

Texas A&M University-Commerce
Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships
A Guide to Financial Aid

In this document you will find essential information regarding the following important financial aid topics:

- ✓ Accepting Your Financial Aid Award
- ✓ Student Loan Entrance Counseling and Master Promissory Note (MPN)
- ✓ Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (Plus Loan)
- ✓ Authorization Schedule (Dates) of Financial Aid to Student Accounts
- ✓ Satisfactory Academic Progress
- ✓ How Dropping a Class Affects Your Financial Aid
- ✓ How Withdrawing From All Classes Affects Your Financial Aid

ACCEPTING YOUR FINANCIAL AID

Once you have received your award notification, you must accept or decline your financial aid package. At <https://leo.tamu-commerce.edu> enter your student ID and Pin number. Click on 'myleo.' Click on 'financial aid,' then 'award.' Next, click on 'accept award offer,' then select aid year and submit. Next to each award, a drop down box will give you the option to 'decide later,' 'accept/partial amount,' or 'decline.' If you want to accept the full amount of all awards, click 'accept full amount all awards.' Click 'submit decision' when you have made your choice.

Please be advised, financial aid will not be credited to your student account until you accept your financial aid offer.

STUDENT LOAN ENTRANCE COUNSELING AND MASTER PROMISSORY NOTE (MPN)

The Texas A&M University-Commerce Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships requires all students that have never received student loans at this institution (Example: freshman, transfer etc.) to complete an Entrance Counseling Session before students can receive loans. To meet this requirement for the Entrance Counseling, you must complete the online session at: <https://www.dl.ed.gov/borrower/CounselingSessions.do?cmd=initializeContext>. You must also complete a master promissory note (MPN) at: <https://dlenote.ed.gov>. You must fulfill the entrance counseling and MPN requirement before your student loan(s) will credit to your student account.

PARENT LOAN FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS (PLUS LOAN)

If the financial aid award includes a Plus award and your parent is interested in applying, your parent can complete a Parent PLUS Loan by visiting <https://lbw.tgslc.org/LBW/start.do>.

Also, if you have been awarded a PLUS, the funds from that loan will not be available unless your parent completes and submits the application in accordance with "TG Loans by Web." The funds from the Plus Loan will first be applied to your tuition, fees, room and board, and other university charges.

If any loan funds remain, you (the student), will receive the amount as a check or direct deposit, unless the parent authorizes the amount to be released to you (the student) by contacting Pat Talley (Bursar’s Office) in writing or by email at pat_talley@tamu-commerce.edu .

REGARDING YOUR FINANCIAL AID

1. Financial aid grants and scholarships are based on full-time enrollment. If you fail to enroll full-time, your aid will be adjusted accordingly.

2. Accepted financial aid awards will be automatically applied to your student account for the purpose of paying your tuition and fee bill based on the estimated dates below.

3 If you are a first time freshman there is a 30 day delay on Stafford Direct Loans prior to crediting to your student account. Also, if you are only attending one semester within the academic year, your award will be credited in two (2) payments.

4. If you change your mind about attending Texas A&M University-Commerce, please notify the Registrars office to cancel your classes, the Bursars Office to cancel your tuition and fee bill, and the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships to cancel your financial aid package.

AUTHORIZATION DATES OF FINANCIAL AID TO STUDENT ACCOUNT

Types of Aid	Fall Semester 2009
Grants & Scholarships	August 21
Perkins Loan	August 21
Texas Be-On Time Loan	September 9
Stafford Loan – 1 st yr Freshman	September 30
Stafford Loan for all other Classifications	August 21
Students Who Only Attend Fall 2009 Semester have 2 payments	August 21 October 26

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

In order to be awarded or receive any financial aid, a student must be accepted to the University, in good academic standing, be enrolled in credit courses leading toward a degree or teaching certification, and maintain “Satisfactory Academic Progress” in the course of study being pursued.

The Higher Education Amendment Act of 1965, as amended, mandates institutions of higher education to establish a minimum standard of “Satisfactory Academic Progress” for students receiving financial aid. A&M-Commerce makes its standard applicable to all federal, state and institutional financial assistance programs for the purpose of maintaining a consistent policy for all students receiving financial aid.

