



**Higher Education
Services Corporation**

The Excelsior Scholarship

WSCA, March 19, 2019

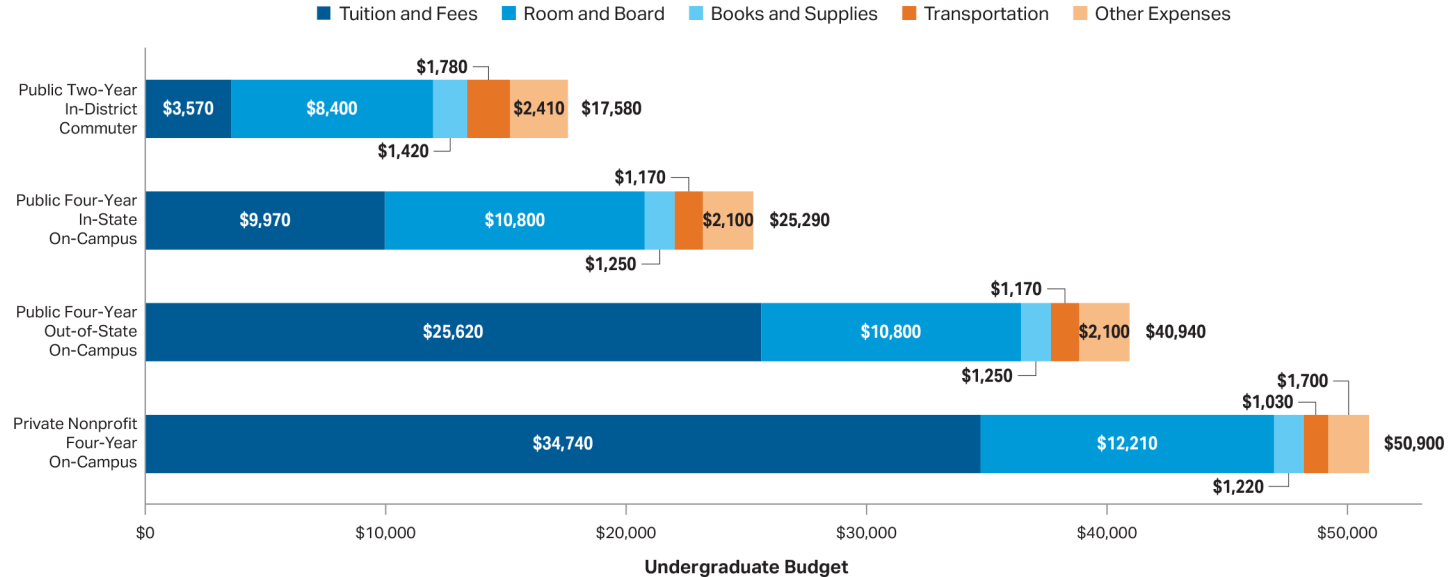
**Kate Anderson
Long Island Admissions
Counselor SUNY Oswego**

