



# Financial Aid: Policy and Procedures Manual

2025-2026

Last Update on 7/14/2025

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### **Sanford School of Public Policy Financial Aid Office**

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[sanfordfinancialaid@duke.edu](mailto:sanfordfinancialaid@duke.edu)

<http://graduate.sanford.duke.edu/mpp/admissions>  
<https://dcid.sanford.duke.edu/midp/admissions/>

Office hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30AM-4:30PM

\*Financial Aid for Sanford's PhD in Public Policy is handled by the Duke Graduate School. Please refer to their manual. <https://sanford-files.cloud.duke.edu/sites/default/files/2021-06/PhD%20Handbook.pdf>

#### **Financial Aid Office Operations**

The Sanford Financial Aid Office is open and available to service students from 8:30am-4:30 pm Monday through Friday or via email at any time: [sanfordfinancialaid@duke.edu](mailto:sanfordfinancialaid@duke.edu). Emails are responded to within 24 hours.

Students are required to make appointments to meet with staff. Please visit our bookings page here: [calendly.com/sanfordfinaid](https://calendly.com/sanfordfinaid)

Office hours for advising over zoom are Monday and Thursday with availability from 10am-11:15am and Wednesday from 1pm-2:15pm If you need to book an appointment outside of that timeframe or to make an in-person appointment, please email the financial aid office directly. Student are limited to one appointment per day.

#### **SSPP Financial Aid Mission Statement**

The Sanford School's Master of Public Policy Financial Aid Office strives to provide its students with excellent individualized customer service. We provide our domestic students with financial assistance in the form of scholarships, assistantships, federal loans and/or private loans. International students, who are not fully funded by sponsors, will receive a program scholarship. They may also seek private loans if they have a U.S. cosigner or through options in their home countries.

#### **2024-2025 Academic Calendar**

<b>February 17</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b><a href="#">Registration</a> begins for all summer sessions</b>
<b>May 14</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Summer Term 1 classes begin</b>
<b>May 16</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Drop/Add for Term 1 ends (11:59 PM)</b>
<b>May 26</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Memorial Day holiday. No classes are held</b>
<b>June 11</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Last day to withdraw with W from Term 1 classes (undergraduates only)</b>
<b>June 19</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Juneteenth holiday. No classes are held</b>
<b>June 23</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Term 1 classes end</b>

June 24	Tuesday	Reading period (until 7:00 PM); Term 1 <a href="#">final examinations</a> begin (7:00 PM)
June 26	Thursday	Term 1 final examinations end
June 30	Monday	Summer Term 2 classes begin
July 2	Wednesday	Drop/Add for Term 2 ends (11:59 PM)
July 4	Friday	Independence Day holiday. No classes are held
July 28	Monday	Last day to withdraw with W from Term 2 classes (undergraduates only)
August 8	Friday	Term 2 classes end
August 9	Saturday	Reading period (until 7:00 PM); Term 2 <a href="#">final examinations</a> begin (7:00 PM)
August 11	Monday	Term 2 final examinations end (10:00 PM)
Fall 2025		
August 16	Saturday	New undergraduate student move-in day
August 17 – August 22	Sunday – Friday	New undergraduate student orientation
August 19	Tuesday	New graduate student orientation begins
August 24	Sunday	First-Year Convocation
August 25	Monday	Fall semester classes begin (8:30 AM); Drop/Add continues
September 1	Monday	Labor Day. No classes are held
September 5	Friday	Drop/Add ends (11:59 PM)
September 25 – 28	Thursday – Sunday	Founders' Weekend. Classes are held Thursday and Friday

October 10	Friday	Last day to report midsemester grades
October 10	Friday	Fall break begins (7:00 PM)
October 15	Wednesday	Classes resume (8:30 AM)
October 20	Monday	Shopping carts open for Spring 2026
October 29	Wednesday	<a href="#">Registration</a> begins for Spring 2026
November 7	Friday	Last day to withdraw with W from Fall 2025 classes (undergraduates only)
November 10	Monday	Registration ends for Spring 2026
November 11	Tuesday	Drop/Add begins for Spring 2026
November 25	Tuesday	Thanksgiving recess begins (10:30 PM); Graduate classes end
November 26 – December 9	Wednesday – Tuesday	Graduate reading period
December 1	Monday	Undergraduate classes resume (8:30 AM)
December 5	Friday	Undergraduate classes end
December 6 – December 9	Saturday – Tuesday	Undergraduate reading period
December 10	Wednesday	<a href="#">Final examinations</a> begin (9:00 AM)
December 15	Monday	Final examinations end (10:00 PM)
Spring 2026		
January 7	Wednesday	Spring semester begins (8:30 AM). A Monday class schedule is followed ( <a href="#">more info</a> ). Drop/Add continues
January 19	Monday	Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday. No classes are held

January 21	Wednesday	Drop/Add ends (11:59 PM)
February 9	Monday	Shopping Carts open for Summer 2026
February 16	Monday	<a href="#"><u>Registration</u></a> begins for Summer 2026
February 20	Friday	Last day to report midsemester grades
March 6	Friday	Spring recess begins (7:00 PM)
March 16	Monday	Classes resume (8:30 AM)
March 23	Monday	Shopping Carts open for Fall 2026
March 25	Wednesday	Last day to withdraw with W from Spring 2026 classes (undergraduates only)
April 1	Wednesday	<a href="#"><u>Registration</u></a> begins for Fall 2026; Summer registration continues
April 9	Thursday	Registration ends for Fall 2026; Summer registration continues
April 10	Friday	Drop/Add begins for Fall 2026
April 15	Wednesday	Graduate classes end
April 16 – 26	Thursday – Sunday	Graduate reading period
April 22	Wednesday	Undergraduate classes end
April 23 – 26	Thursday – Sunday	Undergraduate reading period
April 27	Monday	<a href="#"><u>Final examinations</u></a> begin
May 2	Saturday	Final examinations end (10:00 PM)
May 8	Friday	Commencement begins
May 10	Sunday	Graduation exercises; Conferring of degrees

Summer 2026		
February 16	Monday	<a href="#"><u>Registration</u></a> begins for all summer sessions
May 13	Wednesday	Summer Term 1 classes begin
May 15	Friday	Drop/Add for Term 1 ends (11:59 PM)
May 25	Monday	Memorial Day holiday. No classes are held
June 10	Wednesday	Last day to withdraw with W from Term 1 classes (undergraduates only)
June 19	Friday	Juneteenth holiday. No classes are held
June 22	Monday	Term 1 classes end
June 23	Tuesday	Reading period (until 7:00 PM); Term 1 <a href="#"><u>final examinations</u></a> begin (7:00 PM)
June 25	Thursday	Term 1 final examinations end
June 29	Monday	Summer Term 2 classes begin
July 1	Wednesday	Drop/Add for Term 2 ends (11:59 PM)
July 3	Friday	Independence Day holiday. No classes are held
July 27	Monday	Last day to withdraw with W from Term 2 classes (undergraduates only)
August 7	Friday	Term 2 classes end
August 8	Saturday	Reading period (until 7:00 PM); Term 2 <a href="#"><u>final examinations</u></a> begin (7:00 PM)
August 10	Monday	Term 2 final examinations end (10:00 PM)

## **SECTION 1: MANUAL INTRODUCTION**

### **Financial Aid Policies and Procedures**

The Sanford School Director of Financial Aid is responsible for developing policies and procedures related to financial aid for the school. These policies and procedures—as relates to the Master of Public Policy (MPP) program—are made in conjunction with that program’s Director of Graduate Studies, Assistant Dean of Academic Programs and Student Affairs, the Director of Admissions and Scholarships as well as the Director of Student Services and Program Development. All decisions regarding policies must be approved the DGS and the Assistant Dean.