To make Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), students must meet all of the following standards:

- 1. Academic Standards 2. Maximum Time Frames 3. Enrollment Status**

Academic Standards

Students must maintain a cumulative GPA minimum requirement at the end of each academic year for all credit hours attempted at A&M-Commerce: Undergraduate Freshman must have a 1.8 cumulative G.P.A. at the end of the first academic year; Undergraduate Sophomore through senior level must have a 2.0 cumulative G.P.A.; Graduates must have a 3.0 cumulative G.P.A. If the cumulative G.P.A. drops below the minimum requirement, the student will no longer be eligible for financial aid.

Maximum Time Frames

The number of credit hours a student attempts may not exceed 150% of the number of credit hours required for graduation in his or her program of study, as published in the University catalog. If the published number of hours required for graduation is 120, a student may not attempt more than 180 credit hours ($120 \times 1.5 = 180$) and continue to receive financial aid. All periods of enrollment must be considered, even those for which the student did not receive financial aid as well as hours transferred in from another school. If the number of attempted hours reaches 150% of the hours required for graduation, the student will no longer be eligible for financial aid.

Students will be limited to the following number of attempted hours to complete their degree or certification program:

Undergraduate Degree
180 attempted hours

2nd Undergraduate Degree
45 attempted hours

Master's Degree
54 attempted hours

Teacher Certification
45 attempted hours

Doctoral Degree
120 attempted hours

Attempted hours include all registered hours per semester whether or not the student earns a grade or receives credit. The following are considered hours attempted, but not completed:

- a) "F" grades for undergraduate students
- b) "D" or "F" grades for graduate students
- c) "W" or withdrawal from courses
- d) "DP" dropped passing or "DF" dropped failing grades
- e) "DS" dropped satisfactory or "DU" dropped unsatisfactory grades
- f) "I", incomplete, "IP", in progress, or "X" incomplete grades
- g) "U" unsatisfactory grades
- h) All transfer hours

Completed hours include all semester hours for which the student earns a grade:

- a) "A" through "D" grades for undergraduate students
- b) "A" through "C" grades for graduate students
- c) "S" satisfactory grades
- d) All transfer hours completed

Enrollment Status

For each academic year (Fall/Spring/Summer) a student who receives financial aid must successfully complete a minimum of 67% of all attempted course work. If the number of completed hours drops below 67% of attempted hours, the student will no longer be eligible for financial aid.

Examples:

- a) If a student attempts (registers for) 30 credit hours in an academic year, he or she must complete a minimum of 20 credit hours ($67\% \times 30 = 20$) in order to make SAP for the year.
 - b) If at the end of the second year a student has attempted 60 credit hours, he or she must have completed a minimum of 40 credit hours ($67\% \times 60 = 40$) to be making SAP.
- Note: All partial credit hours will be rounded to the nearest hour

Review Policy

The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (OFAS) will review the progress of each financial aid recipient for SAP at the end of each spring semester. Student records will be reviewed to ensure that the following criteria are met:

- * Cumulative G.P.A. of 1.8 or higher (freshman undergraduates)
- * Cumulative G.P.A. of 2.0 or higher (sophomore-senior undergraduates) or
- * Cumulative G.P.A. of 3.0 or higher (graduates).
- * Successful completion of at least 67% of all attempted course work for all periods of enrollment (cumulative), even those for which the student did not receive financial aid.
- * Total attempted hours do not exceed 150% of the published length of the program of study.

Financial Aid Termination

In the event the student does not meet the requirements for SAP, he or she will be placed on Financial Aid Suspension. This means that the student will not be eligible for any type of federal, state or institutional aid until he or she returns to satisfactory academic progress.

