Affording Higher Education

Financial Aid Counselor
California Lutheran University
Highlights

• Process of Financial Aid
• The Application
• Types of Financial Aid
Financial Aid Principles

• Financial Aid is designed to bridge the gap between what the school actually costs and what you can afford. Families should expect to pay a portion of the student’s college costs.

• Governmental Convention: To the extent that they are able, parents have the primary responsibility to pay for their dependent child’s education.

• Students also have a responsibility to contribute toward their educational expenses.
Dates and Deadlines

• The 2016-17 FAFSA - available January 1, 2016

• 2016-17 Cal Grant GPA verification and FAFSA deadline March 2, 2016

• Colleges may set FAFSA filing deadlines

• Ask all colleges you apply to if other forms or applications (e.g. CSS Profile) are required for financial aid
CSS Profile

- Financial Aid application service of the College Board
- Available ONLY online: profileonline.collegeboard.com
- Becomes available in the fall
- The university will let you know if this is a required form
- Cost: $25 for initial application & sent to 1 school
  $16 for each additional school
- Some of the schools that use the CSS Profile are:
  Duke, USC, Stanford, Scripps, Princeton, Amherst, Cal Tech, Occidental, UCSF, Westmont
The FAFSA

• *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA) → go to [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) to apply on-line

• FAFSA collects demographic and financial information about the student and his or her family and calculates an Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

• The EFC is a measure of your family’s financial strength; it is used by a college to calculate the amount of federal student aid a student is eligible to receive
Preparing to Apply

• Use the FAFSA on the Web (FOTW) Worksheet before you begin the FAFSA
  – Allows you to gather all your information before filing your FAFSA
  – Questions follow the order of the FAFSA
  – [https://fafsa.ed.gov/help/ffdef44.htm](https://fafsa.ed.gov/help/ffdef44.htm)

• FAFSA – Students/parents need to set up an FSA ID and password

• FAFSA4caster – gives a very general idea of what kinds of financial aid a student might be eligible for
  – [https://fafsa.ed.gov/FAFSA/app/f4cForm?execution=e1s1](https://fafsa.ed.gov/FAFSA/app/f4cForm?execution=e1s1)
Reasons to Apply Online

• Built-in edits to prevent costly errors
• Skip logic allows student and/or parent to skip unnecessary questions
• More timely submission of original application and any necessary corrections
• More detailed instructions and “help” for common questions
• Ability to check application status on-line
• Simplified application process in the future
FAFSA Helpful Hints

• If your taxes won’t be completed until mid-April, do not wait to complete the FAFSA. Apply now and use the “Will File” indicator. Refer to last year’s final pay stub, W-2’s, or your own estimates for all the financial questions on the FAFSA

• Once you’ve completed your taxes, be sure to update your FAFSA by using the Data Retrieval Tool (this may cause changes to your EFC and/or your financial aid award)

• If your Financial Aid Office asks for additional information/documentation, please provide in a timely manner
Completing the FAFSA

- Students will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) once the FAFSA is completed.
- Data is sent to all schools listed on the FAFSA.
- Student must enter a California school first on the FAFSA for data to be sent to the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) to determine if student is eligible for a Cal Grant.
- 103 questions, of which only 29 are related to income and assets.
Understanding College Costs

• Direct costs: Tuition, fees, etc.

• Indirect costs: Books, transportation, etc.

• Direct costs + Indirect costs = Cost of Attendance (COA)

• COA varies widely from college to college
Calculation of Financial Aid

Cost of Attendance
- Estimated Family Contribution
= Financial Need

• Because COA varies widely from college to college, Financial Need will also vary depending on the college
Sources of Financial Aid

• Federal government
  – Largest source of financial aid
  – Must complete the FAFSA every year
• States
  – Usually have residency requirements
• Colleges/Universities
  – Offer both merit and need-based aid
• Private sources
  – Small awards add up!
Types of Financial Aid

Grants

• Federal Pell Grant
• Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)
• Cal Grant
  – CA residency requirement, March 2\textsuperscript{nd} Deadline
  – “A” is typically awarded at Universities
  – “B” is typically awarded at Community Colleges
  – “C” is for vocational programs
• Institutional Grants
Work Study

• Federal Work-Study
  – Need based
  – Self-help aid
  – Gives students the opportunity to work on-campus
  – Each college awards according to different criteria
Loans

• Federal Direct Loans: 4.29%
  – Subsidized (Need based)
  – Unsubsidized (Non-need based)
• Federal Perkins Loan (Need based) 5.0%
• Federal Parent PLUS Loan: 6.84%
  – Credit Check Required (Non-need based)
• Alternative/Private Loan (Non-need based)
  – Variable or fixed interest rate based on credit
Scholarships

• Institutional Scholarships
  – Merit (GPA and test scores)
  – Skill/Unique characteristic/Major (Fine Arts)
  – Athletic
  – Other (e.g. CLU Guarantee)

• Outside Scholarships
  – Civic and Local organizations
  – Churches
  – Employers
  – Private sources: (i.e., fastweb.com)
Outside Scholarships

• CLU’s Outside Scholarship Page:
  http://www.callutheran.edu/financial-aid/scholarships-grants/outside-scholarships.html
• Fastweb.com
• Scholarships.com
• Collegeexpress.com
• Academicinvest.com
• College-scholarships.com
• Gocollege.com
Special Circumstances

• Cannot report on FAFSA

• Call the Financial Aid Office to determine institution’s policy on applying for a “Special Circumstance” – many will require a written explanation and additional documentation

• Reasons for submitting a Special Circumstance appeal
  – Change in employment status/high medical expenses/death of a parent
  – Student cannot obtain parent information
Reapplying Each Year

• You must complete a new FAFSA each year you intend to receive financial aid

• Since each FAFSA is based on the prior year’s tax information, your award can vary from year to year
Financial Aid Websites

FAFSA: www.fafsa.gov
   FAFSA application, FAFSA renewal application, Apply for PIN

Cal Grant: www.calgrants.org
   Information on Cal Grant programs, Monitor your Cal Grant application

College Board: www.collegeboard.org
   CSS/Financial Aid Profile, Financial Tip Sheets, General Financial Aid Information

Fin Aid: www.finaid.org
   Financial aid information in English (not in Financial Aid speak!)

Fast Web: www.fastweb.com
   Scholarship search site
Questions