Overview of the Excelsior Scholarship

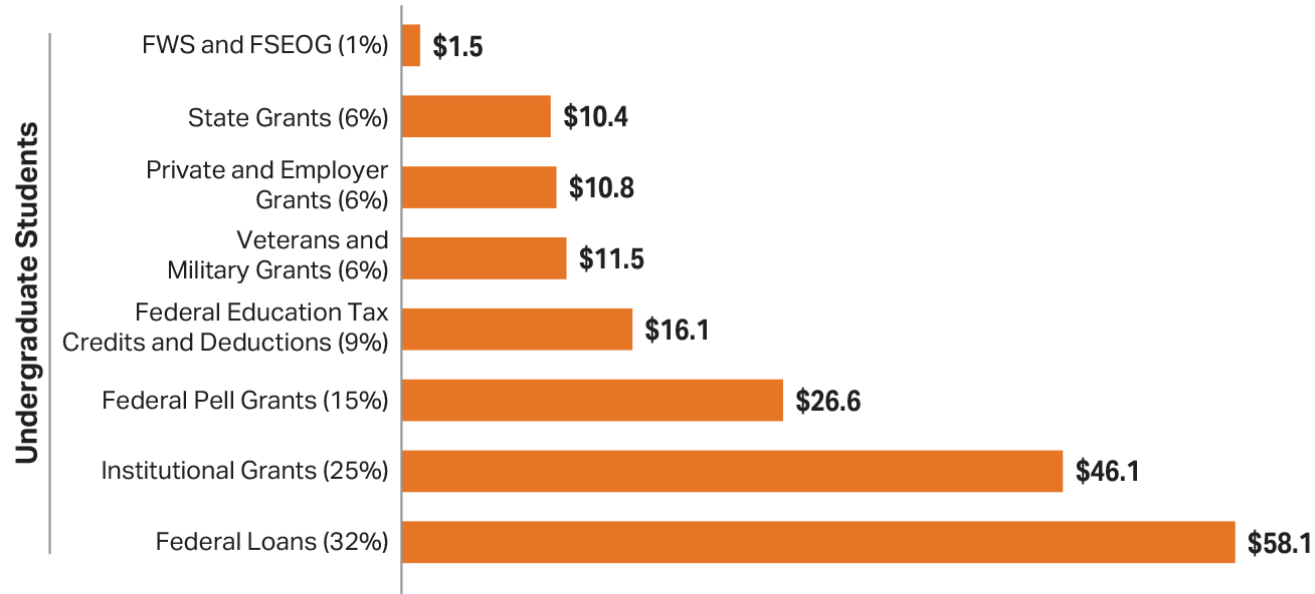
- First-in-nation program for students pursuing a 2-year or 4-year degree
- Allows eligible, full-time students to attend a SUNY or CUNY college tuition free
- An incentive for on-time degree completion



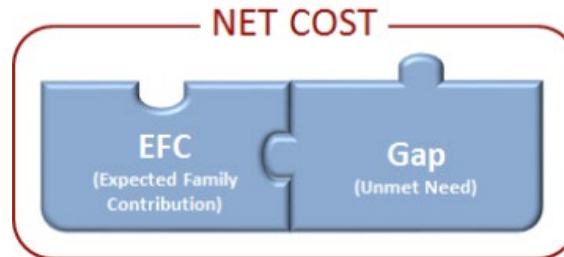
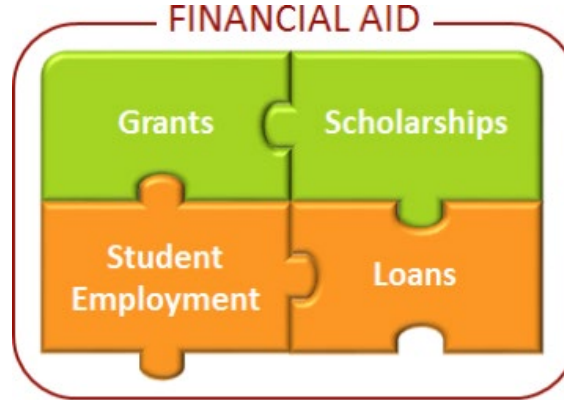
The Average Estimated Cost of College by Sector



Sources of Aid



What Makes up a Financial Aid Package?



Financial Aid Package Components: Grants

- PELL Grant
 - Must have an EFC between \$0-\$5,300
 - Max. Award for 2019 \$6,095
- NYS TAP Grant
 - Based on NYS net taxable income
 - Max. Award \$5,165



Excelsior Scholarship

- Administered by HESC
- Awards are limited to length of program (2-year, 4-year, approved 5-year)
- This is a “Last dollar” Scholarship
 - Awards up to \$5,500, reduced by any other grant or scholarship that can be applied to tuition, including: Pell, TAP, SEOG, SUNY/CUNY/Private scholarships
 - SUNY/CUNY covers the remaining tuition through a tuition credit



Excelsior Scholarship Eligibility

- US Citizens or eligible non-citizens
- Full-time residents of New York State for 12 continuous months prior to the term they are applying for
- High school diploma, recognized equivalent or ATB
- Have applied for FAFSA and NYS TAP
- First-time or continuing full-time students at SUNY/CUNY pursuing their first Associate's or Bachelor's degree



Eligibility Requirements (Continued)

- Take 30 credits per calendar year (including winter and summer terms)
- Maintain good academic standing
- Plan to live in New York following graduation for the length of time you participate in the scholarship program
- Household adjusted gross income does not exceed:
 - 2019/20: \$125,000 (based on 2017 tax return)



Income Eligibility

- Reviewed based on prior-prior year income, similar to FAFSA and TAP
 - For 2017-18 applicants, combined student and parent AGI on the 2015 federal income tax could not exceed \$100,000
 - For 2018-19, it could not exceed \$110,000, based on 2016 federal AGI
 - For 2019-20, must not exceed \$125,000 based on 2017 federal AGI
 - Going forward, the threshold stays at \$125,000



Income Eligibility

- No adjustments are allowed to reduce AGI
- Students must reapply for Excelsior annually to report their income
- If AGI exceeds the income qualification, then they will not qualify that year.
 - Students may reapply in a future year if future income falls within eligibility



Did you know?

