



Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships

Winter Newsletter
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Phone 540.568.7820 • Fax 540.568.7994 • Email fin_aid@jmu.edu • Web www.jmu.edu/finaid



If your family is experiencing financial hardships that could affect your ability to continue enrollment at JMU for the remainder of the 2009-10 school year, Madison for Keeps may be the answer. The university developed this program to address financial needs resulting from the current economic crisis. Students who meet eligibility requirements should complete a Madison for Keeps Appeal Form. [Click here to download form](#) or visit our Web site for more information. Only you, the student, can complete an appeal form. Grants are available on a first-come, first-served basis for those who qualify.

Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships

170 Bluestone Drive,
MSC 3519
Harrisonburg, VA
22807

Location:
3rd Floor Warren Hall

Web site:
www.jmu.edu/finaid/

E-mail:
fin_aid@jmu.edu

Phone:
540-568-7820

Course Registration and Timely Receipt of Financial Aid

Your enrollment status can affect the timing of financial aid disbursements. If you plan to enroll as a full-time student for the spring 2010 term, make sure your registration is complete before **December 23, 2009**. Otherwise, you may experience delays in receiving your spring aid. For financial aid purposes, JMU defines full-time status as 12 or more credits per semester for undergraduates and nine or more credit hours for graduate students.

Part-time students should notify the financial aid office as early as possible, preferably before leaving campus for the holidays, about their planned enrollment status. You can send e-mail to fin_aid@jmu.edu to notify us regarding your plans. This will allow time to make any necessary adjustments to your financial aid package and expedite the delivery of your financial aid funds for the spring semester.

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Enrollment Changes and Financial Aid Eligibility

Loan Repayment Information is Here!

December graduates, the financial aid office now offers a loan repayment Web site. Use this resource to learn more about your current loan status and your options for repayment. In addition, you can use one of the loan repayment calculators to estimate the size of your monthly student loan payments.

<http://www.jmu.edu/finaid/loanrepay.shtml>

Financial aid disbursements generally occur during the first week of each semester for students who submitted all required paperwork in a timely fashion and registered for full-time hours. Enrollment level plays a big part in determining a student's financial aid eligibility. Generally, the financial aid office bases their award packages on the expectation that students will enroll full time. However, students sometimes drop courses during the first week. When students drop to part time, their awards may change.

The financial aid office conducts an enrollment audit each semester following the add/drop period. During this audit, the office identifies those students whose enrollment status changed from full time to part time and recalculates their financial aid eligibility. If JMU must reduce financial aid funds already received by the student, then he or she may owe a bill. For spring 2010, the last day of the add/drop period for semester and first block courses is January 19, 2010. This represents the enrollment audit date for financial aid programs.

Students who receive approval to add one or more courses after the enrollment audit date cannot receive an increase in funds from some federal grant programs (i.e., Pell Grant, Academic Competitiveness Grant and SMART Grant). Therefore, for these grant programs, a student's enrollment at the end of the day on January 19, 2010 will determine his or her eligibility for that semester with no adjustments possible.

Learn more by reviewing one (hypothetical) student's experience.

Joy's Situation

At the beginning of the spring semester, the financial aid office considers Joy a full time (i.e., 12 or more hours) undergraduate.

January 7, 2010 - The financial aid office disburses all Joy's financial aid based on full-time enrollment.

January 9, 2010 - Joy drops to nine credit hours.

January 20, 2010 - Since Joy did not increase her hours to full time, financial aid recalculates her entire financial aid package based on part-time enrollment.

The Result

The financial aid office determined that Joy's disbursed funds, based on full-time enrollment, exceeded allowable limits for a part-time student. Therefore, JMU would need to reduce financial aid funds, which would result in a bill for Joy.

Refunds and Direct Deposit

Direct deposit is the fastest way to receive your financial aid refund. The Duke Dog Direct Deposit Program provides automatic deposit of your financial aid refunds into your bank account and then notifies you of the deposit by e-mail.

Learn more, including how to enroll, by visiting the University Business Office Web site.

<http://www.jmu.edu/ubo/refundsDirectDeposit.shtml>

Parents can sign up for direct deposit too!

Need a Job?

The Student Work Experience Center is here to help you. Visit their Web site or speak with a member of the SWEC team at our third floor counter in Warren Hall to learn about both on-campus and off-campus employment opportunities.

