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## Welcome Benedictine Eagle!

The Office of Financial Aid is pleased to provide the following information about your **Estimated** offer eligibility for the **2025-26** academic year. This Estimated offer lists the type of BU scholarships; offered federal grants, state grants, federal work-study and/or offered federal direct student loans with the total amount for each type of assistance. This document serves as an informational supplement to the ESTIMATED financial aid offer notification and is intended to assist you with understanding your estimated offer.

In order to provide you with an **Official** financial aid award offer notification, you will be required to submit outstanding verification documentations to the Office of Financial Aid. The financial aid office will inform you of the outstanding verification documents via your email address.

Please review this information with your **Estimate** offer notification carefully. Be sure to regularly check your BU email account for important messages from the Office of Financial Aid.

**Cost of Attendance** – The Office of Financial Aid uses an average cost of attendance budget to calculate educational costs. Federal regulations require the university to set a limit on the amount of aid the student can receive. This means the student's total financial aid offered—i.e. scholarships, grants, loans, work-study and other resources—cannot exceed the student's cost of attendance budget. The cost of attendance typically represents the academic year—two semesters enrolled full-time in each semester with living arrangements (on campus, off campus or with parents). The student's financial aid offer cannot exceed the university's cost of attendance budget minus the Federal's Student Aid Index (SAI).

In your Cost of Attendance budget are both Direct and Indirect Costs associated with your educational expenses.

**Direct Costs** – These charges are billed directly to the student and are paid directly to Benedictine University.

- **Tuition** – is a direct cost billed by the Business and Finance Office to all students upon registration. A student's tuition rate is based on their academic program, enrollment and admitted term.
- **Standard Student Fees** – are directly billed to all students upon enrollment. *There are **additional fees** associated with specific academic programs, i.e. science majors.*
- **Housing and Food** – This direct cost is determined on the student's choice of living arrangements.

**Indirect Costs** – are expenses are not charged directly to the student's Benedictine account.

- **Books, course materials, equipment and supply** – any related educational expenses.
- **Off Campus living arrangements** – both housing and food expenses not provided by university.
- **Transportation** – any related commuting expenses
- **Personal** – any self-maintenance expenses
- **Loan processing fees** – are assessed by the federal government. The federal government will deduct the fee from the loan before the any loan funds are disbursed.

These costs are the most common expenses that students may come across during their enrollment. For further reference is a [worksheet](#) is provided for budgeting purposes only.

**Federal Direct Loans** – Federal Direct Loans are low-interest loans offered by the U.S. Department of Education for students and parents to utilize in effort to help finance the cost of education at a post-secondary institution. A loan is money that is borrowed and must be paid back with interest.

Federal Direct Subsidized Loans are based on financial need. The federal government subsidizes the loan by paying any accrued interest while the student is enrolled at least half-time.

Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans are low interest loans that are not based on financial need. The student is responsible for paying the interest from the date the loan is disbursed; however, a borrower may choose to defer these payments while they are in school and enrolled at least half-time.

Federal Direct loans are placed in an offered status and require the student to take additional steps for those loan funds to be disbursed. If you are a first-time Federal Direct Loan borrower at BU, you are required by the federal government to complete the MPN application and Entrance Counseling session.

- [Complete Federal Direct Master Promissory Note \(MPN\)](#)
- [Complete Entrance Counseling](#)



The Federal Direct Loans are calculated based on the student's FAFSA results, such as dependency status, the Student Aid Index (SAI) and the student grade level.

Dependency Status	Academic Level	Subsidized Amount	Unsubsidized Amount	Annual combined maximum amounts undergraduate may borrow
Dependent	Freshman (0-29 earned credit hours)	\$3,500	\$2,000	\$5,500
	Sophomore (30-59 earned credit hours)	\$4,500	\$2,000	\$6,500
	Junior/Senior (60+ earned credit hours)	\$5,500	\$2,000	\$7,500
Independent	Freshman (0-29 earned credit hours)	\$3,500	\$6,000	\$9,500
	Sophomore (30-59 earned credit hours)	\$4,500	\$6,000	\$10,500
	Junior/Senior (60+ earned credit hours)	\$5,500	\$7,000	\$12,500

Transfer credits applied towards a degree are factored in when determining a student's grade level so it is important to complete all admittance requirements i.e. *submit official transcripts for an academic evaluation so that an accurate grade level designation can be determined*. The Office of Financial Aid determines a student's loan eligibility by credits earned and applied in a student's program of study at the time of awarding. *If your grade level changes after you are awarded, and you wish to be considered for additional loan funding based on that change, please contact the Office of Financial Aid.*

**Award and Loan Acceptance** – if you are accepting your awards and/or loans as stated on your **official** Financial Aid award offer notification letter, there is no need to return the letter to the Office of Financial Aid.

However, if you wish to reduce or decline a financial aid assistance offer to you on your official offer notification letter, you must state the change in writing within fourteen (14) days of receiving your official award offer.

Send your changes from your BU email address account to the Office of Financial Aid's email [financialaid@ben.edu](mailto:financialaid@ben.edu).

**Disbursement** – The financial aid offered to a student is posted and disbursed to the student's account following the add/drop week period at the beginning of each semester. You may review your student account activity by accessing [MyBenU](#).

