



Montgomery College

endless possibilities

OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID AWARD CONDITIONS 2011-2012

Montgomery College helps students and their families pay for college with financial aid programs that include grants, scholarships, loans, and student employment.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR STUDENT FINANCIAL AID?

Students may be eligible for aid if they meet certain requirements. A student must

- enroll in an eligible degree or certificate program. (Enrollment in at least 6 credit hours each semester is necessary for some types of financial aid);
- be a U.S. citizen or an eligible non-citizen;
- demonstrate financial need through the federal formula;
- make satisfactory academic progress toward completion of an associate degree or a one-year certificate program;
- not be in default on Federal Perkins Loans, Federal Stafford Loans, or Federal SLS/PLUS loans or owe a refund on a Federal Pell Grant or Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG);
- report all financial aid awarded by private sources (such as scholarships, loans, employer reimbursement, and other third-party payments);
- meet all additional federal, state, and institutional eligibility requirements for financial aid;
- be a high school graduate, GED recipient, or have passing scores on an approved ability-to-benefit test (students younger than age 16 without a high school diploma or GED are **not** eligible for federal and most state student financial aid); and
- not be concurrently enrolled in high school at any time during the award year. (See "Special Programs for High School Students") Students in the MC Gateway and College Institute programs are not eligible for federal or state financial assistance.

You must report any change in your family financial situation, school enrollment (including attendance), or additional non-federal and non-state financial assistance to the Office of Student Financial Aid. Additional financial aid received may reduce the Montgomery College financial aid award or the amount of student loans you may receive. You must report any change in your name, address, or phone number to the Office of Admissions and Enrollment Management.

HOW FINANCIAL AID IS AWARDED

Montgomery College uses the federal government's formula to determine your ability to pay for your education. We collect eligibility information on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) that you submit to the Federal processor. The formula considers your family income (including your parents' income if you are dependent and your spouse's income if you are independent), the size of your family, the number of family members attending college at least half-time (**not** including your parents), and other financial information. Federal, state, and local taxes paid, social security paid, and an allowance for supporting the family are also factors in determining your **Expected Family Contribution (EFC)**. This amount represents what the formula says your family can contribute to your educational costs.

The Office of Student Financial Aid constructs average budgets that include tuition, fees, books, supplies, transportation, and living expenses. These budgets are the **Cost of Attendance**. The Office of Student Financial Aid subtracts the Expected Family Contribution from the Cost of Attendance. The difference between the Cost of Attendance and the Expected Family Contribution is your **Financial Need**. The Cost of Attendance, Expected Family Contribution, and Financial Need

used to determine your financial aid awards can be viewed on MyMC. Students who register for less than six credit hours each semester may not have financial need for some types of aid.

You may use your financial aid to pay for developmental course work. (For additional information, see the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy.) Refer to the on-line college catalogue for the credit hour equivalent for developmental classes and American English Language Program classes. Financial aid does not cover continuing education courses or classes in which students register as "Audit."

We review and award applications for financial aid in the date order they are received, completed, and verified. All financial aid is awarded pending the availability of the funds. Federal, state, institutional and private financial aid funds may be reduced during the academic year depending on the source and availability of funds.

Credit Hours, Credit Equivalent Hours, and Billed Hours

The college uses your total semester credit hours or equivalent credit hours (for developmental classes and American English Language Program (AELP) classes) to determine your enrollment level. Refer to the on-line college catalog for 2011-12 to determine class credit hours. **This may not match the hours you are billed for tuition.** For example, you may enroll in a class that is billed at 5 hours, but the equivalent credit hours equal 3 credit hours. Some developmental classes earn 0 hours, but are billed at the equivalent of 3 or 5 credit hours. Some AELP classes earn three hours, but are considered to be the equivalent of 5 credit hours. In these cases, we use the equivalent credit hours in your total enrollment. A chart of these hours is available at www.montgomerycollege.edu/finaid/. If you have questions, contact the financial aid office.

INDIVIDUAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

Please note: Your financial aid award package may not contain funds from all of these programs. Your initial financial aid awards are based on full-time enrollment (minimum registration of 12 credit hours per semester). If you do not enroll full-time, your financial aid may be reduced or cancelled, depending on the rules of the specific program. For financial aid purposes, the college defines an academic year as equal to 30 credit or equivalent credit hours.

Federal Pell Grant

This is the Federal government's primary grant program. We determined the amount of your award using your federal Expected Family Contribution and your enrollment level. We always base the initial award on full-time enrollment (minimum of 12 credit hours per semester) for the fall and spring semesters. It is adjusted each semester for enrollment of three-quarter time (9 to 11 credit hours or equivalent credit hours – 75% of the full-time semester award), half-time (6 to 8 credit hours or equivalent credit hours – 50% of the full-time semester award), and less than half-time (1 to 5 credit hours or equivalent credit hours – 25% of the full-time semester award).