The Sanford Director of Financial Aid works with the MPP Director of Admissions and Scholarships in administrating policies related to merit scholarships and assistantships awarded in the MPP Letter of Admission. Merit scholarship inquiries should be made to the Director of Admissions and Scholarships. Questions regarding assistantships can be made to either the Director of Financial Aid or to the Director of Student Services and Program Development, who works with faculty and students to create and place students in assistantships.

Updated policies and procedures for all programs are communicated through the Financial Aid sections of that programs website. New policies or changes will also be communicated through emails made directly to students, faculty, and/or staff.

### **Federal Financial Aid Updates**

The SSPP Director of Financial Aid keeps abreast of federal regulations through a variety of resources. This includes the Federal Student Financial Aid Handbook, Dear Colleague Letters, NASFAA newsletters, the IFAP website, webinars, and monthly Graduate and Professional meetings led by the Assistant Vice Provost and Director, Financial Aid.

The following operating policies are designed to assure that the Financial Aid Office is effective in carrying out its responsibilities:

1. All students seeking federal student loans must submit the FAFSA to Duke annually (School Code 002920).
2. All students seeking federal student loans must submit a Financial Aid Application to the SSPP Financial Aid Office annually.
3. All financial assistance available to SSPP students shall be administered through the MPP and MIDP Financial Aid Offices.
4. The selection of students to receive certain designated scholarships shall be submitted by the responsible staff member to the Financial Aid Office for processing. Outside student resources received by other offices (such as the Bursar's Office) must be reported to the Financial Aid Office via email or through the Financial Aid Application Form.
5. The Financial Aid Office shall maintain adequate records to ensure proper administration of aid funds. This includes ensuring that aid given is not in excess of need and/or the cost of attendance and that aggregate awards do not exceed total expenditures of funds under each program.
6. Selection of students to receive financial aid will be made without regard to age, sex, race, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or marital status.
7. Priority processing of returning student aid is given to students whose FAFSA is completed by May 1st.

## **SECTION 2: ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION OF THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE**

### **Division of Responsibility between Financial Aid and Fiscal Offices**

There exists a clear and separate division of responsibility for the administration of financial aid programs which are divided between the FAO, Student Loan Office and the Bursar/Cashier's Office. In order to maintain this division, each office is accountable for the following responsibilities.

#### **The SSPP Financial Aid Office is responsible for the following:**

- Collect supporting documentation for the determination of aid eligibility.
- Determine student eligibility for financial assistance.
- Award federal aid in compliance with laws, regulations, and policies
- Notify students of aid eligibility (loans and scholarships/grants)
- Assist students with creating personal student budgets, administration of Sanford Scholarships, federal checklist completion, FAFSA verification.
- Assist students with sponsored/external scholarship payments, private loan certification, bursar disbursements.
- Compile and complete financial aid institutional, state and federal reports
- Prepare a master list of scholarships awarded for the current year and update as appropriate.
- Fund Management (Scholarships and Endowments)

#### **The Duke Bursar's office is responsible for the following:**

- Maintain and disburse accurate bills.
- Collect payments for student accounts.
- Disburse funds to students.
- Report outside scholarships received to the FAO.

#### **The Duke Student Loan Office is responsible for the following:**

- Process school loan certification
- Process Electronic Funds Transfers to the student accounts
- Administer the Direct Loan Program

### **Records Management**

All records and conversations between an aid applicant, his/her family and the staff of the FAO are confidential and entitled to the protection ordinarily given a counseling relationship. The SSPP assures the confidentiality of student educational records in accordance with institutional, state, and federal

### **SECTION 3: FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS**

Financial aid programs which are available to students attending the Sanford School of Public Policy are listed on the Financial Aid sections of the MPP and MIDP websites. The SSPP Financial Aid Office awards federal and institutional resources listed below based on the eligibility criteria outlined.

#### **Federal Resources**

Federal Unsubsidized Loan  
Federal Workstudy  
Federal Grad PLUS Loan  
VA GI Bill/Yellow Ribbon Program

#### **Institutional Resources**

MPP/MIDP Program Scholarships  
MPP/MIDP Student Assistantships  
MPP University Scholar; Endowment Awards; Studding Student Awards  
Yellow Ribbon Match Award

#### **Federal Resource Requirements**

To be eligible to receive Federal assistance, a student must:

1. Be enrolled at least half-time (6 credit hours Fall, 6 credit hours Spring)
2. Be a U.S. citizen, U.S. national, or U.S. permanent resident or reside in the United States for other than a temporary purpose (supportive documentation may be required to verify residency or citizenship status).
3. Maintain satisfactory academic progress (3.0 GPA) in their course of study.
4. Not be in default of any loan or owe a repayment on a Federal Pell Grant, FSEOG, or State Grant.
5. Demonstrate financial need.

Federal aid is awarded in accordance with the Department of Education guidelines. Federal loans are awarded after any grants or scholarships (including outside scholarships which must be reported on the Financial Aid Application), and are applied toward any unmet cost of attendance.

Unsubsidized Stafford (\$20,500) is awarded as FAFSA information is reviewed

#### **How to request a Graduate Plus loan**

Graduate Plus loans may be requested via the Sanford School of Public Policy-2025-2026 Graduate PLUS loan request form: <https://applygp.duke.edu/register/graduateplusrequestform>

#### **Institutional Resource Requirements**

All institutional scholarships are awarded prior to the student's first semester and carried throughout the student's SSPP career. These scholarships must be applied toward tuition.

#### **MPP Awards:**

The University Scholars program is a highly selective scholarship. All applicants to the MPP Program are considered based on their admissions application. The top applicant from the MPP Program is selected for nomination. The Director of Graduate Studies, the Assistant Dean of Academic Programs and Student Affairs and the Director of Admissions and Scholarships will approve the recipient who will represent the Sanford School of Public Policy.

Stubbing Awards are issued to 2<sup>nd</sup> year MPP students who perform academically and who participate in and improve the Sanford community through their participation. They are chosen by a committee of faculty and staff members.

The Master of Public Policy does not issue any scholarship awards based on need. All scholarships are merit-based.

The Sanford School offers 20 spaces to veterans who qualify for the VA's Yellow Ribbon Program. This program requires a match of funds from the participating institution. The Sanford School has pledged to match VA awards up to \$16,000 per year per space. For more information on veteran's programs please see the Duke VA information website: [Military Affiliated Education Benefits | Office of the University Registrar \(duke.edu\)](http://military.duke.edu/education/benefits).

## **SECTION 4: STUDENT LOAN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Student loan policies and procedures are created and maintained by Duke's Student Loan office. For more information, please visit their website: <http://finaid.duke.edu/loans>.

## **SECTION 5: STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION**

The staff in the Financial Aid Office recognizes that in order to understand the complications of Financial Aid, accurate and timely dissemination of information to consumers is vital. Several policies have been implemented to ensure appropriate dissemination is achieved. The consumer information policies are developed and maintained by the main Duke campus. For more information, please contact the Undergraduate Financial Aid office: <http://finaid.duke.edu>.

### **Rights and Responsibilities of Students on Aid**

As a recipient of financial aid, there are certain rights and responsibilities of which students should be aware. These rights and responsibilities of students on financial aid are listed in the following documents:

1. The SSPP Bulletin; Program Student Handbook
2. The Financial Aid Award Notification
3. The Master Promissory Note

Students have the right to know the:

1. Financial aid programs available at the SSPP
2. Application process which must be followed to be considered for aid.
3. Criteria used to select recipients and calculate need.
4. SSPP refund and repayment policy
5. FAO policies surrounding satisfactory academic progress.
6. Special facilities and services available for the handicapped

Students are responsible for:

1. Completing all forms accurately and by published deadlines.
2. Submitting information requested by FAO staff in a timely manner.
3. Keeping the FAO informed of any changes in address, name, marital status, financial situation, or any change in student status
4. Reporting to the FAO any additional assistance from non-University sources such as scholarships, loans, fellowships, and educational benefits
5. Notifying the FAO of a change in enrollment status (adding a dual degree program)

6. Maintaining satisfactory academic progress (3.0)
7. Re-applying for aid each year.

A description of the fees for attendance is published for each program on the SSPP website. An estimated budget for the total cost of attendance is also published on the SSPP website. A link to this webpage is in the Financial Aid award letter issued to students with their offer of admission.

