

GUIDE TO  
FINANCING YOUR  
MISERICORDIA EDUCATION



MISERICORDIA  
UNIVERSITY®

## IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

### Students with Last Names Beginning with A-L

Kim Spencer, Counselor Student Financial Services

ph: (570) 674-6715

Fax: (570) 674-3063

E-mail: [kspencer@misericordia.edu](mailto:kspencer@misericordia.edu)

### Students with Last Names Beginning with M-Z

Leah Ostrum, Counselor Student Financial Services

ph: (570) 674-3338

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E-mail: [lostrum@misericordia.edu](mailto:lostrum@misericordia.edu)

## HELPFUL SOURCES

### Monthly Payment Plan

1-877-821-0625

<http://commerce.cashnet.com/paymentportal>

### To pay by credit/debit card online

<https://forms.misericordia.edu/payonline>

A 2.5% processing fee will be charged for these transactions.

### To pay by phone

570-674-6222

### To secure a Direct Student Loan

<https://studentaid.gov>

### Apply for Direct Parent Plus Loan

### Complete Entrance Loan Counseling,

### MPN or Annual Student Loan

### Acknowledgment

### To apply for an alternative loan

[www.misericordia.edu/financialaid](http://www.misericordia.edu/financialaid)

### The Free Application for

### Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

<https://studentaid.gov>

1-800-4-fed-aid or 1-800-433-3243

### PHEAA State Grant

1-800-692-7392

[www.pheaa.org](http://www.pheaa.org)

### National Scholarships Search Engine

<https://studentaid.gov>

### National Student Loan Data System

[www.nsls.ed.gov](http://www.nsls.ed.gov)

### To register for Selective Service

[www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov)

### To request a copy of your

### federal tax return transcript

[www.irs.gov/Individuals/Get-Transcript](http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/Get-Transcript)

1-800-908-9946



*Our mission* is to provide you with the information, support and guidance needed to make the financial aid process easy and stress-free. We believe in individualized attention. As such, a financial aid counselor has been assigned to your account and will be available to you throughout your entire career at Misericordia. This guide will help you to better understand your financial aid award letter.

Thank you for choosing Misericordia University.  
We look forward to working with you.

*Founded by the Sisters of Mercy*

Misericordia University   Dallas, PA 18612-1090  
Toll free: 866-262-6363   Fax: 570-674-3063  
Web: [www.misericordia.edu/financialaid](http://www.misericordia.edu/financialaid)



## UNDERSTANDING YOUR FINANCIAL AID OFFER

**Financial Aid Offer**—All aid awarded listed on this letter is estimated. If you have questions on any particular type of aid, please review the descriptions in this guide.

**Verification**—If you have been selected for verification we will contact you in the near future regarding the information required to complete the verification process. The outcome from verification could result in changes to your financial aid. No financial aid can be processed until verification is completed.

**Nursing Loans**—If you were eligible for a Nursing loan, an application will be sent to you.

**Work-Study**—If a Work-Study appears on your financial aid offer, it is only an indication that you meet the financial criteria for participation in the program. It is not a guarantee of a job. Work-Study assignments are based upon grade level and financial need, meaning the neediest seniors get hired first, followed by the neediest juniors, etc. The work-study employment job site can be accessed by logging into e-MU, selecting Student Services then Student Employment. Access to e-MU will be provided after freshman orientation.

**Tuition Invoice**—Approximately the end of July, you will receive in the mail your FALL semester invoice. Your financial aid will appear as credit toward the charges on your bill. Funds are transferred electronically into the student account no earlier than 10 days prior to the start of each semester.

**Please monitor your tuition account and future transactions through myMU.**





## OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO MEET YOUR FULL YEAR BALANCE

### **Tuition Payment Plan** – *Open for Application March 1st*

The University participates in an outside payment plan through Cashnet. The payment plan allows you to pay all or part of your tuition bill in interest free monthly installments. There is an enrollment fee. Program details, including a budget calculator, payment worksheet and enrollment application can be found online at <http://commerce.cashnet.com/paymentportal> or by calling 1-877-821-0625.

