

# Financial Aid Programs and Procedures for Graduate Students

2010-2011



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**Hofstra University** offers financial assistance to graduate students in the form of scholarships, fellowships, grants, loans and employment opportunities.

Scholarships and fellowships are applied to tuition and awarded to qualified graduate students based on academic excellence and/or demonstrated need. On the graduate level, all scholarships, fellowships, assistantships and grants are administered by the student's respective academic department. Graduate students should contact their departments for information.

In addition, financial assistance is available through state and federal agencies. Such support may depend on the financial need of the student.

The estimated cost of attendance for a full-time graduate student living on campus for 2010-2011 is approximately \$36,074 (includes tuition, fees, room, board, books, transportation and personal expenses).

## HOW DO I APPLY FOR AND RECEIVE AID?

### Free Application for Federal Student Aid

Graduate and professional students must complete the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** at [fafsa.gov](http://fafsa.gov) to be considered for federal aid. The toll-free telephone number for the FAFSA processor is **1-800-4-FEDAID**. Hofstra's federal school code is **002732**. Students may be required to submit copies of income tax returns and other information in support of their federal aid applications. The Hofstra University Office of Financial Aid will notify students if any additional information is needed. We encourage continuing students to file the FAFSA every year **by February 15** to be considered for federal aid. For more information regarding the FAFSA or federal student aid programs, call **1-800-4-FEDAID** or visit [fafsa.gov](http://fafsa.gov) or [studentaid.ed.gov](http://studentaid.ed.gov).

### Application and Reapplication Procedures

Requests for financial assistance will not influence a candidate's consideration for admission in any way. Financial aid decisions are made after the student has been accepted. New students receive a financial aid award package by mail; continuing students receive a postcard and e-mail at their Hofstra Pride account and can accept or decline their awards online via the Hofstra portal at [my.hofstra.edu](http://my.hofstra.edu).

### Satisfactory Academic Progress for Federal Aid

The academic standing of all graduate students is reviewed each year. In addition to the individual program requirements to be considered in good standing, satisfactory academic progress for federal financial aid eligibility requires that graduate students successfully complete at least 75 percent of the credits attempted each year.

## TYPES OF AID: GRANTS

### Federal Grant

The Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant provides grants of up to \$4,000 per year to undergraduate and graduate students who intend to teach in a high-need field in a public or private elementary or secondary school that serves students from low-income families. A service (work) obligation is required or the grant converts to an Unsubsidized Stafford Loan. Students apply for this grant by filing the FAFSA.

### State Grant

The New York State Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) offers grants to New York state residents who attend a college or university located in the state of New York. To be eligible, a student must be enrolled for a minimum of 12 credits per semester. Students who would like to apply for TAP must first file the FAFSA. At the end of the FAFSA session, you will be able to link to your online TAP application. If you miss the link, you may apply directly online at [hesc.com](http://hesc.com). Hofstra's graduate TAP school code is 5265 (Law School code is 5268).

Students must maintain satisfactory academic progress toward degree completion in order to receive TAP benefits. Satisfactory academic progress is measured by accrual of a specified number of credits each semester and achievement of a certain grade point average. For more information regarding TAP and other state programs, visit [hesc.com](http://hesc.com) or call **1-888-NYS-HESC**.

## TYPES OF AID: LOANS

### Student Loans

Loans are available to assist students in meeting the cost of their education. To allow adequate processing time for bill payment and avoid late fees, students beginning classes in fall 2010 should apply for loans by **June 1**; students beginning classes in spring 2011 should apply by **December 1**. **Please note:** If you are attending in both fall and spring *and* you are applying for loans, please apply for the amount you need for the full academic year, not just one semester.

Financial aid programs are currently under review by the U.S. government. Please visit [hofstra.edu/FAupdates](http://hofstra.edu/FAupdates) for the most current financial aid information.

### Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP)

The federal government guarantees low-cost Stafford and Graduate PLUS loans to qualified students through the FFELP. The loans are originated by participating lending institutions. Students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) annually to determine their FFELP eligibility. Loan counseling is required and must be completed for Stafford Loans at [hofstra.edu/FAEntrance](http://hofstra.edu/FAEntrance) and for Graduate PLUS Loans at [hofstra.edu/GradPLUSentrance](http://hofstra.edu/GradPLUSentrance). FFELP loans must be certified prior to the end of the student's enrollment period.

### Stafford Loans

There are two kinds of Stafford Loans: subsidized and unsubsidized. These loans are not mutually exclusive; therefore, many students qualify for both types.

**Federal Subsidized Stafford Loans:** Federal Subsidized Stafford Loans are available for graduate students; eligibility is determined by the FAFSA. Graduate students may borrow up to \$8,500 per year. Federal Subsidized Stafford Loans have a fixed interest rate of 6.8 percent. Students must be enrolled at least half-time (4.5 credits per term at Hofstra). While the student is enrolled at least half-time, payments on the loan are deferred. Repayment of both principal and interest begin six months after the student graduates, leaves school, or becomes enrolled less than half-time.

**Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loans:** Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loans are also available for graduate students. Graduate students may borrow up to \$12,000 per year. Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loans carry a fixed interest rate of 6.8 percent. Interest begins accruing on this loan during the in-school period. If a student chooses not to pay the interest while in school, the interest is capitalized and added to the outstanding principal on an annual basis. Repayment of principal and accrued interest begins six months after the student graduates, leaves school, or becomes enrolled less than half-time (4.5 credits per term at Hofstra).

For step-by-step instructions on how to complete your loan process, please visit [hofstra.edu/learnaboutloans](http://hofstra.edu/learnaboutloans).

### Federal Graduate PLUS Loans

Federal Graduate PLUS Loans are available to graduate students to assist with educational expenses. These loans do require a credit check, and the lender has the final discretion on approval. Students must be enrolled at least half-time (4.5 credits per term at Hofstra) and meet all the other federal eligibility criteria. The interest rate of the Federal Graduate PLUS Loan is fixed at 8.5 percent. The annual limit is the student's cost of attendance minus any other type of financial aid, and no aggregate limit exists. Accepting Federal Graduate PLUS Loans on the award notification will allow processing of loans to begin. First-time borrowers must complete an electronic master promissory note (for step-by-step instructions on how to complete your loan process, please visit [hofstra.edu/learnaboutloans](http://hofstra.edu/learnaboutloans)). Repayment begins 60 days from the final disbursement for the loan period, unless payment is deferred with the lender. A FAFSA must be filed and Federal Stafford annual limits must be exhausted to enable the student to apply for the Federal Graduate PLUS Loan. Federal Graduate PLUS Loan borrowers must also complete loan counseling at [hofstra.edu/GradPLUSentrance](http://hofstra.edu/GradPLUSentrance).

*Please note that Hofstra University is required to submit loan information to the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS), and that information is accessible by guaranty agencies, lenders and institutions determined to be authorized users of the data system.*

## Alternative Student Loans

Alternative student loans are private loans offered by lenders to help meet educational costs. These loans usually have variable interest rates, which, unlike loans from the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP), are not set by the federal government. Most lenders require students with limited credit history to have a co-signer. Some alternative loans can be borrowed retroactively to cover outstanding bills. For help choosing a lender and evaluating loan benefits, visit [hofstra.edu/learnaboutloans](http://hofstra.edu/learnaboutloans).

For a list of alternative student loan lenders, please visit [www.finaid.org/loans/privatestudentloans.phtml](http://www.finaid.org/loans/privatestudentloans.phtml).

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## VERIFICATION PROCESS

Approximately 30 percent of FAFSAs are selected for verification each year. This is done to make certain that the information reported is accurate. The federal processor uses a system of edits, or flags, which produces a selection of certain applications for verification. If a student's application is selected for verification, this may mean that a data element in the application does not fit generally recognized patterns (not necessarily that the element is incorrect; it merely must be verified), or that the student was selected at random. The University's Office of Financial Aid may also select files for verification if there appears to be a conflict of information. If a student's application is selected for verification, the student is notified on the Student Aid Report (SAR).

If a student's application is selected for verification, the following documentation must be submitted to the Office of Financial Aid:

- 2010-2011 Independent Verification Worksheet
- Signed copy of student's (and spouse's, if applicable) 2009 federal income tax return and all schedules (W-2 forms alone cannot be used for verification).
- If you do not have a copy of your tax return, please call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040 and ask for a tax transcript for the 2009 calendar year. This form is acceptable in lieu of an actual copy of your tax return, but *must* be signed by the tax filer prior to submission.
- Other documents as needed.

Federal financial aid cannot be disbursed and Stafford Loans may not be certified until verification is complete. Estimated financial aid awards will be rescinded if verification has not been completed within specified deadlines. In this case, any deferred tuition and fees become due immediately. Please keep in mind that you will be notified of any adjustments that are necessary and corrections will be made for information that is not accurate, which may affect your ability to receive aid. If corrections are made to your FAFSA as a result of the verification process, you will be sent an updated SAR from the federal processor. Notification of revised awards will be mailed to new students; continuing students will receive an e-mail via their Hofstra Pride account and can immediately access their awards online through the Hofstra portal at [my.hofstra.edu](http://my.hofstra.edu).

Verification must be completed no later than 90 days past the last day of your enrollment for each academic year. Corrections involving the federal processor must be made prior to mid-August.

In order to receive Stafford or Federal Graduate PLUS Loans, verification must be completed prior to the last date of the term for which the student wishes to borrow funds.

# Federal Graduate PLUS Loan vs. Alternative Student Loan, 2010-2011

## What is a Federal Graduate PLUS Loan?

Federal Graduate PLUS Loans are loans for graduate student borrowers. Parents cannot borrow under this loan program. The Federal Graduate PLUS Loan is not asset-based; approval is based on creditworthiness. It allows graduate students to borrow up to the total cost of educational expenses minus other financial aid received.