### **Refunds**

In the event of death, refund of full tuition and fees for the term will be granted. In all other cases of withdrawal from the university, students may have tuition refunded according to the following schedule:

- withdrawal before classes begin full refund, including fees\*
- withdrawal during the first or second week of classes: 80% refund
- withdrawal during the third, fourth, or fifth week of classes: 60% refund
- withdrawal during the sixth week of classes: 20% refund
- withdrawal after the sixth week: no refund

\*Fees will not be refunded after the start of the term.

If a student must drop a course a special fee course (music, golf, etc.) or drops a paid audit during the first two weeks of the drop/add period, a full refund may be granted with the approval of the dean. The student health fee will not be refunded. Student loans must also be returned according to a government required formula (See SECTION 13: Return of Title IV funds for information on returning loan funds). Once a withdrawal or leave of absence form is sent to the aid officer, they will notify you about the amount of funds you will need to return. Sanford fellowships are not prorated and are returned to Sanford in full.

A description of the academic programs offered at the SSPP is listed in our Bulletin and is posted on the SSPP website. Additional information may be obtained from individual departments (MPP, MIDP). Only information published, provided, or referred by financial aid office staff is valid. Any additional information should be verified with staff from the Financial Aid Office.

Student retention and completion data is gathered by the Registrar's Office.

The Student Disability Access Office provides information and assistance to students with disabilities who are in need of special accommodations. That office should be contacted for additional information.

Information concerning accreditation is listed in the SSPP Bulletin. Additional information may be obtained from the Office of the Dean.

### **Withdraws and Institutional Aid**

Aid is offered to a student under the assumption that the student will attend for the entire semester. When a student withdraws during a semester, the student is no longer eligible for the full amount of funds originally offered for that semester.

A student who withdraws before the end of the sixth week of classes is eligible for a pro-rated tuition refund as per the Duke Tuition Withdrawal Adjustment policy. The Sanford School of Public Policy will adjust any Sanford institutional aid received in a proportion equivalent to the tuition refund. For example, a student who withdraws during the second week of classes is eligible for a refund of 80% of tuition; if that student paid \$10,000 in tuition with the rest covered by Sanford institutional aid, they will receive a refund for only 80% of the tuition they paid, or \$8,000 in this example.

Duke's Tuition Withdrawal Adjustment Policy can be found on the Bursar's website in the Tuition & Fees section - <https://finance.duke.edu/bursar/TuitionFees/>.

## **SECTION 6: APPLICATIONS AND FORMS**

### **Application Process**

As federal loans are the main resource offered to domestic and permanent resident SSPP students, the FAFSA is the primary application requirement for financial aid and the federal EFC is the basis for determining financial need. Students should submit their FAFSA to Duke's code 002920.

**\*If you have filed your federal tax return the FAFSA can be completed with the IRS data retrieval.**

The FAFSA and application survey appear on the student's account as a To Do item until it has been completed.

Additional documents may be requested to complete processing of the aid request. Notifications of these additional required documents are sent to students by email. Below is a list of documents which may be required.

1. Federal Tax Transcript – students selected for federal verification and not able to use the IRS data retrieval must request an official federal tax transcript from the IRS.
2. Verification Worksheet – a document which collects updated information submitted on the FAFSA. Students who are selected for verification must submit a federal verification worksheet by the **last day of classes** of the final semester of enrollment in the academic year. Dependent students must obtain a parent's signature. Independent students must obtain a spouse's signature, if applicable. An Aid Administrator may request a Verification Worksheet to resolve conflicting documentation.
3. Citizenship/Residency Verification - a document which collects proof that the student has citizenship status eligible for financial aid purposes. For eligible noncitizens, Document Verification Request Form G-845 will be required, along with copies of the student's Department of Homeland Security documentation. Please book an in-person appointment with the financial aid office or request a notary version of the form.
4. Income Certification Statement – a document which verifies that a student did not file a tax return.
5. Certification of Separation – a document which verifies that a married student is separated and living separately from his/her spouse.
6. Employment Verification - a letter which verifies a student, spouse, or parent's change in employment status. This letter must be written by the current or former employer, whichever is appropriate.

\*These documents will be made available for the student upon being selected for verification, you can also email the financial aid office for the forms as well.

### **Application Review Procedure**

Financial Aid Applications are reviewed by the Director of Financial Aid who updates the student's checklist in PeopleSoft to reflect receipt of the application and notes any outside awards or special circumstances.

The Director of Financial Aid runs a query in AY for students within a specified program and admit term who have been accepted. These are matched with FAFSAs through the Duke PeopleSoft system and awards are posted for students who have both items in their file.

The Director of Financial Aid runs a query for students who are selected for verification. The student is

emailed notifying him/her of the missing documents, with links to obtain the forms.

If student has submitted FAFSA and we did not receive it in our system, the FAFSA record (ISIR) is requested through the Department of Education via FAA Access. where/how to send the information. If the student has made an error on the FAFSA, the student is instructed to go to [Home | Federal Student Aid](#) and correct this information.

### **Deadlines**

All students are asked to complete their FAFSA by no later than May 1 to allow for timely financial aid processing.

### **Document Assignment, Collection, and Tracking**

Financial aid documentation is kept on a secure drive accessible by the financial aid office. FAFSAs are stored electronically in PeopleSoft. PeopleSoft checklists are utilized to track receipt of financial aid application materials. Students are notified of required documents via email.

A small percentage of students are selected for federal verification and/or require additional information, and the Director of Financial Aid will email the student to inform him/her of the reason for the request and any required forms or next steps needed by the student. A PeopleSoft checklist and communication is generated through an automated PeopleSoft process when a student is selected for federal verification or when a C flag appears on the FAFSA (such as to confirm citizenship, selective service registration, etc.).

Once additional information is received, the Director of Financial Aid finalizes the award(s) and includes the information in the student's folder. If the information is incomplete, the student is notified by the Director of Financial Aid via phone or email. Once federal verification is completed, the flag indicating verification status is flipped accordingly in PeopleSoft. The Director of Financial Aid runs queries periodically for any students with Verification status at Required or Pending. The Officer reviews the information and follows-up with the students. When all required documents are received, the student is considered complete and ready to be packaged. The Director of Financial Aid gathers all documentation and saves the information to the students slate file.

### **Pre-Award Appeals**

We have limited scholarship funds available at the school, appeals of the scholarship award decisions are not applicable. Triggers for appeals typically involve involuntary loss of employment by the student or spouse, high medical expenses, or child or elder care

## **SECTION 7: FILE REVIEW**

### **Verification**

Verification is the process of confirming the accuracy of student reported data on financial aid applications. Only a portion of the student population is selected for verification. Students are notified that they are selected for verification on the FAFSA Student Aid Report (SAR). In addition, the student is notified via email that he/she has been selected for verification.

The SSPP Financial Aid Office verifies only those applicants identified by the Department of Education (DOE) or if there is a discrepancy or a condition which is unusual and warrants investigation. SSPP systematically verifies only those data elements required by the federal government. However, the Director of Financial Aid may request additional information if further investigation is needed to resolve a discrepancy.

The SSPP Financial Aid Office is required to resolve any discrepancies discovered in a student's file, regardless of whether the student is selected for verification. The Director of Financial Aid will request additional information from the student to resolve the discrepancy.