The determination of the credit hours your Pell Grant can pay for is based on your enrollment at the time your financial aid file becomes complete. If your file becomes complete before the semester Pell cut-off date, you are paid for the hours in which you are enrolled on the cut-off date. (To see each semester's Pell enrollment cut-off date, go to www.montgomerycollege.edu/finaid/.) If your file becomes complete after the cut-off date, your Pell Grant pays for the hours in which you are enrolled on the day you complete your financial aid file. Students may receive additional Pell Grant funds for summer sessions if they enroll at least half-time in the combined summer sessions..

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG)

This Federal grant program supplements the Pell grant of students with exceptional financial need. The Federal government provides MC with a limited amount of SEOG to award to students. We base

your initial award on full-time enrollment (minimum of 12 credit hours per semester). It may be reduced for less than full-time enrollment or if students receive other grant funds. In order to maintain a semester SEOG award, students must stay enrolled in at least one class past the 6% date (MC last date for refund) for the semester classes in which they registered. If students withdraw from all classes prior to the 6% dates, SEOG will be cancelled for that semester.

Federal TEACH Grant

The TEACH Grant program provides up to \$4,000 a year in grant aid to students completing (or planning to complete) the coursework required to become a teacher. Students enrolled less than full-time (12 credit hours per semester) will have their TEACH Grant reduced according to a schedule established by the federal government in regulations.

In exchange for TEACH Grant aid, students must agree to serve as full-time teachers at specified schools and teach in a specified high need fields for four academic years within eight years after completing the college course. TEACH Grant recipients that do not fulfill their teaching obligations must repay the grant as if it was an unsubsidized Direct Stafford Loan, with interest accruing from the date the funds were awarded to the student.

To receive a TEACH Grant, students must complete the FAFSA and have a 3.25 GPA (high school GPA for first year undergrads) OR score in the 75th percentile on at least one admissions test. Students must attend annual TEACH Grant counseling and sign a service agreement to receive funds. Final regulations for this program are pending; additional requirements may be applied.

Board of Trustees (BOT) Grant

This is an institutional grant program directly funded by Montgomery College. To receive a Board of Trustees Grant, students must have financial need and maintain at least a *cumulative* 2.0 grade point average (GPA). You may only use a BOT Grant to pay charges for tuition and fees. If your tuition and fees are waived for any reason, or are covered by a tuition-specific award, we will cancel your BOT Grant. Tuition-specific awards include Board of Trustees Scholarships, Montgomery Scholars, Renaissance Scholars, and Macklin Scholars. Other awards may be included as well, depending on the criteria of the individual program.

Private Scholarships, and State Grants and Scholarships

Organizations and agencies outside of Montgomery College award these funds using their own eligibility requirements to receive and renew these awards. We do not credit private and state scholarships to student accounts until we receive the funds from the state agency or sponsor issuing the awards. This includes Maryland State Scholarships and Grants as well as DC TAG and LEAP funds.

Maryland State Campus Based Educational Assistance Grants are awarded through Montgomery College to full-time students who are Maryland residents and meet the state's criteria for the award. Maryland State Part-Time Grants are awarded per semester to Maryland State residents with financial need who enroll in 3 – 11 credit hours in the semester the award is made. Priority for part-time grants is given to students who lose other state grants due to part-time enrollment.

Federal Perkins Loan

This is a low-interest Federal loan for students with exceptional financial need. The Federal government provides Montgomery College with a limited amount of funds to award students. Students must repay the loan to Montgomery College. Students receiving a Federal Perkins Loan must sign a promissory note before funds are credited to student accounts. The Office of Student Financial Aid will notify you in writing when and where to sign your promissory note.

Federal Direct Loan Program

Montgomery College participates in the Federal Direct Loan Program. Loan funds are provided to students directly from the federal government. An estimated Federal Direct Loan amount may be included in your financial aid award package. Direct Loans can only be finalized and processed after students complete a Student Loan Request Form. Before a request form can be submitted you must attend an in-person student loan information session. We will then determine your final eligibility and process your loan. Students requesting Direct PLUS loans must submit the appropriate loan request form to the Office of Student Financial Aid. All Direct Loan recipients must register for at least six credit hours each semester and remain registered at least half time until their loans are certified. If you drop below six credit hours in a semester or completely withdraw from school, you may not receive the full amount of your loan or the loan may be cancelled.

Students receiving Direct Loans must sign a master promissory note before funds are credited to student accounts. Funds will be deposited directly to your student account at the college.

