

General Information

Financial Aid Office Contact Information

University of Arkansas – Fort Smith
Financial Aid Office

Location: Smith-Pendergraft Campus Center 215
Address: 5210 Grand Avenue
P.O. Box 3649
Fort Smith, AR 72913-3649
Phone: 1 (479) 788-7090
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Email: finaid@uafs.edu
Website: <https://uafs.edu/tuition-and-aid/index.php>
Federal School Code: 001110

UAFS Financial Aid Handbook Purpose

The following Code of Conduct was last updated by a vote from NASFAA's Board of Directors in November 2020, and published in January 2021. Subject to [enforcement procedures](#) that went into effect July 1, 2015, NASFAA institutional members of NASFAA will ensure that:

1. No action will be taken by financial aid staff that is for their personal benefit or could be perceived to be a conflict of interest.

- a. Employees within the financial aid office will not award aid to themselves or their immediate family members. Staff will reserve this task to an institutionally designated person, to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest.
- b. If a preferred lender list is provided, it will be compiled without prejudice and for the sole benefit of the students attending the institution. The infor

Educational Loans Code of Conduct

UAFS does not maintain a preferred lender list for private student loans, rather UAFS provides a [historical lender list](#) as well as all lenders available through FastChoice.

The University shall not enter into any revenue-sharing arrangement with any lender.

No officer or employee of the University who is employed in the Financial Aid Office of the University or who otherwise has responsibilities with respect to education loans shall solicit or accept any gift, .7 (y g04 Tc P3)1.3 (.2 (n)7.ts)4.8 (F)1.9 (S)3.4 (d)7.33 (n)-0yc P3ll

Enrollment Status

Enrollment status is determined by the academic course load that a student is carrying for a semester. This relates to the number of credit hours taken by a student during a given period of enrollment.

Undergraduate Students:

For federal and institutional aid purposes:

Full-Time:	12+ credit hours
Three-Quarter Time:	9-11 credit hours
Half-Time:	6-8 credit hours
Less than Half-Time:	1-5 credit hours

For state aid purposes:

Full-Time:	15+ credit hours
Three-Quarter Time:	9-14 credit hours
Half-Time:	6-8 credit hours
Less than Half-Time:	1-5 credit hour

and/or federal work study and veterans' educational benefits. A student must take at least six hours required for the second degree to qualify for Federal Direct Loans and Federal Work Study.

Note: If the student is seeking a double major, institutional aid will only be awarded for eight semesters or until a degree is awarded. Full-time enrollment is required. In addition, the annually awarded AR Challenge state award typically will not renew once the student has earned 120 credit hours, with very limited exceptions (e.g., concurrent hours are excluded from the 120 unless the student begins at year two of the Challenge). For more information on the Arkansas Challenge and other state aid, please see <https://scholarships.adhe.edu/scholarships-and-programs/a-z/> or contact the Financial Aid Office.

Course(s) used solely to satisfy a minor are not eligible for federal student aid (Federal Pell Grant, Federal SEOG, federal work study, federal direct loans, and veteran's educational benefits). A course(s) that applies towards both a primary degree requirement and minor is considered required for federal financial aid and veterans' educational benefits. Students with a declared minor will not qualify for federal and/or veteran education benefits once all requirements have been met for the first bachelor's degree.

Note: Institutional aid will only be awarded for eight semesters or until a degree is awarded. Within that timeframe, a non-required minor may be completed if it was declared in a timely fashion, before 75 hours have been earned. Full-time enrollment is required. In addition, the annually awarded AR Challenge state award typically stops when the student has earned 120 credit hours, with limited exceptions (e.g., concurrent hours are excluded from the 120 unless the student begins at year two of the Challenge). For more information on the Arkansas Challenge and other state aid, please see e -

Students that are unable to meet the early bird processing deadline of March 1st are still encouraged to complete their financial aid file by final deadline July 1st but may be responsible for payment. Award notifications will be sent to t14-Lcf M91 0 Td Tw n al deti8.8 (l ea-2.3 (c)88 (co)-0.89(u)41.4 (n)80.8