For students selected for verification, an automated process assigns a PeopleSoft checklist and email communication to the student. The Director of Financial Aid sends an email to the student as well as a reminder of the specific items needed and to let the student know the information may be mailed, faxed, or scanned and sent electronically. **All verification requirements must be satisfied before aid can be disbursed.**

### **Verification Exclusions**

In the circumstances below, student verification is not required. The Director of Financial Aid documents the specific reason within PeopleSoft if any of the following applies:

1. A student who does not receive Title IV funds.
2. A student who is eligible to receive only unsubsidized loans.
3. Student was selected for verification after ceasing to be enrolled at the school and after all Title IV aid has disbursed.

### **Data Elements to be Verified and Required Documentation**

#### **Adjusted Gross Income and Taxed Paid**

The adjusted gross income, federal taxes paid, and most untaxed income is verified through IRS Data Retrieval, which imports tax information from the IRS directly to the FAFSA. This may be completed during the initial FAFSA filing or as a FAFSA correction. If a student cannot or will not use IRS Data Retrieval, s/he must provide an IRS tax transcript for the student and/or spouses, if applicable.

If a student did not file a tax return, s/he must submit all W-2s as well as a signed verification worksheet listing any income for which a W-2 was not received.

### **Number in Postsecondary Institutions**

Number of family members enrolled at least half-time in postsecondary institutions is verified by comparing the Verification Worksheet to federal data. Discrepancies must be corrected before further processing. If the student is the only family member enrolled at least half-time in postsecondary institutions, number in college does not need to be verified.

### **Food Stamps**

If a student or spouse (if applicable) indicated receipt of food stamps, the student must provide this information as part of the signed Verification worksheet. The Director of Financial Aid may also request documentation from the benefits agency or other documentation to resolve any conflicting information or address any concerns regarding the accuracy of student submitted information.

### **Child Support**

If a student or spouse (if applicable) indicated receipt of child support, the student must provide this information as part of the signed Verification worksheet. This includes the amount paid, name of child(ren) supported, source of support, and to whom it was paid. The Director of Financial Aid may also request documentation such as a copy of a separation agreement or divorce decree or copies of checks or money order receipts to resolve any conflicting information or address any concerns regarding the accuracy of student submitted information.

### **Notification to Students**

Students are notified of the results of verification by email, either through a financial aid award notification or revision communication generated through PeopleSoft or as a personal email sent from the Director of Financial Aid.

### **Update and Correction Procedures**

There are three situations whereby a Director of Financial Aid may update student information. When students notify the aid office of an allowable update, the Officer may recalculate the student's Expected Family Contribution and the new figure may be used to award financial aid. Updates may occur for: Dependency status (Dependency status may not be changed for previously certified Stafford Loans, and may not be changed due to marital status)

### **Family size**

Number of family members enrolled in a postsecondary institution. If corrections are needed after verification is completed, the student will be required to update the incorrect FAFSA information. This will result in an additional FAFSA being received. Once received, verification will be completed on the updated FAFSA information.

### **Database Matches, Reject Codes, & C-Codes Clearance**

For database match and c-codes on the FAFSA, an automated process assigns PeopleSoft checklists for any missing documentation and sends an email to the student notifying them of this requirement. The Director of Financial Aid would also follow up with an email to the student, providing additional explanation. Financial aid awards are not final until the appropriate documentation is received and verified. Common FAFSA messages and required documentation to clear the message and proceed with a final financial aid award are listed below.

### **Social Security Administration (SSA)**

The student is required to submit a copy of the social security card, confirming the name and SSN, or to correct the FAFSA if errors were made during the initial FAFSA filing.

### **Department of Homeland Security (DHS)**

If the Department of Homeland Security could not verify the student's citizenship, the student must submit additional information. US citizens or permanent residents must submit a copy of a US passport, birth certificate, or naturalization certificate confirming citizenship status. The checklist item is completed by the Officer and a copy of the documentation is stored in the student file. Eligible non-citizens whose A-number did not pass secondary confirmation by Homeland Security must bring unexpired immigration status verification documentation in person to the Financial Aid Office. The Director of Financial Aid completes form G-845 and makes a copy of the front and back of student documentation. This information is sent to the Department of Homeland Security for review. No financial aid is awarded until we have received confirmation from the Department of Homeland Security regarding student's eligibility for federal financial aid or until **15 business days** after the date the documentation was sent, whichever occurs first.

### **National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS)**

If the student's FAFSA indicates that s/he is at or near the federal aggregate loan limit or may be in default or owes an overpayment, the Director of Financial Aid pulls the student's NSLDS record and retains this in the student's file. If the student is at or near a federal aggregate limit, the financial award is completed accordingly, to either omit any funding from the pertinent federal program or with a reduction from the standard award amount. If the student is in default or owes an overpayment, the Officer contacts the student to request additional information before completing the financial aid award. Questions regarding the student's eligibility for federal loans are reviewed by the Student Loan office.

The student regains eligibility based on the timeline in the chart below (Please note - if the student is convicted for both possession and sale, the longer period applies)

### **Review of Subsequent ISIR Transactions**

Queries are utilized to identify students with additional federal subsidized Stafford eligibility due to subsequent ISIR transactions. Audit queries are used to identify students who are in a federal over award situation.

## **SECTION 8: STUDENT BUDGETS**

Student budgets are an important component in the financial aid process. Standard student budgets reflecting the SSPP average student population cost of attendance at a modest, but adequate standard of living is used to award financial aid. Special budget considerations are approved through the Professional Judgment Budget Increase process by the Director of Financial Aid on a case-by-case basis.

### **Budget Components**

The Director of Financial Aid collects information on an annual basis to prepare standard budgets by academic program and cohort/admit term. The budget components are as follows:

#### **Tuition and Fees**

Tuition rates are approved by the Board of Trustees on an annual basis in late February. SSPP-specific fees are approved with tuition in February. All other University fees are approved by June. Tuition and fees information is available on the SSPP Financial Aid website under the Cost of Attendance link. Loan fees are reviewed on an annual basis using the most recent data available.

#### **Books and Supplies**

A survey of Sanford students is conducted each spring term on the costs of books and supplies.

#### **Room and Board**

Room and board are based on a survey of average utilities and rent for two-bedroom apartments in the Duke University area. This amount is used for all Duke University graduate and professional student budgets.

#### **Transportation**

Transportation costs are based on a student living locally and commuting to class five days a week. This amount is used for all Duke University graduate and professional student budgets. For the MPP Hertie study abroad program: Participants may include additional airfare expenses. Receipts are required.

#### **Miscellaneous Expenses**

Miscellaneous expenses include costs for clothing, toiletries, recreational, and other personal expenses. This amount is used for all Duke University graduate and professional student budgets.

#### **Health Insurance**

All students are required to have health insurance. Students are given the option to purchase insurance through Duke University. These rates are set annually by Duke Student Health and varies based on the age of the student and applicable spouse or dependent coverage.

#### **Loan Fees**

Loan fees are calculated into the cost of attendance. Students who utilize federal student loans are charged an origination fee for borrowing. These fees are calculated by Federal Student aid and are evaluated annually.

#### **Budget Amounts**

The Sanford School estimated Direct Costs for the 2024-2025 aid year:

MPP Tuition and Registration Fees \$61,458

MIDP Tuition and Registration Fees \$61,458

MNSP 20 Month Program Tuition and Registration Fees \$34,755

MNSP 12 Month Program Tuition and Registration Fees \$49,650

MPA 18 Month Program Tuition and Registration Fees \$48,000

MPA 15 Month Program Tuition and Registration Fees \$60,000

Sanford Student Activity Fee \$50/semester

#### **2025-2026 estimated Duke Fees Include**

Student Medical Insurance Program (fall only fee): \$3,752

Student Health Fee: \$503/semester.

