National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators Presents ...

What You Need to Know About Financial Aid

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Topics We Will Discuss Tonight

- What is financial aid?
- Cost of attendance (COA)
- Expected family contribution (EFC)
- Financial need
- Categories, types, and sources of financial aid
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- Special circumstances



What is Financial Aid?

Financial aid consists of funds provided to students and families to help pay for postsecondary educational expenses





What is Cost of Attendance (COA)?

- Direct costs
- Indirect costs
- Direct and indirect costs combined into cost of attendance
- Varies widely from college to college



What is Expected Family Contribution (EFC)?

- Amount family can reasonably be expected to contribute
- Stays the same regardless of college
- Two components
 - Parent contribution
 - Student contribution
- Calculated using data from a federal application form and a federal formula



What is Financial Need?

Cost of Attendance

Expected Family Contribution

= Financial Need



Categories of Financial Aid

Need-based aid

Non-need-based aid



Types of Financial Aid

Scholarships

Grants

Loans

Employment



Self-Help Aid



Gift Aid: Scholarships

Money that does not have to be paid back

 Awarded on the basis of merit, skill, or unique characteristic



Gift Aid: Grants

Money that does not have to be paid back

Usually awarded on the basis of financial need



Self-Help Aid: Loans

- Money students and parents borrow to help pay college expenses
- Repayment usually begins after education is finished
- Only borrow what is really needed
- Look at loans as an investment in the future



Self-Help Aid: Work-Study Employment

- Allows student to earn money to help pay educational costs
 - A paycheck; or
 - Nonmonetary compensation, such as room and board
- Student may opt to work or number of hours to work



Sources of Financial Aid

- Federal government
- States
- Colleges and universities
- Private sources
- Civic organizations and churches
- Employers





Federal Government

- Largest source of financial aid
- Aid awarded primarily on the basis of financial need

Must apply each year using the FAFSA



Federal Student Aid Programs

- Federal Pell Grant
- Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant (IASG)
- Teacher Education
 Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH)
 Grant
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)

- Federal Perkins Loan
- Federal Work-Study (FWS)
- Subsidized and
 Unsubsidized Federal
 Direct Student Loans
 (Direct Loans)
- PLUS Loans



Texas

- Residency is determined by the college/university/school
- Programs are based on need and merit
- Uses information from the FAFSA or TASFA (Texas Application for State Financial Aid)
- Deadlines is March 15, 2015



Texas Student Aid Programs

- Towards Excellence, Access and Success (TEXAS)
 Grant
- Texas Educational Opportunity Grant (TEOG)
- Texas Public Educational Grant
- Top 10 Percent Scholarship
- Texas B-On-Time Loan
- College Access Loan (CAL) Program



Colleges and Universities

- Award aid on the basis of both merit and need
- Aid may be gift aid or self-help aid
- Use information from the FAFSA and/or institutional applications (Profile) (TASFA)
- Deadlines and application requirements vary by institution
 - Check with each college or university