- Excelsior Scholarship recipients are charged the initial tuition rate for length of attendance, provided they remain Excelsior eligible
- Tuition rate for recipients resets after four years
- Non-recipients are charged current tuition rate
- Non-credit courses don't count toward credit requirement



- EOP student requirement - total 24 credits per year (5 years allowed to complete degree on time)
- If the undergraduate program of study normally requires 5 years, Excelsior allows 5 years to complete the degree (requires the completion of the equivalent of 30 credits each academic year)
- ADA student - no credit requirement (same as TAP)
- AP/IB courses can be used to meet credit requirement
- There is an appeals process for income, credit and enrollment requirements



New Students

- Enroll in 12 credits applicable to program(s) in first term
- Earn 30 credits each year of enrollment

Transfer Students

- Earned 30 credits each year of enrollment
- Credits must be accepted by the new campus
- Credits must be applicable to the program of study



In-School Academic Requirements

- Recipients must take 12 credits per term and complete 30 credits in a year and be on track to graduate on time
 - Exception made for students with disabilities under the ADA
 - Credits may be earned from any term during the academic year, such as summer or winter
- Earn a passing grade as established by the school



- Matriculated students must be enrolled in consecutive terms to maintain eligibility
- 365 days to complete and earn 30 credits
- Interruptions of study for hardship cases, pre-approved leave of absence
- Summer and winter terms can be used to meet credit requirement (no Excelsior funds for these terms)

AP, IB Credit and Other Pre-College Credit

- Any non-matriculated college credit that is transferred into SUNY and CUNY can be used to help students meet their annual 30-credit requirement
 - CUNY College Now, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), etc.
 - Credits may be “banked” to use in future academic years when needed



Loss of Award

- Students who fail to complete 30 credits at the end of the year will be able to keep their award for the first term, as long as they attempted 12 credits or more.
 - Does not need to be repaid to NYS
- However, they will not be eligible for any award in their second term or future terms

Loss of Award

- If a student loses their award for not meeting the annual 30-credit requirement, then they cannot regain eligibility as they are no longer on-track to graduate on-time.
- Exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis for students with special circumstances

Continuing and Transfer Students

- Continuing or transfer SUNY/CUNY students must be considered to be on-track to graduate on time to qualify for Excelsior
 - For example, college students entering their third year must have earned 60 credits in the prior two years as a full-time student to qualify
- Credits earned for summer courses through August 31st will be considered for the 30-credit per year review.



Post-graduation Residency Requirement

- Excelsior recipients must agree to live in New York State for the length of time they participated in the program
 - If working, must also work in New York State
 - Residency requirement may be met during, undergrad, graduate or doctoral studies at a NYS college



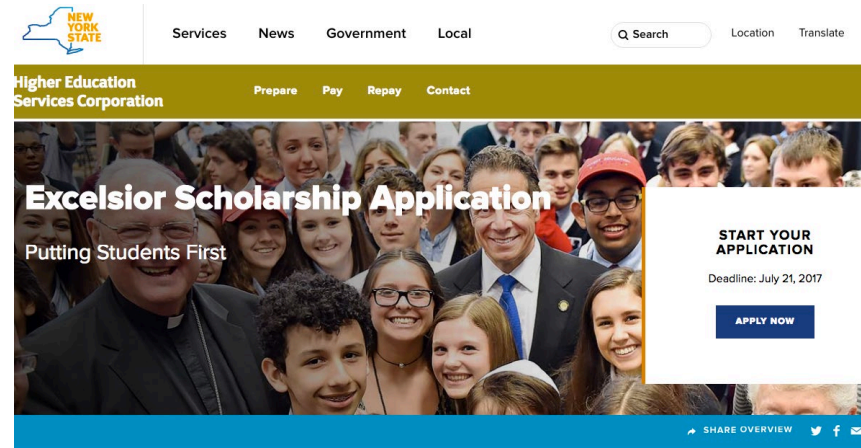
Post-graduation Residency Requirement

- Exceptions and postponements to post-graduation residency will be made on a case-by-case basis
 - Graduate/Doctoral study outside of NYS, military service, job market conditions
- Failure to meet post-graduation residency requirement will result in conversion of scholarship to a zero-interest loan