Graduate Student Activity Fee (GPSC): \$19/semester

Graduate Recreational Facilities Fee: \$194.50/semester

Graduate Student Services Fee: \$12.5 per term

Transcript Fee (one-time fee, first year): \$120

All student budgets include a standard allowance for housing, food, transportation, books, loan fees and miscellaneous expenses, as detailed below:

#### **2025-2026:**

Rent/Housing: \$13,842 per aid year.

Food: \$4,320 per aid year.

Books/supplies: \$660 per aid year.

Transportation: \$2,088 per aid year.

Miscellaneous: \$4,374 per aid year.

Health insurance is included as a standard budget item for both programs is based on the average age of

students in the program (24-34).

Student Medical Insurance Program (SMIP)-\$3,752 per aid year.

### **Special Budget Considerations**

Upon request, the Director of Financial Aid may review, and if appropriate, adjust a student's budget. Students must submit supporting documentation. The student would need to submit a **Professional Judgement Budget Increase form via SLATE: <https://applygp.duke.edu/register/BudgetIncrease>**

**Examples of changes to standard budgets include, but are not limited to:**

1. Large out of-pocket medical expenses – medical expenses incurred by the student during the months of enrollment that exceed the normal allowance provided by the Department of Education (generally about 2% of income) may be added to the student budget with appropriate dollar-specific documentation.
2. Childcare - the cost of day care with dependent children may be added to a standard budget with appropriate dollar specific documentation. Maximum allowance is \$5000 per aid year.
3. Additional educational expenses – educational expenses required for the degree and that are not included in our budget or exceed our allocation may be considered with dollar-specific documentation. This may include one-time purchase of a computer, books and supplies that exceed the allowance, participation in the Hertie program or for dual degree students, participation in other study abroad programs where credits count towards the degree being sought.

\*We cannot consider budget adjustments for living expenses to increase federal loan eligibility. However, you can submit dollar-specific documentation of additional living expenses in order to borrow from a private student loan.

### **Budget Waivers**

If a student receives a resource toward a budget item, the amount must either be included in the financial aid award as an outside resource (such as tuition benefits or stipends), or the budget item must be removed (such as a student living in military housing rent-free). Students are required to report these resources to their aid officer.

## **SECTION 9: AWARDING AND PACKAGING FINANCIAL AID**

### **Packaging Philosophies**

The MPP program offers admitted students (without full tuition/fee paying sponsors) a program scholarship. This scholarship is merit-based (made without regard to financial need) and no financial documentation is needed to be considered for a program scholarship.

U.S. Citizens and permanent residents are offered financial aid (scholarships, assistantships and loans) to cover the full cost of attendance (via the FAFSA) this includes a Grad PLUS loan offered for graduate students enrolled at least half-time to meet any gap between institutional/federal resources and total cost of attendance. The student may seek an outside private loan, which the Director of Financial Aid will certify and post in the student's account. International students without the full support of a sponsor will be awarded a scholarship but will be required to find outside resources to cover the remainder of tuition and fees on their own.

The Financial Aid office works in conjunction with the Business Office, the Admissions Office, the Student Services Offices, and their Program Directors to develop policies and procedures related to institutional scholarship awarding. The Dean of the Sanford School, the Associate Dean of Finance and Administration, the Director of Graduate Studies, the Director of Admissions and Scholarships, and the

Associate Dean of Academic Programs and Student Affairs have oversight of all financial aid policies and procedures to ensure they are aligned with the school's mission.

Packaging guidelines and philosophies are evaluated by the Director of Financial Aid on an annual basis. Merit-based scholarship awarding procedures are reviewed at least annually, and often prior to the beginning of each application cycle, by the Director of Admissions and Scholarships.

Students selected for verification are contacted regarding supplemental information needed before a financial aid award may be finalized.

The SSPP financial aid packaging policy is to help up to the total cost of attendance, so there is not any gap. Cost of attendance is defined as tuition and fees plus a standard allocation for books and living expenses.

Outside resources are considered first, then institutional scholarships/grants, guaranteed workstudy or assistantships, followed by federal loans (Unsubsidized Stafford then Grad/PLUS). If scholarship, grants, assistantships and federal loans do not cover the total cost of attendance or if the student is not eligible for federal aid, the remaining gap may be covered by a private loan. The student is responsible for seeking any outside loan opportunities.

The Director of Financial Aid pulls the student folder and verifies receipt of the Financial Aid Application and any other documentation that the student may have submitted. If the student is selected for verification or if additional information is needed, the Officer emails the student. If the file is complete, the officer reviews the FAFSA and application.

FAFSA information is used to verify eligibility for federal aid, and federal loan annual fiscal limits are monitored automatically. Outside scholarships or tuition benefits are manually awarded, as are Sanford's merit-based scholarships, guaranteed workstudy/assistantship positions.

The PPS packaging plan is then selected for automated awarding of loan funds. The packaging plans used by the SSPP financial aid office is listed below. The packaging plan awards the Unsubsidized Stafford, then Grad/Plus loans.

We have an automated process that runs weekly in PeopleSoft to assign and send an initial financial aid award notification email to students. For matriculated students, the award information is also available for view on the student's account.

### **Packaging Other Educational Resources**

Outside scholarships and grants are considered as a resource against federal need and cost of attendance. Chapter 31 & 33/VA benefits are applied toward the cost of attendance but are not considered against federal need. External award and over award queries help us monitor and ensure compliance against over awards and overpayments.

### **Summer Awards**

The MPP program does not offer summer term credits, therefore no funding is available for outside summer coursework or to aid with living expenses while completing the required summer internship. Students are encouraged to seek assistance from the Career Services Office if funding is needed for support to complete the required internship.

### **Award Package Notification**

All students receive an automated email created by PeopleSoft when an award or change is made to the student's financial aid package. Students also receive a second email reminder from the Director of

Financial Aid when self-service is turned on and they have access to their award panels.

Each student receives an award letter annually that includes: a link to their program cost of attendance, breakdown of individual scholarships and assistantships awarded by SSPP, and financial aid office.

contact information (phone number, email address, website). Information is included regarding the process for receiving loans, namely that they must be accepted through the student account and the required paperwork for approval and disbursement.

All active, matriculated students can view their full financial aid panel on their student account. This lists the aid by individual source, specific cost of attendance, and award amount broken down by term. This includes any issued loans—federal and/or private. Award messages are included, describing federal sources and links to federal loan requirements.

### **Packaging Appeals**

Students may submit documentation for appeals based on change to financial income, such as involuntary loss of employment by the student or spouse or based on additional cost of attendance, such as childcare or computer expenses. Appeals are reviewed by the Director of Financial Aid.

Appeals to cost of attendance would only increase maximum Grad/PLUS or private loan eligibility. Appeals to income or other FAFSA data elements may not change aid eligibility. In fact, at the Graduate Level it is HIGHLY UNLIKELY that any change in the SAI will change a student's loan eligibility or packaging. The outcome of the appeal and additional aid eligibility (if applicable) is communicated to the student by email and through an adjustment to the financial aid award, if applicable. A revision email would be sent to the student with instructions to view the information on Storm. The appeal process is as follows:

1. Request for appeal is communicated to the Director of Financial Aid.
2. Additional information and documentation required is communicated to the student.
3. Completed appeal is reviewed by the Director of Financial Aid.
4. Any applicable changes to FAFSA, cost of attendance, and/or financial aid award are made by the Officer.

Student is emailed regarding the result of the appeal. Professional Judgment is documented in PeopleSoft.

### **Award Package Revisions**

The Director of Financial Aid updates student budgets and revises financial aid awards as needed. The Director of Financial Aid runs over award queries periodically to determine over awards and overpayments. The awards are then reviewed, and any necessary adjustments are made. If loan reductions are needed, they will be made in the following order: private, Grad/PLUS, Unsubsidized Stafford.

Queries are run at least weekly from the start of the semester until the week after drop/add. Queries are also run at the end of the fiscal year as a final clean up. Revisions are made as quickly as possible after the query is run (typically the same day). The student is emailed notification of the change and referred to ACES for specific award details.

### **Over awards & Overpayments**

The Financial Aid office runs queries on a monthly basis to check for students who are currently over awarded. Over awards are rare and can be due to a change in the student's program, due to new external funding/scholarships or to receipt of a subsequent FAFSA.

An adjustment is made to the student's financial aid award, reducing private loans first, then Grad/PLUS,

then Unsubsidized Stafford loan. If possible, the over award is resolved by reducing future loan disbursements. If the additional resources must be applied toward tuition only, other funds that are specific to tuition may need to be reduced first—this includes the Sanford scholarship and any guaranteed assistantship. Before returning funds already disbursed and creating a balance on the student account, we will review the budget to determine if there are additional expenses that warrant an increase to the Cost of Attendance. If loan disbursements have already been made and funds must be returned, the Student Loan office is notified of the funds that need to be returned. The student is emailed regarding the change to the award and the reason.

## **SECTION 10: PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT**

Students may submit documentation for professional judgment based on change to financial income, such as involuntary loss of employment by the student or a spouse or based on additional cost of attendance, such as childcare, study abroad or computer expenses. Professional judgments are reviewed by the Director of Financial Aid. Professional judgment requests to budget items would increase maximum Grad/PLUS or private loan eligibility. Professional judgment requests may result in no change in aid eligibility. Professional judgment decisions are noted in PeopleSoft and emailed to the student. Documentation for PJ decisions are placed in the student's financial aid student file. A revision email would be sent to the student if applicable, directing the student to view the information on ACES.

The professional judgment process is as follows:

1. Request for professional judgment is communicated to the Financial Aid office.

Professional judgment form is submitted by the student: <https://applygp.duke.edu/register/BudgetIncrease>.

2. Professional judgment request is reviewed by student's Director of Financial Aid.
3. Any applicable changes to FAFSA, cost of attendance, and/or financial aid award are made by the Officer.

The student is emailed regarding the result of the appeal. Professional Judgment is documented in PeopleSoft.

## **SECTION 11: DISBURSEMENTS**

Financial aid disburses to the student's account no sooner than 10 days prior to the start of classes. Awards made during the semester disburse overnight through an automated process through PeopleSoft. For information regarding loan disbursement policies and procedures, please refer to the [Student Loan Office](#).

## **SECTION 12: SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

New Federal regulations that went into effect July 1, 2011, require that Sanford Financial Aid Office establish and implement a policy to measure whether students applying for and/or receiving financial aid are making satisfactory academic progress (SAP) towards a degree. This regulation applies to all students applying for aid, whether financial aid has been previously received. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is the successful completion of degree requirements according to established increments that lead to awarding the degree within published time limits. There are three measurements that are used to determine eligibility: Credit Hour Requirement, Grade Point Average and Maximum Time Frame. Not meeting these requirements may result in loss of all financial aid.

### **Monitoring of Academic Progress**

Students' progress will be reviewed after grades are finalized at the end of each semester (fall, spring, summer). A determination of eligibility to receive financial aid for subsequent enrollment periods will be made at this time. Although Sanford will send a notification to the student, the student is fully responsible for monitoring their own academic progress as it relates to financial aid eligibility. The student should review their grades on an on-going basis and compare it to the standards set forth in this

SAP policy to determine if they are meeting (or failing to meet) the established criteria. The SAP policy for Title IV aid recipients is aligned with the school's academic policy, and more information regarding academic policy may be found in each program's handbook.

Evaluations will be completed in a timely manner; however, the next term may be in progress at the time we are able to notify students of their ineligibility. Should the student be concerned that they may not have met the requirements, they may contact the Sanford Financial Aid Office. Students will be notified via their Duke e-mail account if they have failed the measurement. Students may appeal the decision. The appeal form and directions are located on our website. There are three parts to the measurement, and they are detailed by program below.

#### **Graduate Students:**

1. *Qualitative:* Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
2. *Quantitative:* Students must complete at least 67% of the credits attempted. Failing, withdrawals or incomplete grades will not be counted as successful completion. Only an incomplete that has been changed to a passing grade can be added to the number of hours completed for the semester of the original registration. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Financial Aid Office once an incomplete grade has been changed to a valid grade. Transfer credits and repeated coursework will be included in the number of credits attempted and the number of credits completed.
3. *Maximum Timeframe:* Master's Students must complete the required course work within 3 years from matriculation. Students who exceed the maximum length of time to graduate will not receive a warning semester and be automatically ineligible for financial aid.

#### **SAP Warning**

Students who fail to meet the Qualitative or Quantitative guidelines at the end of the semester/payment period of review are automatically placed on financial aid warning status for one semester and notified of this status. The student continues to receive federal financial aid for this semester. If at the end of the semester/payment period, the student is now meeting all Satisfactory Academic Progress standards, the warning status is removed, and the student is now in good standing.

#### **SAP Probation and Appeal**

Process Students who are on a Warning status and do not meet all the Satisfactory Academic Progress standards at the end of the next semester/payment period of review lose federal financial aid eligibility until they are making progress in all categories (see Regaining Financial Aid Eligibility section below). Students who lose eligibility for financial aid may appeal the decision by following the procedures outlined below.

Those wishing to submit an SAP appeal must indicate mitigating circumstances that occurred during the semester in question, that could not have been anticipated prior to that period, and that adversely affected their ability to successfully complete their required coursework. To appeal, a student must submit a letter of appeal to the Financial Aid Office. The appeal letter should include the following:

- Mitigating circumstances that prevented the student from meeting the requirements of academic progress (i.e., death in the family, student illness or injury, other personal circumstances). Mitigating circumstances do not include withdrawing from classes to avoid failing grades, pursuing a second major or degree, etc.

- Documentation that supports the student's basis for the appeal
- Steps the student has taken/will take to ensure future academic success. This plan should outline the student's academic goals for each period (e.g., number of credit hours and/or cumulative GPA) that will enable the student to meet the requirements of academic progress at a specified future point in time.
- Anticipated graduation date

In most cases, the SAP Appeals Committee will render a decision within two weeks of receipt of a fully completed appeal. All decisions of the SAP Appeals Committee are final. Notification of the decision will be sent via the student's Duke e-mail account.

If the SAP appeal is approved, financial aid will be awarded for the next semester on a probation period. An approved Academic Plan may be required as a condition of the appeal. An Academic Plan must be formulated with your advisor. Term and Academic Plans and/or other conditions of appeal approval will be included in the notification letter.

Students who fail to meet the requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress for their probationary semester or do not complete the requirements of their academic plan (if applicable) will again be ineligible for financial aid and subject to the appeal process. Any subsequent appeal must include information regarding new extenuating circumstances or what has changed since the last appeal.

Students who meet the requirements for academic progress for their probationary semester will resume good standing and again be evaluated at the conclusion of the following semester/payment period. If the SAP appeal is denied, financial aid will be cancelled. If you have been denied aid, please review the section Regaining Financial Aid Eligibility below.

### **Regaining Financial Aid Eligibility**

Students denied financial aid after completing the appeal process or failing to meet their Academic Plan can regain full eligibility for financial aid by:

- Raising their GPA to the qualitative standard outlined above by degree.
- Successfully completing coursework that will meet or exceed the minimum required for quantitative standard outlined above by degree.
- Students who have reached their maximum time frame are not able to regain eligibility except in the case of a successful appeal of the maximum time frame requirement.

Students who are ineligible to receive financial aid may use one or more of the following payment options while attempting to regain eligibility: student's own resources, Duke Tuition Management Payment Plan, and/or Alternative/Private Educational Loans. Students who have taken the necessary measures to regain eligibility for financial aid must contact the Financial Aid office immediately upon doing so and apply for Reinstatement of Eligibility. The student's academic performance will then be reviewed, and if all required SAP criteria is met, full financial aid eligibility will be reinstated, effective the following semester.

### **SECTION 13: RETURN OF TITLE IV FUNDS**

Return of Title IV Funds calculations are approved by, and policy is maintained by Undergraduate Financial Aid Office. *Changes to federal law may affect this policy.*

## Process Overview & Applicability

### Steps in Federally Mandated Process

1. Determine the withdrawal date. If the student officially withdraws, the withdrawal date is the date SSPP determines the student either began the withdrawal process, or the date the student provided official notification to SSPP, in writing or verbally, of his or her intent to withdraw. If the student does not provide official notification of his or her intent to withdraw, the withdrawal date will be determined as the date SSPP became aware the student was not attending class. If a student does not return from an approved leave of absence, the withdrawal date is the date SSPP determines the student began the leave of absence. If a student takes a leave of absence that does not meet the requirements of an official leave of absence, the withdrawal date is the date the student began the leave of absence.
2. Calculate the percentage of enrollment period completed. The percentage of enrollment period completed is determined by dividing the total number of calendar days in the enrollment period into the number of calendar days completed in that period as of the withdrawal date. The total number of calendar days in a payment period includes all days (including weekends) within the period. Scheduled breaks of at least five consecutive days are excluded from the total number of calendar days in the enrollment period and the number of calendar days completed in that period.
3. Calculate the amount of Title IV aid earned. If the withdrawal date is equal to or greater than 60 percent of the enrollment period (semester), the student has earned 100 percent of the Title IV funding disbursed for that semester. If the withdrawal date is less than 60 percent of the semester, the amount of Title IV funding the student has earned is calculated by using the federally mandated calculation to determine the percentage of Title IV funds that have been earned by the student for that semester. This percentage is then applied to the total amount of Title IV funding that was disbursable for the semester as of the withdrawal date.
4. Determine the amount of Title IV aid unearned. The amount of Title IV funding the student has not earned is calculated by subtracting the amount of Title IV funding the student earned from the total Title IV funding disbursed/or was disbursable.
5. Allocate unearned aid. SSPP is required to return the lesser of the total amount of Title IV funds the student has not earned or an amount equal to the charges if the total amount to be returned exceeds the charges incurred by the student. Charges include tuition and fees and can include other education-related expenses assessed by SSPP.
6. Unearned Title IV funds must be returned within 45 days of the student's withdrawal. SSPP will return the student's unearned Title IV funding on his or her behalf and consider the returned funds as the student's debt to SSPP. Students must plan with the Bursar's office for repayment of the debt. Consequences of non-payment include blocks on re-enrollment, transcript and diploma holds, and student account placement with Collections. Title IV loan amounts to be returned by SSPP will be credited to the appropriate programs in the following order: Unsubsidized Federal Stafford loans, Federal Grad PLUS loans received on behalf of the student. If amounts to be returned remain after repayment of all outstanding loan amounts, the remaining excess must be credited to any amount awarded for the semester for which a return of funds is required. Federal Work Study is excluded from this policy.
7. Communication of return of funds. Students for which a portion of Title IV aid must be returned will receive a communication from the Financial Aid Office sent to their Duke email address indicating an adjustment has been made and funds have been returned on the student's behalf. This communication further instructs any resulting balances on the student account must be paid by the student and arrangements for payment must be made directly with Duke's Bursar.

## **Withdrawal Date**

### *Policies*

The withdrawal date is determined by the student's program director and is the date the student began the withdrawal process, or the date the student provided official notification to their director, in writing of his or her intent to withdraw. If the student does not provide official notification of his or her intent to withdraw, the withdrawal date will be determined as the date the program director became aware the student was not attending class. If a student does not return from an approved leave of absence, the withdrawal date is the date the program director determines the student began the leave of absence. If a student takes a leave of absence that does not meet the requirements of an official leave of absence, the withdrawal date is the date the student began the leave of absence. Students wishing to return from a leave of absence must receive approval from their program director.

### *Procedures*

Program directors provide withdrawal dates to the Registrar and an official attrition notice is originated and emailed to appropriate departments.

## **Formula Calculation**

### *Policies*

Upon receipt of an attrition notice from the Registrar, the Financial Aid Office performs a return of Title IV funds calculation using the web based application provided by CPS Online:

<https://faaaccess.ed.gov/FOTWWApp/faa/faa.jsp>.

The school calendar is determined by:

1. Calculating the days in the term/semester, from the first day of classes to the last day of finals.
2. Weekend days are included in the total number of days.
3. Breaks of five or more days are excluded.
4. When counting the number of days attended, the date of withdrawal is counted as a day attended.

Institutional costs are used to determine the amount of refund due from the school versus the student but do not change the amount of aid earned by the student. These costs refer to the original amounts charged to the student for educational expenses for the term of withdrawal and not pro-rated amounts used by the University based on the date of withdrawal. Required fees are included. Health insurance charged through the University can be included, but parking permits, parking tickets, flex account deposits, and similar non-academic expenses are not included. Aid disbursed or aid that could have been disbursed is determined by:

1. Counting the aid accepted for the term/semester in question only.
2. Aid that could have been disbursed refers to aid accepted by the student and for which all paperwork/application materials and federal verification have been completed by the student.
3. If loan fees are taken out, the net amount disbursed or that could have been disbursed is used.

### *Procedures*

The attrition notice is received by the Director of Financial Aid. The Officer performs the Return to Title IV calculation on the web. The Officer saves a copy of the attrition notice to "Comments" in PeopleSoft. The calculation is then sent to the Undergraduate Financial Aid Office for review. Once the calculation has been approved, the Officer adjusts the student's aid according to the calculation and notifies the Student Loan Office to return any loan funding within 45 days of the date of student withdrawal. An email is also sent to Duke's Bursar to notify them of the adjustments made to student aid. Once the calculation has been completed, a pdf copy of the calculation and attrition notice are placed in the student's financial aid file.

## **Post-Withdrawal Disbursements**

### *Policies*

If an amount of Title IV aid a student has earned is greater than the amount of Title IV aid that has been disbursed, the difference is treated as a post-withdrawal disbursement to the student. Any post-withdrawal disbursement must be made within 180 days of the date the institution determines that the student withdrew. Aid for which all requirements (paperwork/application materials and federal verification) have been satisfied is disbursed to the student account 10 days prior to the start of classes. Refunds of applicable aid are provided to the student immediately after the drop/add date for each semester.

### *Procedures*

If a student has *undisbursed aid for which all requirements have been satisfied*, a Return to Title IV calculation must be performed to ensure that funds for which a student was eligible and had earned at the time of withdrawal but had not been disbursed are offered as a post-withdrawal disbursement. The institution must disburse any amount of a post withdrawal disbursement of grant funds that is not credited to the student's account as soon as possible but no later than 180 days after the date it is determined the student withdrew. A post-withdrawal disbursement of Title IV funds does not require permission from the student. Written notification will be sent to the student within thirty (30) days of the date it is determined that the student withdrew, and confirmation received before making any post-withdrawal disbursement of loan funds. The notification will include:

1. A request for confirmation.
2. A confirmation deadline of fourteen (14) days or more.
3. The type and amount of the loan funds it wishes to credit to the student's account or disburse directly.
4. An option to accept or decline the post-withdrawal disbursement.
5. A notice of obligation to repay loan funds.
6. A notice the student may not receive, as a direct disbursement, loan funds that the institution wishes to credit to the student's account unless the institution agrees to do so.
7. A post-withdrawal disbursement must be made from available grant funds before available loan funds.

## **Returning Unearned Funds**

### *Policies*

The amount of Title IV funds the student has not earned is calculated by subtracting the amount of Title IV funds the student earned from the total Title IV funding disbursed/or was disbursable. Unearned Title IV funds must be returned to the applicable Title IV program within 45 days of the date of the students' withdrawal. If the amount earned is greater than the amount that has been disbursed, the difference is treated as a post-withdrawal disbursement to the student. Unearned funds are returned to the Title IV programs within 45 days of the student's withdrawal by SSPP's Financial Aid Office and the Student Loan Office on behalf of the student and consider the returned funds as the student's debt to Duke.

### *Procedures*

Students are notified via their Duke e-mail account that, as a result of withdrawal and pursuant to the Return to Title IV calculation, adjustments have been made to their aid package which may create a balance on the student account. Students must make arrangements with the Bursar's office for repayment of the debt if returned funds create an account balance. Unearned Title IV funds are returned to the Title IV programs in the following order:

1. Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans
2. Federal Grad PLUS/Parent PLUS loans

## **SECTION 15: TITLE IV FRAUD**

### **Student Fraud**

In reviewing reports, appeals, or in other secondary review of files (see SECTION 7: FILE REVIEW for more Information), discrepancies may arise. Discrepancies in student application materials (i.e., income, citizenship, name, SSN, signatures) must be investigated and resolved. To do so, the Financial Aid Office will contact the student to request additional information and documentation. If, in the Financial Aid Officer's judgment, there has been intentional misrepresentation, false statements, or alteration of documents which have resulted or could result in the awarding or disbursement of funds for which the student is not eligible, the case shall be referred to the Assistant Dean of Academic Programs and Student Affairs, the Director of Graduate Studies and the program director, for possible disciplinary action.

The Assistant Dean, the DGS and the program director will review the student's aid file with the Director of Financial Aid and if the decision is made by the committee to pursue the possibility of denying or canceling financial aid, the Officer will contact the student to set up an appointment. If the student does not make an appointment, the Director may:

1. Not process a financial aid application until the situation is resolved satisfactorily.
2. Not award financial aid
3. Cancel financial aid.
4. Determine that financial aid will not be processed for future years.

Students who willfully submit fraudulent information will be investigated to the furthest extent possible. All cases of fraud and abuse will be reported to the proper authorities. After investigating the situation, if the Officer believes there is a fraudulent situation, he/she will refer all information to the Department of Education's (ED's) Office of Inspector General (OIG). The student may also be referred to the SSPP judicial process.

### **Institutional and Third-Party Fraud**

Duke University's compliance policy, including how reports of suspected fraud are handled, may be found through Human Resources: <https://hr.duke.edu/policy/compliance/> Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), nonfederal employees who report waste, fraud or abuse connected to the use of ARRA funds may not be discharged, demoted or otherwise discriminated against because of his or her disclosure.

## **SECTION 16: AUDITS**

All audit policies and procedures are maintained by the [Undergraduate Financial Aid Office](#)

**Appendix:****DUKE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY****SCHOLARSHIPS AWARD MANUAL****CURRENT SYSTEM/FUNCTIONALITY**

The School of Public Policy Business Office provides financial management and oversight of the SSPP scholarship awards. This includes final determination of scholarship awards, reporting on all scholarship awards (both internal and external), and fund management. The Development Office of the SSPP has oversight over the use of endowment funding and is responsible for notifying the students of their award and the person(s) who should be thanked for the award.

The Business Office Financial Analyst & the Director of Advancement Services work closely with the SSPP Financial Aid Office in awarding scholarships and endowments to the students. The Financial Aid Office is responsible for keeping the students informed of new scholarship opportunities (both internal/institutional and external).

Due to sensitive information included in Endowment files, they are kept secure by the Development and Business Offices.

**Determination and initiation of scholarships/awards**

Types of awards, and requirements, based upon degree status.

***PhD***

Not included in current Duke SSPP scholarship management system as awards/payments are made by Graduate School. Close coordination with PhD Program Office and Business office, as needed.

The only requirement of students for SSPP Program scholarships are that the student must be degree-seeking and the student cannot be receiving full-funding from an outside source. Dual Degree Scholarships are awarded only in the students first full year of study with their Sanford Program. Any outside scholarships are applied to a student's aid packaging FIRST. Sanford scholarships may be used ONLY for tuition and fees. If the student receives an external award, that when added to their Sanford scholarship, totals more than the total cost of tuition and fees, the Sanford Scholarship will be reduced to meet but not exceed that amount.

**Workstudy Positions/Assistantships:**

Each spring the Duke Financial Aid Office provides the Sanford School with a notice containing the amount of federal work study funds that will be allocated to the Sanford School for the upcoming year. This amount is always insufficient to cover all assistantship positions guaranteed in its annual award/admission notices. The gap is filled by MPP/MIDP program funds. Workstudy positions are assigned to students packaging to determine eligibility for the federal funds. Eligible students are then randomly selected to receive funding from either federal funds or program funds. All student's ineligible for federal funding, who are guaranteed positions, will receive positions funded by program funds.

Guaranteed Assistantships are assigned in the student's annual award/admission letter. All students are eligible to apply for any additional vacancies through their program director. The program director assigns assistantships to qualified individuals based on the student's submitted assistantship application, their availability, and program need. Generally, a student will receive \$4,000 for completion of this assistantship. Assistantships are assigned by term in the financial aid panel BUT they are paid through the payroll system in four monthly payments in the term served.

### **Authorization and Initial Processing of Awards**

Each spring the Sanford Business Office approves an estimated MPP program scholarship budget and admissions model. The model and budget are created by the Director of Admissions and Scholarships, with approval of the Director of Graduate Studies and the Business Office. The MPP Financial Aid Office is responsible for making sure the scholarship received matches the program/partnerships selected on the application and that the scholarship is allowable after considering all external funding. Award Letters are issued from the Admissions Office, and all are approved by the Director of Admissions and Scholarships and the Director of Graduate Studies. The scholarships are posted in ACES by the Director of Financial Aid after the student matriculates into the program.

### **Notification of Scholarship Award to Student**

- Award letter – Generated in PeopleSoft, as an online document. An email notification is sent out by Commend to let the applicants know when the Award letter has been posted in ACES. The

### **MPP Assistantships/Special Awards Authorization and Award Processing**

#### **Assistantships:**

- All 2 Year MPPs who are US Citizens or Permanent Residents will receive a guaranteed assistantship worth \$4000 in their admission award letter. The FAO verifies whether the student is eligible for federal work study funds.
- The MPP Director of Student Services and Program Development notifies students via email to complete applications for these assistantships. Her email includes blank application along with instructions on how to complete it.
- Upon receipt of applications the Director of Student Services places students in positions based on their ranking of selections, their qualifications, their availability, and program need.
- The Director of Student Services prepares an Excel worksheet listing the students, their pay amount, and the accounts to be debited (workstudy, program funds).
- Any vacancies remaining may be applied for by any MPP students (including dual degree and international students).
- Prepare award packet. The process/steps are the same as the need-based awards with following exceptions:
- The assistantship will be renewed for the second year based on student's academic performance in year one of the program.

### **Special Scholarships/Awards (Ex. Stabbing Awards)**

- The Sanford Business Office provides the MPP Aid Office with a budget for all special scholarship awards. The Director of Student Services and the DGS discuss the academic performance of students as well as their participation level in the program. Students excelling in both areas may be selected for special scholarships to be used towards tuition and fees in year two of their program. MPP FAO reviews the financial record of the students recommended for the award and ensures that the students qualify and that the maximum funding level is not exceeded.
- A notification email is sent to the students by the Director of Graduate Studies congratulating them on their selection.
- The FOA posts the award on the financial aid panel in the student account and sends the student an email at completion and notifies the student of any changes that occurred to their packaging as a result.