This plan begins June 1st. If you wish to maximize the length of the plan, enrolling in June will spread your payments over a 10 month period.

### **Cash or Credit/Debit Card Payments** *A convenience fee may apply.*

The University accepts Visa, MasterCard and Discover Card. Payment can be made online at <https://forms.misericordia.edu/payonline> or you can call 570-674-6222 to pay by phone. A 2.5% processing fee will be charged for these transactions.

**Loans** Open for Application May 1st There are two borrowing options available to pay your remaining balance: The Direct Parent Plus Loan or a private Alternative Loan.

### **Direct Parent PLUS Loan** *Open for Application May 1st*

To apply for the Direct Parent PLUS Loan, a parent must go to [www.studentloans.gov](http://www.studentloans.gov). The parent borrower must complete the application and submit the Master Promissory Note. When determining the amount to borrow, consider the 4.236% origination fee which is deducted prior to each disbursement of the loan by the lender.

If a parent is denied a Direct Parent PLUS loan, the student is eligible to borrow additional unsubsidized Direct Loan funds.

### **Private/Alternative Loan** *Open for Application May 1st*

These are private loans available to both undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in a degree program. Although this type of loan is the primary responsibility of the student, a creditworthy co-borrower is required.

As part of the alternative loan application process, you must complete a self certification form provided by the lender.

To apply for an alternative loan go to [www.misericordia.edu/financialaid](http://www.misericordia.edu/financialaid) and click “Financing Options”. Click Alternative Loan and you will be shown a list of lenders.





## **DIRECT PARENT PLUS VS. PRIVATE LOANS**

A Direct Parent Plus Loan is offered to parents by the Federal Government. A private Alternative Loan is offered through various private lenders with the student as the borrower. A qualified co-signer is required. Alternative loans are not part of federal aid programs. Either of these loans can fill the gap between financial aid and school costs for the student.

The following two pages show a comparison of the two loan programs to assist you in making your decision.





## DIRECT PARENT PLUS LOAN

Interest Rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Fixed interest rate of 5.30%. The interest rate is set each year on July 1.</li></ul>
Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ A 4.228% Federal Origination Fee will be deducted from the loan proceeds prior to disbursement.</li></ul>
Credit Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Credit check is based upon Federal standards.</li></ul>
Loan Limits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Parents may borrow up to the cost of attendance less other aid.</li></ul>
Cancellation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Although Direct Parent PLUS loans must be repaid in full, there are a few situations in which your loan(s) may be discharged and your repayment obligation cancelled including, but not limited to, total and permanent disability, or as a result of your death or the death of the dependent student.</li></ul>
Repayment Terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ For Direct PLUS, repayment begins either no later than 60 days after the final disbursement or, as indicated by the parent borrower, 6 months after the date that the student ceases to be enrolled at least half-time. Interest accrues from the date that the loan is disbursed.</li><li>■ Generally, the repayment term is 10 years, and there are no prepayment penalties.</li><li>■ Graduated repayment or extended terms may be available if the borrower qualifies.</li></ul>
Deferment and/or Forbearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Various deferment and forbearance privileges are available.</li></ul>



## PRIVATE/ALTERNATIVE LOAN

Interest Rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Variable interest rate determined monthly or quarterly based on Prime or LIBOR rate plus margin.</li><li>■ Fixed rates are offered by some lenders.</li><li>■ May be as high as 18%–21% and is not capped.</li></ul>
Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Fees vary among lenders.</li><li>■ Often fees will be determined in part by measure of creditworthiness.</li></ul>
Credit Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Terms vary by lender, most of whom use credit scores or debt-to-income ratios to determine creditworthiness, interest rates, and fees.</li><li>■ International students usually borrow with a creditworthy U.S. citizen cosigner.</li></ul>
Loan Limits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Parents may borrow up to the cost of attendance less other aid.</li></ul>
Cancellation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Alternative loans are not insured against death or disability.</li><li>■ Insurance may be available at an extra cost to borrowers.</li></ul>
Repayment Terms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Repayment varies by lender and may begin immediately or deferred until six months after student ceases half-time enrollment.</li><li>■ Students may select from several repayment plans, and most lenders allow prepayment and early payoff without penalty.</li></ul>
Deferment and/or Forbearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Deferment options vary widely and are generally less flexible than Direct PLUS loan deferments.</li></ul>





