



Southwestern College Guide to Financial Aid 2021~2022

Financial Aid office

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SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE

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This guide is available for download on the Master's degree program application. All financial aid recipients are responsible for knowing and understanding the information contained in this guide. Any questions regarding student financial aid should be directed to the Financial Aid Office at (505) 467-6806 or finaid@swc.edu. Information in this guide booklet is subject to change.

I. Student Financial Aid at Southwestern College

Southwestern College (SWC) offers a variety of financial aid programs for our degree seeking students. We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to obtain their masters, regardless of their financial situation. As a college, SWC promotes financial assistance opportunities in the form of institutional scholarships, graduate assistantships, and federal financial aid. We also encourage all students to apply for outside sources of funding, such as, scholarships and grants. SWC also participates in external funded educational support programs, such as, the Department of Veteran's Affairs GI Bill, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, AmeriCorps, 529s, private loans and Tribal Funding.

II. Financial Aid Policy

To qualify for institutional scholarships and graduate assistantships, you must:

1. Be accepted into one of our M.A. programs
2. Be in good academic standing per the guidelines in the Student Handbook

To qualify for Federal Financial Aid, you must:

1. Be a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen with valid Social Security number
2. If you are male, be registered with selective service
3. Be enrolled at least half time (4.5 units) in an eligible degree program
4. Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)
5. Be in good standing with current federal financial aid
6. Complete Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application on line at <https://fafsa.ed.gov/> and use our federal school code: 030761 (you will also need income taxes from two years prior)

III. Financial Aid Programs

Scholarships

Southwestern College offers various scholarship programs. The amounts vary and depend upon date of enrollment. The financial aid office publicizes these scholarships to students through postings, campus email and on our website. We also accept scholarships from outside sources. This website has several awards for graduate students <https://www.careeronestop.org/toolkit/training/find-scholarships.aspx> (search by graduate degree and use the keyword option, be creative). We encourage students to apply for these opportunities throughout the time of their program. Scholarships are usually awarded for financial need. A scholarship award can be distributed for one quarter or for each quarter depending on the specific award. Graduate Assistantships (GA's) are also awarded usually once a year. The Director of Enrollment Services admissions@swc.edu can

describe this process further. GA's offer administrative support and can work from 5-13 hours per week. The FAFSA is required for GA applicants.

Financial Aid Packaging

A student's aid package may not exceed the student's Cost of Attendance (COA) this includes tuition and cost of living. Cost of living is based on living expenses in Santa Fe or the National average (for online students), including housing, books and supplies, transportation, food, required personal therapy and miscellaneous expenses. The Statement of Financial Aid Package will be e-mailed to the students SWC email address prior to registration. The statement shows the amount of scholarships and loans by quarters. Disbursements are made the first Monday of each quarter. If living expenses are needed, disbursements can be set up monthly and are paid on Thursdays. If you'd like to make any changes, contact the financial aid administrator.

Disbursement Policy

Disbursement is the process of applying federal loans, scholarships and private loans that the student has accepted to their account. If the funds remaining after tuition and fees have been paid are less than \$2,500, the student is issued a refund of the full amount on the first Monday of the quarter.

If the funds remaining after tuition and fees have been paid are \$2,500 or greater, the student will be refunded according to the student's instructions to the Financial Aid Administrator based on the following two options:

Option 1

\$2,500 is disbursed and refunded the first Monday of the quarter and the remaining amount is disbursed and refunded Thursday of the 5th week of the quarter.

Option 2

An initial disbursement sufficient to pay all tuition and fees plus one third of the remaining amount available. The first third is refunded the first Monday of the quarter. The second third is disbursed and refunded Thursday of week 5, and the final, third is disbursed and refunded Thursday of week 9. This extends the monies over the entire quarter (this option works particularly well for financial management and budgeting).

IV. Federal Loan Programs (Title IV)

The Unsubsidized Direct Loan

An Unsubsidized Federal Loan is a non-need-based loan available to all students in good standing with the Federal Loan Program. Loans made by the federal government usually offer lower interest rates and have more flexible repayment options than private loans. Students are strongly encouraged to borrow only what is needed, as all loans must be repaid. For more details go to <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans>.

Repayment of the loan by a student will begin six months after graduation, six months after withdrawal from the program or six months after dropping to an enrollment of less than four and a half units. The loan must be repaid within ten years from the date it enters repayment unless other payment arrangements have been made. (Some loans can extend up to 30 years.)

An origination fee is a percentage charged by the lender and guarantee agency and will be deducted from the loan proceeds. The origination fee is 1.57% on loans accepted on or after 10/01/20 and before 10/01/22. The fixed interest rate is at 5.28% this school year.

Federal loans are based on the number of units you plan to take, as indicated on your planner and registration. If you change your academic status by adding or dropping a course or courses, the amount of loans you are eligible for may change. It is *your responsibility* to notify the Financial Aid Office of any changes you make. The maximum loan amount per academic year is \$20,500. You are required to complete Entrance Counseling and the Master Promissory Note (MPN) both are on the website <https://studentloans.gov> under the Graduate tab.