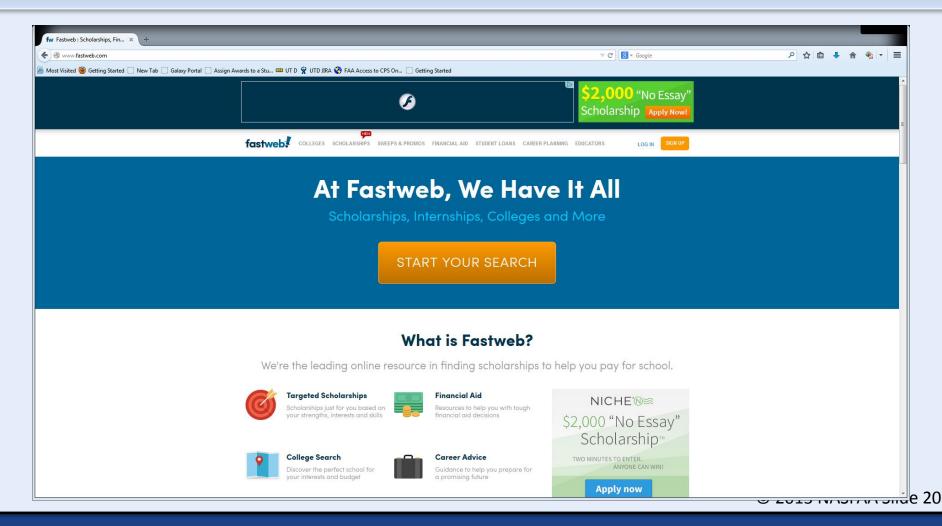


Private Sources

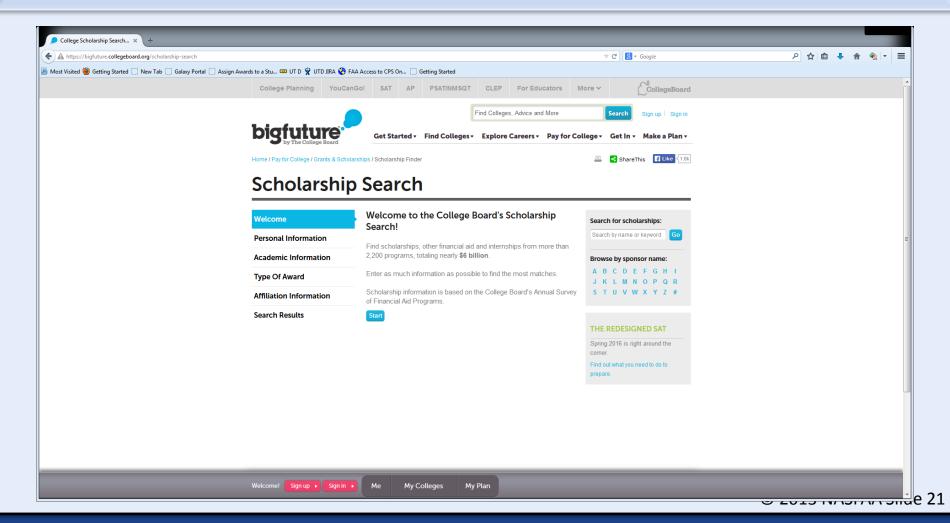
- Foundations, businesses, charitable organizations
- Deadlines and application procedures vary widely
- Begin researching private aid sources early



Fastweb.com



bigfuture.collegeboard.org



Civic Organizations and Churches

- Research what is available in community
- To what organizations and churches do student and family belong?
- Application process usually occurs during spring of senior year
- Small scholarships add up!





Employers

- Companies may have scholarships available to the children of employees
- Companies may have educational benefits for their employees



Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

- A standard form that collects demographic and financial information about the student and family
- May be filed electronically or using paper form
 - Available in English and Spanish



FAFSA

- Information used to calculate the expected family contribution (EFC)
 - Amount of money a student and his or her family may reasonably be expected to contribute towards the cost of the student's education for an academic year
- Colleges use EFC to award financial aid



FAFSA

- May be filed at any time during an academic year, but no earlier than the January 1st prior to the academic year for which the student requests aid
- For the 2015–16 academic year, the FAFSA may be filed beginning January 1, 2015
- Most colleges set FAFSA filing deadlines



FAFSA on the Web



- Website: <u>www.fafsa.gov</u>
- 2015–16 FAFSA on the Web available on January 1, 2015
- FAFSA on the Web Worksheet:
 - Used as "pre-application" worksheet
 - Questions follow order of FAFSA on the Web



FAFSA on the Web

Good reasons to file electronically:

- Built-in edits to prevent costly errors
- Skip-logic allows student and/or parent to skip unnecessary questions
- Option to use Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Data Retrieval Tool to import tax data



FAFSA on the Web

Good reasons to file electronically:

- More timely submission of original application and any necessary corrections
- More detailed instructions and "help" for common questions
- Ability to check application status online
- Simplified application process in the future



IRS Data Retrieval Tool

- While completing FOTW, applicant may submit real-time request to IRS for tax data
- IRS will authenticate taxpayer's identity
- If match found, IRS sends real-time results to applicant in new browser window
- Applicant chooses whether or not to transfer data to FOTW