## FINANCIAL AID OFFER

Your eligibility for need-based aid is determined by your expected family contribution (EFC) as calculated by your FAFSA and the University's cost of attendance (COA).

### 2021-2022 COST OF ATTENDANCE

**Estimated Direct Costs** (Costs billed to students by MU)

Resident		Commuter	
Tuition & Fees	\$35,940	Tuition & Fees	\$35,940
Room & Board	\$13,660	Orientation Fee (one time)	\$200
Orientation Fee (one time)	\$200		
<b>Total Estimated Direct Costs</b>	<b>\$49,800</b>	<b>Total Estimated Direct Costs</b>	<b>\$36,140</b>

**Estimated Indirect Costs** (Costs students may incur each year included for planning purposes but not billed by MU)

Resident		Commuter	
Books & Supplies	\$1,250	Books & Supplies	\$1,250
Transportation	\$500	Transportation	\$1,500
Miscellaneous	\$500	Miscellaneous	\$500
		Room & Board	\$1,800
<b>Total Estimated Direct Costs</b>	<b>\$2,250</b>	<b>Total Estimated Direct Costs</b>	<b>\$5,050</b>

- Any change in housing or enrollment status can affect your award.
- If you have been selected for verification, your award may change upon completion of the verification process.



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## TYPES OF FINANCIAL AID

### GIFT AID

Money the student does not need to repay.

### FEDERAL AND STATE GIFT AID

**Federal Pell Grants**—Federally funded grant awarded to undergraduates who have high financial need and are working toward their first Bachelor's Degree. Eligibility is determined by the FAFSA.

**Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG)**—Federally funded grant awarded to undergraduates who have high financial need. The student must be Pell eligible to be considered for SEOG.

**Pennsylvania State Grants**—The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) determines eligibility and awards grants to Pennsylvania residents. All PA residents must respond to the email sent by PHEAA which will include directions to complete their State Grant status notice at [www.pheaa.org](http://www.pheaa.org). Grant status must be verified at [www.pheaa.org](http://www.pheaa.org) or call 1-800-692-7392. Amounts appearing on your award letter are only estimates of eligibility. Official notification of state grant eligibility will be emailed from PHEAA to students in May.

**\*Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant**—The TEACH Grant is a program designed for Education majors enrolled in the high need fields of Special Education, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and English as a Second Language. Incoming freshman applicants must have achieved a 3.25 high school grade point average. Current students must maintain a 3.25 grade point average.

*\*A TEACH Grant recipient must serve as a full-time teacher in a low-income school for at least four academic years within eight years after completing the course of study. Otherwise, the grant will convert to a Direct Unsubsidized Loan that must be repaid. The annual award is \$3,752, with aggregates not to exceed \$16,000 for undergraduates.*



## INSTITUTIONAL GIFT AID

Your institutional gift aid is made possible through contributions from alumni, benefactors, and institutional resources. The annual scholarships are renewable until graduation, provided minimum grade point averages and satisfactory academic progress are maintained.

**Non-Pennsylvania Resident Grants**—Need based award of \$2,000 granted to non-Pennsylvania undergraduates who live on campus. Students who receive this award must maintain satisfactory academic progress, maintain on campus residency and file a FAFSA each year. Eligibility for this award is determined each year based on the student's FAFSA.

**Residential Grant:** (beginning 2021-2022) This award of \$2,500 is granted to a student who will reside in on-campus housing. Students who receive this award must maintain satisfactory academic progress and maintain on-campus residency.