## What is an alternative student loan?

Alternative student loans are private loans offered by lenders specifically targeted to address educational costs that exceed other financial aid received. Most lenders require students with limited credit history to have a co-signer. The most common reasons some families apply for alternative student loans instead of PLUS loans are: A) Some alternative student loans require the student to enroll in as few as 3 credits per semester, whereas PLUS loans require at least half-time enrollment (4.5 credits per term at Hofstra). B) Some alternative loans can be borrowed retroactively to cover outstanding bills.

	Federal Graduate PLUS Loan	Alternative Student Loan
<b>Loan Borrower</b>	Student	Student
<b>Co-signer</b>	An endorser may be used if the student is unable to satisfy credit requirements	Usually required due to lack of student income/credit
<b>FAFSA Required</b>	Yes	No
<b>Interest Rate and Rate Caps</b>	Fixed 8.5%, subject to congressional approval	Variable rate; many higher than PLUS loans; usually no cap
<b>Accrued Interest</b>	Accrued interest capitalizes once at final repayment	Accrued interest may be capitalized monthly, quarterly or once at repayment
<b>Loan Payment and Terms</b>	10-year repayment term may mean higher monthly payments but lower finance charges	Longer repayment term may mean lower monthly payments but higher finance charges
<b>Approval Criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credit check based on federal standards</li> <li>• No debt-to-income ratio or credit scoring</li> </ul>	Based on student's (or co-signer's) credit history and debt-to-income ratio
<b>Borrowing Limits</b>	Up to the cost of education less other financial aid	Depends on program, either up to the cost of education less other financial aid or aggregate limits
<b>Repayment</b>	Deferred until after leaving school or the student drops below half-time status (4.5 credits per term at Hofstra)	Varies by program; usually deferred until 6 months after leaving school
<b>Payment Flexibility</b>	Income-sensitive, graduated and extended repayment options are available	Varies by program
<b>Payment Deferment Situations</b>	Wider deferment and forbearance options are available	Varies by program; limited deferment and forbearance options
<b>Payment Insurance</b>	Federally insured against death and disability	Not federally insured and may not offer discharge in the event of death or disability
<b>Prepayment Penalty</b>	None	Usually none
<b>Consolidation</b>	Federal Consolidation Loan Program available	Cannot be consolidated with other federal loan programs

To learn more about these and other education loans, visit [hofstra.edu/learnaboutloans](http://hofstra.edu/learnaboutloans).

## OFFICE OF STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

The Office of Student Employment offers on-campus employment options for graduate students while enrolled at the University. The office is located in the Human Resources Center on North Campus and provides services on a walk-in basis.

### Employment Opportunities

Graduate student positions include graduate assistants, resident directors and tutors. Federal Work-Study positions may also be available for students who have completed a FAFSA. For all on-campus graduate student positions, applicants must hold a baccalaureate degree and be enrolled in graduate-level classes at Hofstra University.

For a list of current employment opportunities, please visit [hofstra.edu/jobs](http://hofstra.edu/jobs) and click on “Student Jobs.” Job listings are also posted on bulletin boards located on the second floor of the Mack Student Center, North Campus. For further information, please call the Office of Student Employment at (516) 463-6782.

### Graduate Assistantships

Graduate assistantships are part-time positions working in a campus administrative office or student services area. Some assistantships offer a compensation package that includes a tuition waiver, while others offer a stipend or hourly wage. For all graduate assistantship positions, applicants must hold a baccalaureate degree and be accepted as a fully matriculated student in a master’s, law or doctoral level program at Hofstra University.

## ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF AID

### Office of Vocational Rehabilitation or the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Funds for educational purposes may be available to people who have physical or mental disabilities or visual impairments that are handicaps to employment. Please contact an office near your home for further information. Contact information can be found in your telephone directory under State Agencies.

### Private Agencies

Private agencies such as religious organizations, unions, foundations, and social, civic and cultural groups may offer scholarships to students. Please contact any organizations in which you participate to see if they offer scholarships. Please also visit [fastweb.com](http://fastweb.com) or [finaid.org](http://finaid.org) for additional outside scholarship information.

### Veterans GI Bill Benefits

Funds for educational purposes are available to veterans of the armed forces. Please call the veterans representative at Hofstra at (516) 463-8000 for information.



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### Office of Student Financial Services

206 Memorial Hall  
126 Hofstra University  
Hempstead, NY 11549-1260

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. (4 p.m. on Fridays during the summer)  
Evening hours vary; visit [hofstra.edu/facalendar](http://hofstra.edu/facalendar) to view the schedule.

Phone: (516) 463-8000 • Fax: (516) 463-4936 • E-mail: [studentfinancialservices@hofstra.edu](mailto:studentfinancialservices@hofstra.edu)