Federal Work Study

Federal Work Study (FWS) is a student employment program. The award does not credit to your student account and does not pay your college charges directly. Students are awarded FWS if they indicate an interest in student employment programs on the FAFSA and have a personal income of less than \$10,000. Students may also request FWS at one of the MC campus financial aid offices. If you receive a FWS award, the Office of Student Financial Aid will help you find a job on campus or off campus in a community service agency. The college pays you bi-weekly for the hours you work in each pay period. The college directly deposits student earnings from FWS jobs to the student's personal checking or savings account after you are placed in a job and complete a time sheet. Students may not work in FWS jobs until all required employment paperwork has been completed and returned to the Financial Aid Office.

HOW FINANCIAL AID PAYS YOUR BILL

The college disburses financial aid awards on a semester basis. We credit all financial aid proceeds, including student loans, to your student account at the college. The awards pay for all outstanding tuition and fees for the semester awarded. Students with awarded financial aid in excess of their charges for tuition and fees will have a book credit automatically processed for the campus bookstores. These can be viewed on-line at MyMC. The college will deduct the book charges from your financial aid. If you have a credit balance after all outstanding obligations are met, the college will issue you a refund check. The college sends refunds of any balance remaining after all your charges are paid approximately four weeks after the semester begins, *if your aid has been awarded and credited to your bill*. Awards from differing sources may credit to your account at different times.

Sometimes the amount of your financial aid is not enough to pay your entire semester bill at the college. **If you have any amount of financial aid referenced on your semester bill, your classes will not be deleted for the semester at the time payment is due.** You must still pay the balance of your bill. If you need additional financial aid to pay your bill, you may want to consider requesting a Federal Direct Loan, if you have not already done so. Students are responsible for all charges not covered by financial aid. If have financial aid referenced on your semester bill and you determine that you do not wish to attend MC for the semester, you must manually withdraw from any classes you have registered for prior to the refund date in order to not be liable for those charges.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Students who are dually enrolled in high school and Montgomery College may be eligible for a Board of Trustees High School Grant or Maryland State Dual Enrollment Grant. A limited amount of

funding is available. These programs have a separate application form, which is available at campus Financial Aid Offices, or on the web at www.montgomerycollege.edu/finaid.

BOOK CREDITS

Students who receive financial aid in excess of their charged tuition and fees may use their funds to pay for required books and supplies at any MC bookstore. If the only financial aid you receive is a BOT grant or other tuition-specific award, you do not qualify for a book credit. Book credits are processed automatically for eligible students only in August for fall semester and in January for spring semester. Check MyMC prior to the beginning of the fall and spring semesters to see if you qualify. Book credit eligibility and use of book credits and the MC bookstores ends approximately two weeks into the semester.

ATTENDANCE AND WITHDRAWAL FROM CLASSES

You must be attending all of your classes in order to receive financial aid. The Office of Student Financial Aid must document your attendance in classes. Your financial aid may be canceled at the conclusion of the semester if proof of your attendance cannot be provided, even if you have not officially withdrawn from school and still owe a bill for tuition and fees. Non-attendance is considered an unofficial withdrawal from school. Attendance in on-line classes is documented through submission of academic assignments, completion of exams, or actual participation in on-line discussions about academic matters.

If you receive financial aid from federal Title IV funds and completely withdraw from MC, the college returns your funds to the proper financial aid accounts on a proportional basis. Title IV funds includes Federal Pell Grant, FSEOG, TEACH Grant, Federal Perkins Loan, FWS, and Direct Loans. You may owe a bill for tuition and fees to the college after we reduce your financial aid. Your official withdrawal date may be the date you process the withdrawal, or the documented date you stopped attending classes. Contact your campus financial aid office for examples of how this process affects the repayment of financial aid. Withdrawing from classes, dropping classes, or failing classes can have an effect on your satisfactory academic progress and ability to receive future financial aid.

RE-APPLICATION

You must reapply for financial aid every academic year. Apply on-line at www.fafsa.gov the beginning of January for the following academic year that begins in September. You are encouraged to watch for financial aid news through campus media such as newsletters, student newspapers, or bulletin board displays.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

- **January 1** – First day to file the FAFSA for the following academic year beginning in the fall
- **March 1** – deadline to file your FAFSA for Maryland State Scholarships
- **May 15** – priority deadline for fall aid at Montgomery College
- **June 7** – priority deadline for submitting an MC Foundation Scholarship application
- **November 1** – priority deadline for spring aid at Montgomery College, if you did not apply in the fall

What does a “priority deadline” mean?

Students who complete financial aid applications by the priority deadline are processed first and have the best chance to receive some financial aid funds that are limited. These applications will be awarded aid before the bill for tuition and fees must be paid, with the exception of some MC Foundation funds.