**Mission Award**—Through its own fund raising efforts, Misericordia University provides substantial financial assistance to students through Mission Awards. Students who receive a Mission Award must maintain satisfactory academic progress and file the FAFSA each year. Eligibility for this award is determined each year based on the student's FAFSA.

**Legacy Award**—Full-time students who are children or grandchildren of Misericordia University alumni will receive a \$1,000 annual award.

**Sibling Discount**—A sibling discount of \$1,000 per year is available when two or more siblings are concurrently enrolled at the institution on a full-time basis. The discount is awarded to the eldest sibling.





## SELF-HELP AID

### LOANS

Loans are debt. The student must repay this form of financial aid.

**Subsidized Direct Loans**—Need-based student loans that include full interest subsidy during the in-school period. This means the federal government will pay your interest while you are in school and your loan principal is deferred. The current interest rate is 2.75%. A new rate will be set July 1 of each year. The lender deducts a 1.057% origination fee from the loan prior to disbursement.

**Unsubsidized Direct Loans**—Student loans that are not based on need. Quarterly interest payments are required or the interest will be capitalized upon repayment, meaning unpaid interest is added to the principal. The interest rate is 2.75%. A new rate will be set July 1 of each year. The lender deducts a 1.057% origination fee from the loan disbursement.

#### DIRECT LOAN BORROWING LIMITS

Grade Level	Credit Requirement	Subsidized Limit	Unsubsidized Limit	Extended Unsubsidized Limit (1)
First Year	0-29	\$3500	\$2000	\$4000
Second Year	30-59	\$4500	\$2000	\$4000
Third Year	60-89	\$5500	\$2000	\$5000
Fourth Year	90-119	\$5500	\$2000	\$5000
Fifth Year	120 +	\$5500	\$2000	\$5000

(1) *Extended is available only to independent students and dependent students whose parents have been denied a PLUS loan.*

(2) *Annual amounts may be limited based on the cost of attendance and other financial aid received.*

	Total Subsidized	Total Subsidized and Unsubsidized
Dependent Undergraduate	\$23,000	\$31,000
Independent Undergraduate (and dependents whose parents are denied a PLUS loan)	\$23,000	\$57,500



Repayment of both subsidized and unsubsidized Direct loans begins six months after a student ceases enrollment or enrolls in fewer than 6 credits. The amount listed on your award letter is the maximum allowed for your grade level and dependency status.

To monitor your borrowing through the Federal Direct loan program visit the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) website at <https://nslds.ed.gov>. It is the student's responsibility to monitor how much they have borrowed and how close they are to reaching the maximum borrowing limit. Use your FSA ID and password to log into this website.

**Nursing Loan Program**—The Nursing Loan is a federal loan awarded by the University to nursing students with high financial need. The student is the borrower. Current interest is a fixed rate at 5%. Repayment begins nine months after a student ceases enrollment or enrolls in fewer than 6 credits.

If a Nursing Loan is listed as a source of aid on your award letter, shortly after the fall semester begins you will receive an e-mail from “SIGN MY LOAN” with directions regarding how to e-sign your Nursing Loan promissory note on-line. Nursing Loan funds are limited and are awarded on a first come/first awarded basis to those students who return the Nursing Loan application and sign the Nursing Loan Master Promissory Note.

## STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

**Work-Study Award**—If a Work-Study award appears on your award letter, it is only an indication that you meet the financial criteria for participation in the program. It is not a guarantee of a job. Work-Study assignments are based upon grade level and financial need, meaning the neediest seniors get hired first, followed by the neediest juniors, etc.

## DIRECT LOAN APPLICATION PROCESS OPEN FOR APPLICATION MAY 1ST

To secure a Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loan, first time borrowers must go to [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov) and complete Entrance Loan Counseling, electronically sign the Master Promissory Note and complete the Annual Student Loan Acknowledgment. If you have any questions or need assistance, please call 1-800-557-7394.