IRS Data Retrieval Tool

- Available early February 2015 for 2015–16 processing cycle
- Participation is voluntary
- Reduces documents requested by financial aid office



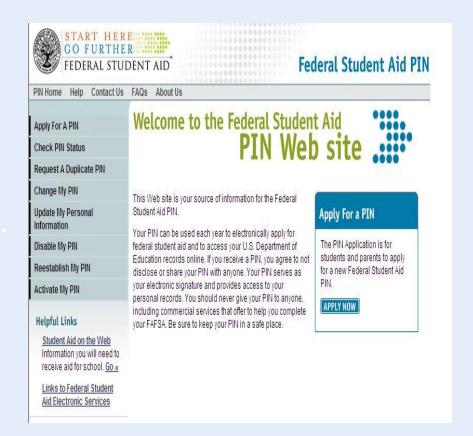
IRS Data Retrieval Tool

- Some will be unable to use IRS DRT
- Examples include:
 - Filed an amended tax return
 - No SSN was entered
 - Student or parent married but filed separately



Federal Student Aid Personal Identification Number (FSA PIN)

- Website: <u>www.pin.ed.gov</u>
- Sign FAFSA electronically
- Not required, but speeds processing
- May be used by students and parents throughout aid process, including subsequent school years





FAFSA on the Web Worksheet

2015–16 FAFSA on the Web Worksheet contains:

- Instructions
- Questions that gather basic information on student and parent, if applicable



General Student Information

- Social Security Number
- Citizenship status
- Marital status
- Drug convictions
- Selective Service registration
- Level of parents' school completion



Student Dependency Status

FAFSA asks questions to determine dependency status for federal student aid (not IRS) purposes:

- If all "No" responses, student is dependent
- If "Yes" to any question, student is independent



Information About Parents of Dependent Students

- Tax, income, and other financial information
- Dislocated worker status
- Receipt of federal means-tested benefits
- Assets
- Untaxed income





Information About Student (and Spouse)

- Tax, income, and other financial information
- Dislocated worker status
- Receipt of federal means-tested benefits
- Assets
- Untaxed income





Additional Information

- College and housing information
- FAFSA preparer information
- Certification of Statement of Educational Purpose



Signatures

- Required
 - Student
 - One parent (dependent students)
- Format for submitting signatures
 - Electronic using PIN
 - Signature page
 - Paper FAFSA





Frequent FAFSA Errors

- Social Security Numbers
- Divorced/remarried parental information
- Income earned by parents/stepparents
- Untaxed income
- U.S. income taxes paid
- Household size
- Number of household members in college
- Real estate and investment net worth



FAFSA Processing Results

Central Processing System (CPS) notifies student of FAFSA processing results by:

- Paper Student Aid Report (SAR) if paper FAFSA was filed and student's e-mail address was not provided
- SAR Acknowledgement if filed FAFSA on the Web and student's e-mail address was not provided



FAFSA Processing Results

- CPS notifies student of FAFSA processing results by:
 - Email notification containing a direct link to student's online SAR if student's email was provided on paper or electronic FAFSA
- Student with PIN may view SAR online at www.fafsa.gov



FAFSA Processing Results

- Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR) sent to colleges listed on FAFSA approximately 10 to 14 days after FAFSA is submitted
- College reviews ISIR
 - May request additional documentation



Student Aid Report

Review data for accuracy and correct any errors

Update estimated tax information when actual figures become available



Making Corrections

If necessary, corrections to FAFSA data may be made by:

- Using FAFSA on the Web (<u>www.fafsa.gov</u>) if student has a PIN;
- Updating paper SAR (SAR Information Acknowledgement cannot be used to make corrections);
 or
- Submitting documentation to college's financial aid office



Special Circumstances

- Cannot be documented using FAFSA
- Send written explanation and documentation to financial aid office at each college
- College will review and request additional information if necessary
- Decisions are final and cannot be appealed to U.S.
 Department of Education



Special Circumstances

- Change in employment status
- Unusual medical expenses not covered by insurance
- Change in parent marital status
- Unusual dependent care expenses
- Student cannot obtain parental information



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