Conditions for Reinstatement

Students whose eligibility for financial aid has been suspended may appeal the decision in writing to the Office of Financial Aid if they had extenuating circumstance(s) that led to their unsatisfactory progress. The Financial Aid Director will notify the student in writing of the decision. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Financial Aid Director, then the final option for the student is to appeal to the Financial Aid Appeals Committee (must be within 10 calendar days of notification of denial by the Financial Aid Director). The student must request in writing that they would like their appeal to be reviewed by the Committee. This

request must be submitted to the Office of Financial Aid. The Chair of the Financial Aid Appeals Committee will notify the student in writing of the decision.

A student will only be allowed to submit an appeal for review twice as an undergraduate and twice as a graduate student.

To appeal for the reinstatement of financial aid eligibility, complete and submit the Request for Appeal Form. A completed form must include:

- * A letter from the student documenting the extenuating circumstance(s). For example, personal illness, medical problems, death in the family, etc. This letter should provide a detailed explanation of the situation. Documentation must be provided to substantiate the extenuating circumstance(s).
- * If the student has exceeded the maximum time frame of 150% of the number of credit hours required for graduation in his or her program of study, as published in the University catalog and is appealing based on a change of major, he or she should state the reason for the change and indicate the number of hours remaining to be taken in the new major. The student must also have his or her Department Head and Academic Advisor complete a 150% Worksheet which indicates the number of credit hours required for the major and the number of hours remaining. Appeal will not be reviewed without submission of this form.

Students who have been placed on Financial Aid Suspension because they do not meet the G.P.A. or Enrollment Status requirements may do the following if they decide not to appeal, or if their appeal is not approved:

- * Students may attend the next semester without financial aid.
- * If at the end of that semester the student meets the SAP requirements, they may submit a request to have their aid reinstated for the next and subsequent semesters for that award year only.

Students will be reviewed again at the end of the spring semester to determine if they meet the SAP requirements and eligibility for aid will be reviewed during the regular review process.

HOW DROPPING CLASSES OR WITHDRAWING FROM ALL CLASSES AFFECTS YOUR FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY.

A student who receives financial aid and withdraws from the University may be required to repay all or part of the aid awarded. An application for withdrawal from the University must be initiated in the Office of Registrar <<http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/registrar/withdrawl.asp>>

As part of this withdrawal process, students are required to secure approval from the Financial Aid Office. The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships will determine if the student must repay all or part of the aid awarded.

Calculation of repayment is made at the time of withdrawal by determining the amount of aid the student was awarded, the amount of awarded aid the student earned, and ultimately the amount of awarded aid the student did not earn that must be returned to the aid program(s).

The following steps are used to calculate the amount that must be returned to the aid program(s):

Determination of the withdrawal date.

Determination of the amount of aid the student earned. This is done by multiplying the % of the period of enrollment that has been completed (or 100% once the student completes 61% of the enrollment period) x the aid that was disbursed and/or could have been disbursed as of the date of withdrawal.

Determination of the amount of aid the student did not earn. This is done by subtracting the "earned amount" from the aid disbursed as of the date of withdrawal.

Determination of the amount of aid the University must return. This is the amount that is equal to the total institutional charges for the payment period x the % of the aid that was unearned.

Determination of the amount of aid the student must return. This is the amount that is equal to the aid received by the student for non-institutional expenses x the %

Special rules that apply to the return of UNEARNED aid include:

The University must return the amount of unearned aid that is equal to the total institutional charges for the payment period x the % of the aid that was unearned.

In order to satisfy the amount the University must return to the aid programs, a combination of the following resources may be used - aid not yet disbursed to the student, the student's refund as determined by the official refund schedule as posted by the Office of the Registrar <<http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/registrar/withdrawl.asp>> and an additional amount to be repaid by the student.

The student must return the balance of the unearned aid less the amount the University returned.

The student's share of loans to be returned may be repaid in accordance with the terms of the loan.

The student's share of the grants to be returned is divided in half. Excess funds will be returned in the following order: Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loan Program; Subsidized Federal Stafford Loan Program; Federal Perkins Loan Program; Federal PLUS Program; Federal Pell Grant Program; Federal SEOG Program; Other Title IV Aid; Other State Aid; and Miscellaneous Aid.

The policy to return funds due to withdrawal may be modified at any time without prior notice in order to comply with state and federal guidelines.