FINANCIAL AID & SCHOLARSHIP SERVICES

The mission of the Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarship Services is to improve access to higher education by providing comprehensive financial assistance and information to all students and the NMSU-A community. Although primary responsibility for educational costs rests with the student and his/her family, NMSU-A, the federal government, and the state of New Mexico all contribute to assist students pursuing higher education.

The Financial Aid Office administers an extensive program of grants, scholarships, and loans. The awarding of grants and loans is based on need, while the awarding of scholarships is based mainly on academic ability and, in some cases, financial need. Assistance in the form of work is available through the Federal College Work-Study Program and the New Mexico Work-Study Program.

Students applying for financial aid must complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) designed to determine, in accordance with state and federal guidelines, the difference between what the student and/or family is expected to contribute and the cost of attending NMSU. Among the factors that determine the family’s Expected Family Contribution (EFC) are:

1. annual adjusted gross income as reported to the Internal Revenue Service;
2. savings, stocks, and/or bonds;
3. other assets in the form of a business, farm or real estate;
4. nontaxable income and benefits; and
5. student’s prior year income and assets.


Please refer to the NMSU-Alamogordo, Financial Aid and Scholarship Services web site for more information on available financial aid. A complete listing of programs and policies is available at http://nmsua.edu/student-services/financial-aid.

General Eligibility Requirements

To receive financial aid you must demonstrate that you are qualified to obtain education by:

- Having a high school diploma or a recognized equivalent such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate or
- Completing a high school education in a home-school setting approved under state law.

If you were enrolled in college in an eligible program or career school prior to July 2, 2012, you may show you are qualified to obtain a higher education by:

- Passing an approved ability-to-benefit test (if you don’t have a diploma or GED, a college can administer a test to determine whether you can benefit from the education offered at that school);
- Completing six credit hours or equivalent course work toward a degree or certificate (you may not receive aid while earning the six credit hours)

- Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a regular student working toward a degree or certificate in an eligible program.
- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen (state funded scholarships are available to undocumented students).
- Have a valid Social Security number. If you don’t have a Social Security number, you can find out more about applying for one at www.ssa.gov (http://www.ssa.gov).
- Must be meeting satisfactory academic progress (SAP).
- Sign a statement on the FAFSA certifying that you will use Federal student aid only for educational purposes.
- Sign a statement on the FAFSA certifying that you are not in default on a federal student loan and that you do not owe money back on a federal student grant.
- Register with the Selective Service, if required.

Financial Aid Awards

All financial aid awards are based on information provided by the student and/or parents, availability of funds and eligibility requirements. Any award may be revised based on changes in enrollment, cost of attendance, application of graduation, family contribution or failure to meet satisfactory academic progress. Withdrawals or reductions in enrollment may affect an award or any future awards. Financial Aid will not pay for audited courses or some repeats.

Federal Direct Subsidized Loans: This is a loan program for eligible undergraduate students who demonstrate financial need. The U.S. Department of Education pays the interest on a Direct Subsidized Loan while the student is enrolled in school at least half-time.

Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans: Loans that are made to eligible undergraduate and graduate students that do not demonstrate financial need. Unlike other federal loans, interest accrues while the student is attending school.

Repayment of a Federal Direct loan begins six months after graduation or six months after enrollment drops below 6 credits or less than half time for undergraduate students.

Students receiving a subsidized or unsubsidized Federal Direct Loan, must complete an online entrance counseling session before NMSU will issue the funds. In addition, students must complete an exit interview upon graduation or withdrawal from the university.

Federal Perkins Loans: A school-based loan program for undergraduate and graduate students with exceptional financial need. Under this program the school is the lender. A Perkins Loan must be repaid according to Federal Guidelines. Repayment begins nine months after graduation or nine months after enrollment drops below 6 credits for undergraduate students.

Grants: The Federal Pell Grant is a federal grant available to undergraduate students with documented financial need. Pell Grants range from $593 to $5,920, though these figures are subject to change each year. If a Pell Grant is insufficient to pay educational expenses, the student may be eligible to receive other types of aid, including a Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG) or Leveraging Education Assistance Partnership Program Grant (LEAP), and/or other miscellaneous grants. These grants are awarded to undergraduate students who show exceptional financial need. For more information, contact University Financial Aid and Scholarship Services or visit the
Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress

Federal regulations require that financial aid recipients meet certain academic standards to be eligible for federal financial aid. To ensure that financial aid recipients are making satisfactory academic progress, academic transcripts are reviewed at the end of each term to determine eligibility for the next term. All terms of attendance are reviewed, including periods in which the student did not receive financial aid. All transfer credit hours are taken into account when satisfactory progress is reviewed. The Financial Aid SAP standards are not the same as NMSU’s Academic Standards of Progress criteria.

Elements of Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress:

- **Qualitative Progress**: Undergraduate students must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 (a C- average).
  
  
  - Grade point values are: A+ / A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, B+ = 3.3, B = 3.0, B- = 2.7, C+ = 2.3, C/ C- = 2.0, D+ / D = 1.0, F = 0.
  
  
  - Grades of I, CR, RR, PR, NC, W, AU are not calculated in the GPA.
  
- **Completion Rate**: Students must complete a minimum of 70 percent of all coursework (registered credit hours) attempted at NMSU. Any course with a grade of withdraw (W), incomplete (I), repeats (RR), failure (F), audit (AU), or no credit (NC) is not considered completed coursework. Repeated courses are included in the calculation.
  
- **Maximum Time Frame**: Undergraduate students must complete their program within 150 percent of the published length required by the program. Students who have reached the maximum allowable time will be suspended from receiving financial aid. Limited developmental/remedial hours are excluded from this calculation. Total attempted hours including repeated courses and transfer coursework are included in the student’s maximum time frame calculation.

  - Recipients of financial aid grants and loans who drop credits or withdraw may be required to return all or a portion of awarded Title IV funds. Further information regarding the return of Title IV funds is available on the NMSU web site at http://fa.nmsu.edu/resources/return-of-title-iv-funds/.

**Financial Aid Warning**: “Warning” is a status assigned to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress at a school that evaluates satisfactory academic progress at the end of each payment period and/or term, and chooses to allow students who fail its progress standards to continue to receive aid. If the student has not returned to satisfactory standing after this additional semester, he or she will be suspended from further financial assistance until the satisfactory progress standards are met.

**Financial Aid Suspension**: Students are suspended from receiving financial aid if they do not meet satisfactory academic progress standards. Students on financial aid suspension will not receive any form of federal or state financial aid (grants, loans, work-study). Financial aid eligibility is reinstated when all standards of satisfactory progress are met.

**The Appeals Process**: Students suspended from financial aid may appeal the suspension if there are mitigating circumstances affecting their progress. Students who would like to appeal the suspension must submit an appeal form, available at: http://nmsua.edu/student-services/financial-aid/scholarships/.

Financial Aid Services

- **Transfer credit hours** are taken into account when satisfactory progress is reviewed. The Financial Aid SAP standards are not the same as NMSU’s Academic Standards of Progress criteria.

Financial Aid Warning: “Warning” is a status assigned to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress at a school that evaluates satisfactory academic progress at the end of each payment period and/or term, and chooses to allow students who fail its progress standards to continue to receive aid. If the student has not returned to satisfactory standing after this additional semester, he or she will be suspended from further financial assistance until the satisfactory progress standards are met.

Financial Aid Suspension: Students are suspended from receiving financial aid if they do not meet satisfactory academic progress standards. Students on financial aid suspension will not receive any form of federal or state financial aid (grants, loans, work-study). Financial aid eligibility is reinstated when all standards of satisfactory progress are met.

The Appeals Process: Students suspended from financial aid may appeal the suspension if there are mitigating circumstances affecting their progress. Students who would like to appeal the suspension must submit an appeal form, available at: http://nmsua.edu/student-services/financial-aid/. They must also submit all required documentation to University Financial Aid and Scholarship Services. A committee will review the appeal and may grant reinstatement of financial aid based on mitigating circumstances that directly contributed to deficient academic performance. Appeals are evaluated on a term-by-term basis. All appeals, including relevant documentation, must be submitted by the semester deadline based on the current semester of enrollment. A student may appeal the termination of eligibility only twice during his or her career at New Mexico State University.