<http://www.jmu.edu/stuemploy/>

Join Us on Facebook

The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships has joined Facebook! For information regarding important updates and deadlines, please join the [JMU FAO group](#) (narrow your search criteria by organization).

Summer 2010 Financial Aid

Information about applying for summer financial aid will appear in our February 2010 newsletter. Watch your e-mail or the financial aid Web site for this newsletter. In the meantime, your first step should be filing the 2010-11 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Make sure you submit your application to the federal government early enough to ensure receipt by March 1, 2010.

2010-11 Scholarship Application Available

Each year, the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships awards a variety of scholarships to deserving students. If you are a current undergraduate, apply by **January 19, 2010** to receive consideration for many of the 200-plus scholarships awarded by the financial aid office. [Click here to download form](#) or visit our Web site for more information about JMU scholarships and private sources of funding.

<http://www.jmu.edu/finaid/scholarships/>

Please E-mail Me

You, the student, are the primary point of contact for the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. Your James Madison University e-mail serves as one of two official methods our office uses to communicate with you. (The other one is e-campus Self Service.) When using e-mail, we encourage you to utilize your JMU e-mail address as your primary account. If you currently forward Webmail to another e-mail provider, you should not use this option to send correspondence to the financial aid office. Please log in to Webmail to send an official message to us. In addition, when you submit your e-mail message, remember to include your name and your JMU student identification number. This information helps us provide better service to you.

When students use non-JMU e-mail addresses, which include forwarding Webmail to another e-mail provider, we cannot assume the message received reflects their wishes. Therefore, an unavoidable delay may result. With your JMU e-mail message, you provide an electronic signature that authorizes us to take the desired action on your behalf. Remember that you should always include your name and student identification number with any correspondence.

Communicating with Students and Parents

Most information about financial aid and scholarships goes directly to you, the student. Therefore, you cannot rely on your parents to keep track of the FAFSA priority filing date, scholarship application deadline or information our office requests to process your financial aid. Remember, you are the primary point of contact for our office.

The financial aid office has established two official methods, JMU e-mail and e-campus Self Service, for communicating with students. We encourage you to utilize your JMU e-mail address as your primary account.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Estimator

We developed this online estimator to help undergraduate students determine whether their academic progress meets the requirements to receive financial aid.

<http://www.jmu.edu/finaid/sap.shtml>

Don't Get Scammed!

Beware of private businesses that offer to assist you with applying for financial aid or scholarships for a fee. Financial aid information is available to students and parents free of charge. When in doubt, contact your financial aid office. We are here to help you.

Take Control of Your Finances

Are you familiar with creating a personal budget? Can you balance your checking account? Do you understand how credit cards work? Do you know your FICO score? If you are taking out loans to help pay for college, do you have a plan for managing your debt after graduation? We address these questions and many more in financial literacy training offered by the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships.

Visit our Web site at <http://www.jmu.edu/finaid/finliteracy.shtml>, listen to a financial literacy podcast and read about a variety of timely topics.

Get Ready to Apply for 2010-11 Financial Aid

We are approaching the halfway point for the 2009-10 school year, which means students should begin thinking about applying for financial aid for 2010-11. Beginning January 1, 2010, students can submit their 2010-11 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by going to <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>.

The FAFSA priority filing date for JMU is **March 1, 2010**. To ensure you receive priority consideration for all types of financial assistance, the federal government must receive your 2010-11 FAFSA by that date. Avoid waiting until the last minute. If necessary, you may estimate your income and make corrections later. In some cases, missing the March 1 priority filing date can reduce your chances of receiving certain types of financial aid, including state grants.

If you filed a FAFSA for the current school year, make sure it includes your current e-mail address. Otherwise, you may not receive important information from the Department of Education regarding your ability to submit a Renewal FAFSA for the 2010-11 school year. Since the Renewal FAFSA includes many of the answers that you provided on your prior year application, you will have fewer questions to answer. If you are unsure of the e-mail address on file with the Department of Education, review your 2009-10 FAFSA at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>. Make sure to update your mailing and e-mail addresses by January 11, 2010 so you will receive the Renewal FAFSA reminders from the Department of Education.