<http://scholarships.adhe.edu>. Students completing the YOUniversal Application for the first time must also complete the FAFSA. The deadline for the YOUniversal Application and FAFSA is July 1 to apply for state aid. For a comprehensive user guide for the YOUniversal Application, please visit: https://static.ark.org/eeuploads/adhe-financial/FinalSept2015Understanding_Your_YOUniversal_Account.pdf

Professional Judgement

If students cannot answer “Yes” to the FAFSA dependency questions and are therefore required to include parent information; however, due to extenuating circumstances such as a history of abuse, neglect, or abandonment or a situation in which the student cannot or should not have contact with the parent(s), a Dependency Appeal Form may be submitted. If the dependency appeal is approved, the Financial Aid Office may use Professional Judgement to override the dependency status on the FAFSA. This would require additional action each year the student is seeking aid at UAFS.

If the family’s financial situation has changed since completing the FAFSA such as a parent losing a job due to business closure or layoff, a parent has become deceased, or parents have divorced/separated, a Special Circumstance Appeal may be submitted. If the appeal is approved, the Financial Aid Office may use Professional Judgement to adjust the finances reported on the FAFSA to re-evaluate financial aid eligibility.

<https://uafs.edu/tuition-and-aid/financial-aid/professional-judgement.php>

NOTE: If a student chooses to pursue a Special Circumstance Appeal, they must first complete the Verification process. This will include completing the Verification Worksheet and providing additional financial information. This may delay financial aid awarding. If a student chooses to pursue a Dependency Appeal, if selected for verification by the Institution or the Depa-uTeti9o8.7 T-7.9 (i)2.o D14.7 oDepa-uT

University Work Study is not based on financial need. Students will be paid with university funds.

submitted to the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS), and will be accessible by guaranty agencies, lenders, and schools determined to be authorized users of the data system. For more information, please visit www.studentaid.gov/loans.

There is no separate application for federal direct loans. The FAFSA is the application; however, there are some additional steps for first-time borrowers only. First-time borrowers must complete Entrance Counseling and sign a Master Promissory Note (MPN) by visiting www.studentloans.gov. This will require the student's FSA ID. If the UAFS Financial Aid Office cannot confirm these steps, loan funds will not be disbursed to the student account.

There are two types of Federal Direct Loans: Federal Direct Subsidized and Federal Direct Unsubsidized.

The Federal Direct Subsidized Loan is a need-based loan, based on the EFC and COA. Interest begins accruing with the first disbursement to the student account; however, the U.S. Department of Education will pay the interest that accrues while the student is enrolled at least half-time and during the student's grace period.

~~NOTE: Federal Direct Subsidized Loans are disbursed from 3/31/12 through June 30, 2019. DEB 05101(F)-00 T~~

For a ***dependent undergraduate*** student, the annual limits are:

Freshman: \$5,500 in Direct Loans. May be up to \$3,500 in Subsidized Loan funds and the difference would be Unsubsidized Loan funds.

Sophomore: \$6,500 in Direct Loans. May be up to \$4,500 in Subsidized Loan funds, the difference would be Unsubsidized Loan funds.

Junior/Senior: \$7,500 in Direct Loans. May be up to \$5,500 in Subsidized Loan funds, the difference would be Unsubsidized Loan funds.

NOTE: The combined aggregate limit that a dependent student may have outstanding is \$31,000. The student may only have up to \$23,000 in Subsidized Loan funds.

For an ***independent undergraduate*** student, the annual limits are:

Freshman: \$9,500 in Direct Loans. May be up to \$3,500 in Subsidized Loan funds and the difference would be Unsubsidized Loan funds.

Sophomore: \$10,500 in Direct Loans. May be up to \$4,500 in Subsidized Loan funds, the difference would be Unsubsidized Loan funds.

Junior/Senior

2. Visit www.studentloans.gov
3. Sign in using the FSA ID
4. Click Request PLUS Loan
 - Click Parent PLUS (if legal parent of dependent student)
 - Click Graduate PLUS (if graduate student)
5. Complete PLUS Application
6. The borrower will be notified immediately if they have been denied due to an adverse credit history
7. Complete PLUS Master Promissory Note
8. Complete PLUS Entrance Counseling ONLY if Grad PLUS

NOTE: Credit checks and PLUS Loan approval are only valid for 180 days.