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)—Serves as the primary application for the Direct Loan and must be completed each year if the borrower wishes to continue to obtain Direct loan funds. Among other conditions, students must meet the following eligibility criteria to obtain a Direct Loan:

- must be admitted to the University and enrolled for at least 6 credits.
- must be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen.
- cannot have defaulted on prior student loans.



## STUDENT LENDING CODE OF CONDUCT

Misericordia University is committed to providing students and their families with the best information and processing alternatives available regarding student borrowing. In support of this and in an effort to rule out any perceived or actual conflict of interest between Misericordia University officers, employees or agents and education loan lenders, Misericordia University has adopted the following:

- Misericordia University does not participate in any revenue-sharing arrangements with any lender.
- Misericordia University does not permit any officer, employee or agent of the school who is employed in the financial aid office or is otherwise involved in the administration of education loans to accept any gifts of greater than a nominal value from any lender, guarantor or servicer.
- Misericordia University does not permit any officer, employee or agent of the school who is employed in the financial aid office or is otherwise involved in the administration of education loans to accept any fee, payment or other financial benefit (including a stock purchase option) from a lender or affiliate of a lender as compensation for any type of consulting arrangement or contract to provide services to a lender or on behalf of a lender relating to education loans.
- Misericordia University does not permit any officer, employee or agent of the school who is employed in the financial aid office or is otherwise involved in the administration of education loans to accept anything of value from a lender, guarantor, or group of lenders and/or guarantors in exchange for service on an advisory board, commission or other group established by such a lender, guarantor group of lenders and/or guarantors. Misericordia University does allow for the reasonable reimbursement of expenses associated with participation in such boards, commissions or groups by lenders, guarantors, or groups of lenders and/or guarantors.
- Misericordia University does not assign a lender to any first-time borrower through financial aid packaging or any other means.





## FINANCIAL AID SATISFACTORY PROGRESS POLICY

Please refer to the Student Financial Services website for information regarding our Satisfactory Progress Policy.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Q What if we have unusual circumstances, such as loss of income, or change in parents' marital status?**

A There is a process for families who feel that their circumstances have not been considered in full or have changed since their aid applications were filed. Please contact your financial aid counselor for guidance.

### **Q What is the maximum amount of money for which I can apply through additional loans?**

A Families are eligible to apply for financial aid to cover the University's "Cost of Attendance" (COA). You are able to borrow (in alternative or Direct PLUS loans) up to the total COA minus all other aid.

### **Q How do I apply for a Direct Student Loan or Direct Parent PLUS loans?**

A Go to [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov) to apply, sign the Master Promissory Note, complete Entrance Counseling and complete the Annual Student Loan Acknowledgment. Call 1-800-557-7394 for assistance. Open for application May 1st.

### **Q How do I apply for an private/alternative?**

A Go to [www.misericordia.edu/financialaid](http://www.misericordia.edu/financialaid) to apply. Open for application May 1st.

### **Q How do I obtain a copy of my federal tax return transcript to give to you for verification?**

A Go to [www.irs.gov/Individuals/Get-Transcript](http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/Get-Transcript) or call 1-800-908-9946. Do not order an account transcript.

### **Q My parent's Direct PLUS Loan was denied. What happens now?**

A If your parent's Direct PLUS Loan was denied you may be eligible for additional unsubsidized Direct Loan funds. Please contact your Student Financial Services Counselor for information.

### **Q I borrowed excess loan funds in order to purchase my books, but the loan proceeds have not yet arrived. How do I get my books?**

A In instances where financial aid (including loans) exceeds the balance owed for tuition, fees and, when applicable, room and board charges, the student may obtain a bookstore voucher from the Student Financial Services Office. The voucher may be used at the Misericordia University bookstore. The books can be charged to the student's account in anticipation of the arrival of excess loan proceeds.

*It starts at the*  
**ARCH**



**MISERICORDIA**  
**UNIVERSITY.**  
STUDENT FINANCIAL SERVICES

[www.misericordia.edu/financialaid](http://www.misericordia.edu/financialaid)