Reporting Federal Work-Study Earnings on your FAFSA

Take steps to ensure that 2009 calendar year Federal Work-Study (FWS) earnings do not affect your eligibility for need-based financial aid next year. If reported correctly on your 2010-11 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the federal processor will exclude FWS earnings when calculating your ability to pay educational expenses.

Follow these instructions when you fill out the FAFSA to record your FWS properly.

1. Determine your 2009 calendar year (i.e., January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009) FWS earnings. You can find paycheck information through JMU Employee Self-Service (J-Ess) or on your W-2 form provided by the JMU Office of Payroll Services. Employers mail W-2 forms to the home address in mid to late January.
2. Report all earnings from January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009 in question 36, the adjusted gross income box, of the FAFSA. Your AGI includes FWS earnings as well as any income from other jobs.
3. In question 44c of your FAFSA, report just your FWS earnings from January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009.

If you are interested in FWS employment during the 2010-11 academic year, indicate your continued interest by selecting option 1 or option 3 in question 31.

Note: If you had two or more jobs at JMU during the 2009 calendar year, please contact the Student Work Experience Center to receive assistance with calculating your total FWS earnings.

Financial Aid Q & A

Q: Where can I learn more about the financial aid rules at JMU?

A: You can find answers to most of your questions on our Web site at <http://www.jmu.edu/finaid/>. Start by reading "JMU Terms & Conditions for Financial Aid" in the "Forms" section of our Web site.

Q: I don't have regular access to a computer, so it's hard for me to review information on your web site, what can I do?

A: All of the information published on our Web site is available in print form as well. If you prefer paper, please contact our office.

Q: Can I access my financial aid funds to purchase my books for the spring 2010 semester?

A: Students should not count on using financial aid refunds to buy textbooks. Unexpected delays can occur. Some circumstances that may cause delays include less than full time enrollment, late registration for classes and not using direct deposit.

Q: What will happen if I just stop going to class without officially withdrawing?

A: You could fail the class and risk losing some or all of your financial aid.

Find more answers to frequently asked questions on our Web site at:

http://www.jmu.edu/finaid/wm_library/FAQ.pdf

Withdrawals and "F" Grades Can Affect Financial Aid Eligibility

Withdrawing from one class or from all of your classes within a given term can affect your eligibility for financial assistance now and in the future. Likewise, earning all "F" grades can affect your current and future eligibility. To comply with federal regulations, the financial aid office may need to reduce or cancel previously disbursed financial aid. This immediate consequence could cause you to owe the university money. For the future, withdrawing or earning "F" grades could result in your inability to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements. Students who fail to meet SAP standards cannot receive financial aid. Use our online SAP Estimator to determine whether your academic progress meets requirements.

Learn more about the consequences of withdrawal and "F" grades by reading "JMU Terms & Conditions for Financial Aid" in the "Forms" section of our Web site. View SAP requirements at <http://www.jmu.edu/finaid/sap.shtml>.

Contact the financial aid office if you have any questions about how withdrawals or "F" grades might affect you.

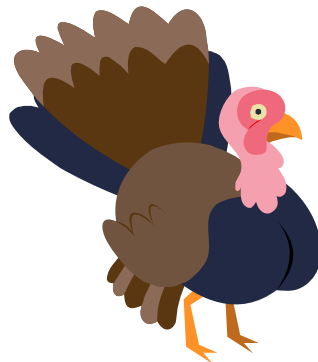
Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

All undergraduate and graduate students must meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements to receive financial aid. Federal regulations require each institution to have a SAP policy, which establishes the minimum standards for financial aid eligibility. Visit our Web site for a detailed description of JMU's requirements, and use our online SAP Estimator to determine whether your academic progress meets those requirements. The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships measures your academic progress once per year. If you are unable to meet SAP requirements, you could lose your eligibility for financial aid, including federal loans. Students may appeal denial of financial aid.

Academic progress standards for financial aid differ from those used by the university to determine your eligibility for continued enrollment. Therefore, in many cases, students denied financial aid could continue taking classes. These students would need to arrange for alternative funding to pay university charges.

Contact the financial aid office if you have any questions about how withdrawals or "F" grades might affect you.

<http://www.jmu.edu/finaid/sap.shtml>



**HAPPY
THANKSGIVING!!**