If the PLUS borrower is denied based on credit, the borrower may choose to seek an endorser. If the borrower pursues this option, the endorser must create an FSA ID to complete the Endorser Addendum electronically at www.studentloans.gov. The PLUS Loan may then be awarded up to the endorsed amount only.

The PLUS borrower may also choose to appeal the credit decision. Contact information and instructions for appealing the credit decision will be provided in the denial notification.

If a legal parent of a dependent student is denied a Parent PLUS Loan due to adverse credit history (or lack of U.S. citizenship) and does not wish to pursue an endorser or appeal the credit decision, that student may request additional Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan funds up to the independent student limits. This is typically up to an additional \$4,000 for the academic year. (See Federal Direct Loans section). If a graduate student borrower is denied, no additional federal funding is available.

The interest rate for any PLUS Loan disbursed from July 1, 2022 and before July 1, 2023 is fixed at 7.54% and accrues as simple interest. For more information about how interest accrues, please visit: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/loans/plus#interest>.

There is an origination fee for any federal loan that is disbursed. This fee is not expected from the PLUS borrower immediately; however, will be taken from the loan disbursement.

Loan Type	First Disbursement Date	Loan Fee
Direct PLUS Loans	On or after 10/1/21 and before 10/1/22	4.228%
*No change for 2022-2023	On or after 10/1/22 and before 10/1/23	4.228%

There is an annual limit for the Federal PLUS Loan; however, there is no lifetime limit. The annual limit depends on the student's COA and any other aid the student may be receiving. A student may receive PLUS Loan funds up to their COA minus any other aid the student is receiving. For more

information, the student may visit their My.UAFS account for their specific COA and to view their current financial aid award package.

Loan Repayment

Students may visit www.nslds.ed.gov and www.studentloans.gov for an overview of their outstanding federal loans. Students must complete Exit Counseling at www.studentloans.gov once they drop below half-time for any reason. Students need to visit www.studentaid.gov to see who their assigned loan servicer(s) is and for their contact information. There are three time periods associated with Federal Direct Loans: In-School Deferment, Grace Period, and Repayment.

In-School Deferment (Payments are NOT required):

While a student is enrolled at least half-time, Direct Loans are in an In-School Deferment status. This means students are not required to make payments on these loans during this time. Half-time enrollment at UAFS for undergraduate students is a minimum of 6 credit hours and for graduate students is a minimum of 5 credit hours.

Grace Period (Payments are NOT required):

Once a student drops below half-time enrollment for any reason (fully withdrawing, degree completion, etc.) the outstanding Direct Loans will enter a Grace Period. The Grace Period is 6 months. If the student were to re-enroll at least half-time before the end of the Grace Period, that student's federal loans may re-enter In-School Deferment; however, if the

Please visit the [Financial Aid Scholarship](#) website for more information.

Outside Aid Sources

Outside aid can be based on merit achievement, performance, or some unique personal attribute. We encourage students to speak with [every one \(524.1\) 468 \(e\) 48.8 0.0.3 e bnt\) \(my 0.-24k\) 1.1 468 Chi r](#)

enrollment on that date, also known as Census Date. Any courses added after the Census Date will not be included in the student's COA.

NOTE: A student's financial aid award package may be affected if a student drops courses prior to the Census Date.

How Cost of Attendance is Utilized

COA is a budget used by any financial aid office to estimate the average student's cost to attend school. This is usually given as an annual amount. COA includes tuition and fees; room and board (or a housing and food allowance); and allowances for books, supplies, and transportation. It also includes miscellaneous and personal expenses. For students attending less than half-time, the COA includes tuition and fees and an allowance for books, supplies, and transportation.

COA is a limit to how much a student may receive in financial aid for any student receiving any federal, state, or institutional aid. If a student is only receiving privately funded awards, that student is not limited by COA unless specifically restricted by the awarding agency. COA is also used to determine a student's financial need.

Demonstrated Financial Need

Financial Need (Need) is calculated by the COA minus the EFC, determined by the FAFSA. Need may also be affected by any Estimated Financial

consideration, up to \$1250 each semester. Student will receive an email from Financial Aid indicating the amount of excess aid available to the student to charge books. Once the student receives this email, the student can go to the on-campus bookstore and use their student ID card to purchase books.

In rare instances, book vouchers may be available from financial aid through the second week of the semester. Book vouchers will not be made available to those students who complete their financial aid file after the second week of the semester.

Students that have set up a payment plan with the Cashier's office to cover charges on their account, can charge up to \$500 of books/supplies to their student account. The student's payment plan will recalculate depending on the additional of charges. For questions, please contact the Cashier's office.

NOTE: Book charges will reduce the amount of available excess aid refund.

Refund Information

A refund will be generated on your account if you are scheduled to receive more refundable financial assistance than you have in allowable charges on your student account.

To view refunds on your student account, log into your My.UAFS account at <http://my.uafs.edu> then click:

1. Students
2. Banner Self Service
3. Student Accounts
4. Account Detail

Refunds will appear in the top portion under the payment column of the Term Detail.

Direct Deposit

Students may setup direct deposit for refunds from their UAFS student account. This allows students to receive their refund more quickly than waiting for a paper check to be mailed.

To Set Up Direct Deposit:

1. Log into My.UAFS at <http://my.uafs.edu>
2. Click Student
3. Click Banner Self Service
4. Click Online Business Center
5. Click Setup Refund Direct Deposit
6. Enter your banking information

NOTE: Direct deposit should be set up at least 24 hours BEFORE a refund can post to your student account. If not, you will be issued a paper check.

Paper check refunds are typically processed once a week, which may delay the receipt of your refund due to processing and postal service. Refund checks lost in the mail will not be re-issued until 10 business days after it was mailed out.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) are the standards for satisfactory academic progress toward a degree or certificate. The UAFS Financial Aid Office reviews SAP at the end of each semester, after grades have been posted for that semester for all students. Please review our complete SAP Policy at the link below:

<https://uafs.edu/tuition-and-aid/financial-aid/sap.php>

Maximum Time Frame – 150%

Federal regulations only permit students to receive federal aid for the number of attempted credit hours up to 150% of the published credit hours required to complete the degree or certificate program. Therefore, if you have attempted credit hours in excess of 150% of your program's required credit hours, you are placed on SAP Suspension and ineligible for Title IV (federal) financial aid. We make every effort to notify students through their UAFS email when they are approaching their limit.

Number of credit hours required x 1.5 = T1s= x a o oedc5. 7313 072 (3 h61105. 7313 010a1s=

If a student's attempted credit hours exceed the maximum time frame allowed for their degree program, that student will immediately be placed on Financial Aid SAP Suspension for the following semester after they have exceeded the 150% Maximum Time Frame. A student may not receive a warning for exceeding the Maximum Time Frame, depending on that student's

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Returning Title IV (Federal) aid due to withdrawal is separate from any UAFS tuition, fee, room and board, and other qualified charges refund policy. When a student fully withdraws during the semester, a calculation to determine the amount of aid to be returned will be performed.

“When a student officially withdraws from a credit course(s), tuition may be refunded according to the following schedule: “

Prior to the start of classes	100%
First week of the semester	100%
Second week of the semester through 11th day of classes (census)	50%
After 11th day of classes	None
Prior to the start of classes	100%
First two days of the term	100%
Third through fifth day of classes (census)	50%
After fifth day	None

**(2021-2022 Undergraduate Catalog, p. 19)*

Adjusting Aid Related to Withdrawals

1. The student is enrolled in a late starting class that begins after the census date and drops the class before it starts. Students are not entitled to receive financial aid for classes they have not attended, and their financial aid will be adjusted accordingly.
2. The student is dropped from a class for non-attendance. Students are not entitled to receive aid for classes they have not attended, and their financial aid will be adjusted accordingly.
3. If a student is dropped in error and is reinstated in the same class, financial aid will be adjusted accordingly. Please note: if a student enrolls in a different class from the one