Grad Plus Loan

Grad Plus loan, also called Direct Plus loans, is a federal loan that is credit based. You can apply for the Plus with the Financial Aid Administrator or online at <https://studentloans.gov> a separate MPN must be completed before funds can be disbursed. The origination fee is 4.228% on loans accepted on or after 10/01/20 and before 10/01/22. The fixed interest rate is at 6.28% this school year. Your lender might require repayment as soon as your no longer attending classes, at least part-time.

V. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

Students are expected to maintain SAP; this is measured by a required Grade Point Average (GPA). A student achieving a cumulative GPA of 2.75 (a B minus average) or better are making satisfactory academic progress. If a student does not maintain this GPA at the end of any quarter, they will lose their Title IV financial aid eligibility. The student may request an appeal form from the financial aid administrator. The appeal will be reviewed in Academic Council and, if approved, the student will be placed on financial aid probation. If a student is on financial aid probation for two consecutive quarters, they will automatically be suspended from Title IV eligibility until the SAP is met. Compliance with the required completion rate is also required to maintain aid.

Required Completion Rate:

Quarterly: The federal required completion rate is 4.5 units to be eligible for aid in each quarter.

Annually: Federal regulations require a 67% completion rate of units attempted to retain eligibility for financial aid.

Entire Program: Masters-level, degree-seeking students must complete MA programs in counseling or art therapy/counseling within six years, must earn a minimum of 97 units for the degree in Counseling and 98 units for Art Therapy and Counseling.

Incompletes and Withdrawals: Withdrawal from school has no effect on the student's satisfactory progress upon re-entrance. The following evaluations will be considered as units not completed:

- "C+" or below
- "W" withdrawals; (student, instructor or Academic Council)
- "I" incompletes

VI. Return of Funds to Title IV

Upon withdrawal, any Title IV funds received but not earned by the student must be returned. The return of funds will be determined by deducting the amount of Title IV aid earned from the amount disbursed, if the disbursement is greater than the amount earned, funds must be returned. The student is responsible for returning any unearned amount, as specified in the terms of the promissory note. (Refer to student handbook for SWC refund policy.)

VII. Managing Student Loans

You can submit payments to your loans at any time, it is best to call your loan servicer and specify where you would like the payment to be allocated. Please review this site: <https://www.salliemae.com/student-loans/manage-your-private-student-loan/understand-student-loan-payments/learn-about-interest-and-capitalization/> regarding how interest is accrued and how to avoid capitalization. This site also discusses forbearance, deferment and payment options. Always avoid default and call your loan servicer if you are struggling to make a payment. Phone number for Direct loan Information is 800-433-3243. Before you graduate, please review this link <https://studentaid.gov/help-center/answers/article/what-is-loan-capitalized-interest>.

VIII. Service-Related Loan Forgiveness Programs

Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program

Your student loan balance will be forgiven after 10 years of working in a full-time public service job and making 120 payments according to your payment agreement. Public service jobs include working for non-profit, government or tribal agency. You are required to submit the Employment Certification form as soon as possible. Review this website for more details <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/public-service>.

National Health Services Corps (NHSC) Loan Repayment Program

This program is open to licensed primary care providers in dental, mental and behavioral health that are employed at an NHSC-approved site. To qualify for this program, you must: be a U.S. Citizen or U.S. National, be in an eligible discipline and primary care specialist, have unpaid federal or state loans, and work at a National Health Service Corps approved service. Two years of service allows the opportunity to receive up to \$50,000 in loan repayment. The substance Use Disorder Program offers up to \$75,000 in loan repayment in exchange for a three-year commitment. Refer to <https://nhsc.hrsa.gov/loan-repayment/index.html> and <https://nhsc.hrsa.gov/loan-repayment/eligibility/index.html>.

Indian Health Services (INH) Loan Repayment Program

The mission of the INH is to raise the physical, mental social and spiritual health of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the highest possible level. Health professionals including chemical dependency counselors, clinical psychologists and social workers who are committed to working at an Indian health facility may be awarded up to

\$40,000 toward the repayment of your qualified student loans in exchange for an initial two-year service commitment to practice full time at an Indian health program site. Refer to <https://www.ihs.gov/loanrepayment/>.

Allied Health Loan for Service Program

This program is specifically for New Mexico residents who plan to practice as a health professional (behavioral health and social services included) in a designated shortage area within the state. For every year of service, a portion of the loan will be forgiven, penalties will be assessed if the service agreement is not satisfied. **Students must apply for this program before or during school (before graduation).** Refer to http://www.hed.state.nm.us/students/alliedhealth_ifs.aspx for more information.

Please note some of these agencies require that you hold a license of a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC), a Marriage and Family Therapist or a Licensed Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselor.