

# 2026-2027 Financial Aid Facts

Graduate and Doctoral Programs  
Starting Summer 2026, Fall 2026, or Spring 2027



## How do I apply for Financial Aid?

1. Apply for a FSA User ID at StudentAid.gov. This will act as your electronic signature.
2. File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at StudentAid.gov. If your first term starts on or after May 1, file the FAFSA for the upcoming academic year. Eastern's school code is 003259.  
*For example, if your first term starts May 19th, 2026, you would file the 2026-2027 FAFSA.*
3. Complete the Master Promissory Note and Entrance Counseling for the Federal Direct Loan at StudentAid.gov. You will use your FSA User ID to sign into the website.

## What happens next?

Based on the results of your FAFSA and your full acceptance into the University, we will process an estimated Financial Aid package for you on your my.Eastern.edu account. Your aid package will show your financial aid eligibility for each reporting term for the financial aid year (Summer 1 & Summer 2= Summer Reporting Term, Fall 1 & Fall 2= Fall Reporting Term, Spring 1 & Spring 2= Spring Reporting Term). In some instances, we may need to request additional information from you. If you are missing any paperwork, an email will be sent to your **Eastern email account** with instructions on how to view Required Documents using my.Eastern.edu. After ALL of your documents are received and you are registered for classes, your financial aid eligibility will be finalized.

## What types of Financial Aid are available?

Aid	Award Range	Criteria
Institutional Awards	Amounts determined by Admissions	-Check with your program recruiter or enrollment counselor to see what award(s) are applicable to you
Federal Direct Loans (Yearly)	<b>Teaching Certification &amp; Certificate Programs:</b> Up to \$5,500 Subsidized + \$2,000 Unsubsidized + \$5,000 Unsubsidized <i>(for Independent students only)</i>  <b>Masters, Professional, &amp; Doctoral Programs:</b> Up to \$20,500 Unsubsidized	Subsidized – the government will pay the interest on your loan while you're in school; eligibility for Subsidized Loans is based on the results of the FAFSA  Unsubsidized – you are responsible for the interest which accrues from the first date of disbursement to the school
Graduate PLUS Loans	Amount determined by student application and approval by the Department of Education	- Available to Masters & Doctoral students only that have previously borrowed a Federal Loan at Eastern for the same program - Application is online at StudentAid.gov
Private Alternative Loans	Amount determined by student application and lender approval	- Available to any student - We have a preferred lender list at ELMSelect.com. Please note: you are not required to use a lender on the preferred lender list.
Outside Scholarships	Amount determined by outside scholarship organization	- Available to any student - We have a list of outside scholarship opportunities: eastern.edu/outside-scholarships

## Glossary

**Financial Aid-** Financial aid includes scholarships, grants, and loans and is added to your financial aid package.

**Subsidized Direct Loan-** The Federal Government will pay the interest on this loan while you attend school. Only students who are pursuing a certificate can be considered for Subsidized Loan funds.

**Unsubsidized Direct Loan-** Interest will accrue on this loan while you attend school. You have the option on paying the interest throughout the school year, or paying the interest when you later enter repayment.

**Disbursement or Disbursed-** These words are used when financial aid (including grants, scholarships, and loans) are sent to the school. The Student Accounts Office will receive the financial aid and then disburse it to your student account.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How much will I have to pay out of pocket?

Our tuition and fees vary by program and course- you can view the full tuition and fees schedule online at [eastern.edu/tuition](http://eastern.edu/tuition). Every student is billed on a per credit basis, not the full cost of the program up front. Students can then use financial aid and/or a payment plan to pay their bill.

### What is considered full-time and part-time enrollment?

Students who take 6 credits per reporting term are considered full-time. Students who take 3 credits per reporting term are considered part-time. Students who enroll less than full-time will have their loans prorated based on their enrollment level using the following calculation:

Number of credits in the reporting term divided by the number of credits equal to full-time enrollment for the year multiplied by the annual loan limit

Example: 3 credits in Summer; 18 credits= Full-time yearly enrollment; Annual Loan Limit= \$20,500  
 $3/18 = .1667 * \$20,500 = \$3,417$ - Amount the student can receive for 3 credits in Summer

### When will my financial aid be applied to my bill and when will I get a refund?

Each reporting term (summer, fall, and spring) has one disbursement date after all the add/drop periods have concluded for the particular reporting term. All financial aid will be disbursed on the scheduled disbursement date for each reporting term assuming you have met all the criteria for the financial aid. If that results in a credit on your bill, the Student Accounts Office will then start the refund process, which typically takes 10 business days from the disbursement date. We strongly recommend that students sign up for eRefund on their myEastern account under the Student Accounts link.

### I've borrowed Federal Loans before; can I still borrow more loan funds?

We recommend that all students log into [StudentAid.gov](http://StudentAid.gov) and navigate to the Loan Borrowing section to view their borrowing history. This will show you how much you borrowed up to this point as well as who is currently servicing your loans. If you are starting a new program at Eastern, you cannot borrow a Graduate PLUS Loan effective July 1, 2026. Also effective July 1, 2026, students starting in a new graduate or doctoral program will be held to the new graduate student lifetime borrowing limit of \$100,000. The exception is Master's in Divinity students who will be held to the new professional student lifetime borrowing limit of \$200,000.

### I have a question about my bill. Who do I call?

The Student Accounts Office is responsible for billing you each term, applying financial aid to your Eastern student account, sending refunds, and helping to set-up payment plans. Student Accounts can be reached at 610-341-5831 or via email at [student.accounts@eastern.edu](mailto:student.accounts@eastern.edu).