Application Process

- Available online at HESC.ny.gov/excelsior
- Sign up for email notification
- The deadline for all 2018 applicants was July 23, 2018
- FAFSA & TAP applications must be on file **prior** to submitting the Excelsior application.



OVERVIEW

New York is now home to the Nation's first accessible college program - The Excelsior Scholarship.



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Application Process

- Application will screen for general program eligibility
 - Citizenship, NYS Residency
 - AGI, FAFSA/TAP filing status
 - Prior enrollment history
 - HESC will verify income with NYS Tax and Finance

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Excelsior Scholarship

General Eligibility

Read and follow the instructions.

Required information is marked with a *

To be eligible, you must be a current resident of New York State and have been a resident of New York State for 12 continuous months prior to the beginning of the term.

* Are you currently a resident of New York State and have you been a resident of New York State for 12 continuous months prior to the beginning of the term?

 ?

To be eligible, you must be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen.

* Are you a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen?

 ?

To be eligible, you must have a combined federal adjusted gross income equal to or less than \$100,000 as reported on your 2015 New York State income tax return(s) filed by you and your parent(s) or your spouse, as applicable.



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Application Process

- Students will need to sign in with their HESC User ID and PIN to finalize application
- Approvals or denials will be emailed to students within one week of applying

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Prepare Pay Repay Contact

HESCPIN Authentication System

[First time users click here to register with HESC](#)

Returning Users Enter your HESCPIN User ID and PIN.

To sign in to the HESCPIN Authentication System, enter your User ID and PIN, then click the "Enter" button. To leave without signing in, click the "Exit" button.

Required information is marked with a *.

* User ID:

* PIN:

* Last four digits of SSN:

Enter

Clear

Exit

[I forgot my User ID or PIN](#)



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What Documents are Needed to Apply

- Parent, student federal income tax return(s)
- Student's Student Aid Report (SAR) from FAFSA completed showing a calculated EFC
 - Must be uploaded through the application
- Current unofficial college transcript showing the number of credits earned each year prior, if continuing student
 - Must be uploaded through the application



After Being Approved

- Excelsior recipients will be asked to finalize their award application by executing a service agreement with New York State
 - Agreeing to live and work, if working, in New York State post-graduation
 - Signing a promissory agreement for the conversion of the scholarship to a zero-interest loan if residency requirement is not fulfilled



Verification Performed by Schools

- Schools will receive list of potential Excelsior recipients but will need to verify the student's eligibility
- Schools will verify the student's
 - Credit history, if continuing student
 - Grants and scholarships that may conflict with Excelsior
 - ADA disability status



School Certification

- Colleges will certify students' eligibility for an Excelsior Scholarship payment at the end of each term
- They will report
 - The tuition rate charged to student
 - Number of credits student completed each term
 - Cumulative number of credits at end of each term



Post-graduation Requirements

- Reside in New York State equal to the number of annual awards received
- Can meet residency requirement
 - While in military, regardless of station, as long as NYS residency is maintained
 - While completing undergraduate or graduate studies (including medical residency) in state



Post-graduation Requirements (continued)

- Can defer residency requirement
 - While completing undergraduate or graduate studies (including medical residency) out-of-state
 - For hardship or other HESC-approved circumstance
- Cannot work outside of NYS during residency period
- Reverts to an interest-free 10-year loan if post-graduation/attendance requirement is not met
- HESC has responsibility to track students



Don't forget ... STEM Incentive Program

- Tuition scholarship at SUNY or CUNY
- Eligibility
 - Need to graduate in top 10% of high school class
 - Need to study in STEM Field
 - Need to maintain a 2.5 average
- Five-year service contract to work in NY state in a STEM field
- Also administered by HESC



Thank You for attending!

To Contact HESC:

Excelsior@hesc.ny.gov

888-NYS-HESC (888-697-4372)

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