion pace or who have attempted 150% or more of the semester hours required for their program of study will be placed on financial aid suspension and will no longer be eligible for Federal or State financial aid assistance or Veterans Education Benefits.

Summer Session

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

Transfer Students

Transfer students will be considered as incoming freshmen for the initial awarding and disbursement of financial aid until transcripts arrive and are evaluated. Only grades earned at Valdosta State University will be used to determine the grade point average for financial aid eligibility. Hours transferred to Valdosta State University will be counted as total hours attempted for the maximum time frame.

Repeated Courses, Remedial Courses, Withdrawals, and Incompletes

Students should be careful in repeating courses, as all attempts at a course are counted in the maximum hours allowed to obtain a degree. Students are also reminded that withdrawing from a course does not count as successful completion and does not count in the required 67% completion rate. Incompletes also do not count as the successful completion of a course, and excessive incompletes can result in the termination of financial aid.

Federal Financial Aid Regulations allow a student to retake any previously passed course one time. For this purpose, passed means any grade higher than an "F," regardless of any school or program policy requiring a higher grade in order to meet academic program requirements. This retaken class may be counted towards a student's enrollment status and the student may be awarded Title IV aid for the enrollment status based on inclusion of the class. After the one allowed repeat of any course in which a student receives an "F," we are not allowed to count this course towards a student's enrollment status or award federal financial aid for enrollment in this course. If a student withdraws from a course they are repeating, the attempt of this course does not count as the one allowed repeat and they may again repeat the course one time.

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 3.0 GPA or the required 67% completion pace can apply for reinstatement of their financial aid once they are in compliance with all SAP requirements.

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 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 U.S. 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 Obligations Resulting from Academic Load Changes

Financial aid recipients who have loans and reduce their academic load to below half-time may have a financial obligation to the University. The undergraduate half-time load is six hours; the graduate half-time load is five hours. Students receiving a Pell Grant who drop classes to reduce their academic load may also have a reduction in their Pell Grant and thus incur a financial obligation to the University.

Students who add classes through the appeal process after the announced Drop/Add dates may incur a financial obligation, which is due upon receipt of the approval of the added classes. Classes added and not paid for are subject to cancellation.

All these financial obligations are due within five working days after the processing of the load changes and are payable at the Bursary.