



Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships

The *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA) is the only application required by the Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships to apply for federal and state funds awarded via this office. That's it! Here is a brief description of the flow for someone applying to receive financial aid during the 2009-2010 academic year:

1. Students should file the *2009-2010 Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA) after January 1, 2009, and make sure it reaches the federal processor before **March 1, 2009** to be considered on time. (**PRIORITY FILING IS VERY IMPORTANT!**). This can be done at www.fafsa.ed.gov/.
2. The student will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) from the federal processor, electronically or mailed, shortly, after filing the FAFSA and JMU will start receiving FAFSA's around the middle of March.
3. If additional information is needed to "complete" a student's file, a notice will be sent to him/her. It is extremely important that students and parents respond to the request for additional information as quickly as possible. Not responding in a timely fashion can mean lost financial aid dollars, or delays in when a student receives funds.
4. Financial Aid Award Notices are tentatively scheduled to be e-mailed to incoming freshmen in April, 2009 and to returning students in June, 2009.
5. Students will respond to their Financial Aid Award Notice through their e-campus account. Instructions will be provided in the notice.

You can go to the "Forms" section of our web site at www.jmu.edu/finaid to read the *JMU Terms & Conditions for Financial Aid*. You will find a brief description of how financial aid eligibility is determined at JMU.

Approximately one half of the JMU Student Body receives financial assistance that is processed through the Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships. This equates to approximately \$90 million disbursed annually.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Information about scholarship opportunities at JMU can be found at www.jmu.edu/finaid/scholarships/. A general description of freshmen and continuing student scholarships is below.

- **INCOMING FRESHMEN:**
 1. Freshman applicants are invited to apply for merit-based awards through the Freshman Scholarship Programs. Only one application is needed for the Freshman Scholarship Programs.
 2. You can review the details for these awards at <http://www.jmu.edu/admissions/scholarships/>.
- **CONTINUING STUDENTS:**
 1. Over 1,600 current undergraduates submitted a 2009-10 scholarship application by the January 20, 2009 deadline. These students will receive consideration for scholarships awarded by our office. In July, all applicants will receive a response from us, regardless of award decision.
 2. Visit our web site at www.jmu.edu/finaid/scholarships/ for information about scholarship assistance from JMU and other organizations.

STUDENT WORK EXPERIENCE CENTER

At times, a student may need to work to secure the additional funds needed to attend college and pay for living expenses. The Student Work Experience Center is set up to help students find such employment, and strives to “enhance student learning and meet departmental student employment needs by providing meaningful work experiences.”

The following areas are housed in this office:

- Work-Study (Federal Work-study jobs, which are primarily on-campus)
- Institutional Employment (On-campus JMU employment that is not Federal Work-study)
- Off-campus employment

More detailed information about this area can be found at www.jmu.edu/stuemploy/.

SPECIAL ITEMS TO NOTE ABOUT FINANCIAL AID

- Satisfactory Academic Progress. Once students begin their college coursework they must continue to make progress towards a degree to maintain financial aid eligibility in subsequent years.
- Parents CANNOT make too much money to receive financial aid...remember, loans are considered financial aid.
- **Complete the FAFSA even if the student thinks he/she won't qualify for any financial aid.** The student may need it later due to an unexpected circumstance, and it can take weeks for a FAFSA to reach JMU from the time it is filed with the federal processor. Having it on file can speed up aid delivery, and it's FREE to apply!
- Parents and students should complete the FAFSA together.
- Students should start a “financial folder” and keep copies of all financial aid documents, and information used when completing the FAFSA in that folder.
- Financial aid is not awarded the same at every school. Deadlines can also be different.
- General information regarding financial aid can be found at www.jmu.edu/finaid.
- The *JMU Terms & Conditions for Financial Aid* document can be found under the “Forms” link at www.jmu.edu/finaid. This document explains many of the policies and programs associated with financial aid.

WHAT ELSE DOES THIS OFFICE DO?

- ❖ Money management workshops are held on campus for student groups. The workshops cover all aspects of finances as they relate to the college student. For example, credit cards, budgeting, debt management, etc.
- ❖ Several members of the staff are very involved with state, regional, and national financial aid organizations. This can range from committee/board membership to conducting presentations at conferences. This type of involvement helps the office keep current with regulations and financial aid trends, which ultimately allows the JMU student body to be served much more efficiently.
- ❖ **If you feel it would be beneficial for us to conduct a “How to complete your FAFSA” or other financial aid/money management program for your organization, then please contact Brad Barnett at barnetbd@jmu.edu or (540) 568-2894. The JMU Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships would be more than happy to do this.**

We look forward to assisting you in the financial aid and scholarship processes. Please contact us if you have any questions.

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