### **Benedictine Institutional Aid Guidelines**

All Benedictine institutional funds are designated for tuition only. Institutional scholarships are available to eligible students enrolled in the traditional undergraduate program for the fall and spring semesters only. Students are eligible to receive these awards each semester as long as they are continuously enrolled as a full-time degree-seeking student and maintain satisfactory academic progress. Failure to meet either requirement may result in the loss of your institutional scholarships. The total amount of institutional funds offered from all sources cannot exceed the standard full-time tuition rate, which is based on enrollment of 12-18 credit hours. A student who chooses **not** to enroll as a full-time student will receive a pro-rated amount of their institutional funds.

The maximum number of years a student is eligible to receive institutional awards is based on his/her grade level at the time of admission. For example: An incoming freshman student is limited to a maximum of 4 years or 8 semesters of institutional awards; an incoming sophomore student is limited to a maximum of 3 years or 6 semesters; etc.

Benedictine University Institutional Scholarships/Awards and the Tuition Exchange/Remission programs are mutually exclusive and may not be combined.



If the **Eagle Promise award** is listed on your estimated or official award notification, please refer to the requirements on the website for further details. <https://ben.edu/eagle-promise/>

**State of Illinois MAP Grant –**

*By applying for financial aid and agreeing to share that information with the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) you have been considered for the State of Illinois (IL) Monetary Award Program (MAP) Grant. All MAP-approved institutions are required by the State of Illinois to announce MAP Grant awards to students who are enrolled or intending to enroll at their institution. An award amount is included in your financial aid package if you have met the eligibility criteria.*

*The MAP Grant award amount is an estimate made by the financial aid office and is identified as a "State of IL MAP Grant (Est)". Please be aware that the number of available MAP Grants is limited by funding levels approved by the Illinois General Assembly and the Governor, and reductions to estimated or actual MAP Grants are possible.*

*There are also limitations to how long you can continue to receive a MAP Grant. Usage is tracked by the number of credit hours for which you've received MAP benefits and is referred to as MAP Paid Credit Hours (MPCHs). The maximum number of MPCHs that can be received is 135, which is equivalent to approximately four and a half years of full-time enrollment. For your reference, and to learn more about MPCH limitations, you may access a record of your MPCHs, as well as other student resources, through the ISAC Student Portal at [studentportal.isac.org](http://studentportal.isac.org).*

*Eligibility for the need-based MAP Grant award may indicate that you are eligible for assistance with expenses such as food, housing, or child care for dependent children. If you have dependent care expenses, ask the financial aid office about the federal dependent care allowance. For eligibility and application information about the [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (SNAP) and the [Child Care Assistance Program](#), contact the [Illinois Department of Human Services](#) at 800-843-6154 or [www.dhs.state.il.us](http://www.dhs.state.il.us). Contact the [Illinois Hunger Coalition](#) Hunger Hotline at 800-359-2163 or [www.ilhunger.org](http://www.ilhunger.org).*

***Note: The Office of Financial Aid estimates the State of IL Map Grant (Est) on enrollment of 15 hours per semester. If the student enrolls less than 15 hours per semester the State of IL MAP Grant (Est) will be prorated to actual hours enrolled. Also, if a student takes the same class more than two times, the student will not be eligible for the credit hours of State of IL MAP Grant (Est) for the third time.***

**Federal Work Study** – Federal Work Study (FWS) is not included in the remaining balance calculation as the FWS program pays students directly for the hours worked in an FWS position. The Federal Work Study award provided is the amount the student is eligible to earn under the FWS program. It is the student's responsibility to obtain a federal work-study position and work the hours required to earn the maximum award provided.

**Financial Aid Cost of Attendance Disclaimer** – Be advised that, due to federal regulations, any scholarship, grant or other award must be included in your financial aid offer and considered in your total Cost of Attendance Budget. Please be aware that should you receive a scholarship, grant assistantship, stipend or endowed award at any time during the year, your financial aid, including loans, may be adjusted at that time. The Office of Financial Aid reserves the right to modify financial aid awards at any time based on the availability of federal, state, and institutional funds; outside scholarships; or if changes occur in your financial need, course enrollment, or academic status. When a loan is affected/reduced the funds will be sent directly back to your lender, no additional steps are required. This will not change the total amount of aid you are eligible to receive for the aid year; it will decrease your total loan debt.

**Private Loans** – Also called alternative or third-party loans, are credit-based loans offered by private lenders such as banks and other financial institutions can be another source of college funding. Eligibility for most of these loan programs is based on the creditworthiness of the borrower and may require the assistance of a parent or another credit-worthy co-signer.

Private loan programs can help bridge the gap between the cost of attendance budget and the financial aid offer. These loans are allowed to cover the cost of tuition and other school-related expenses, up to the federal cost of attendance budget allowed for the academic year.

While their loans are generally limited to the university's cost of attendance budget, just like federal loans, they may have higher annual or total limits. Private loans have some drawbacks. The student is likely to need a co-signer with good credit. The interest rate may be higher, and the repayment options are less flexible, than on a federal loan. For those



reasons, it makes sense to consider private loans only after the student exhausted all the federal aid the student is eligible for.

Benedictine University does not keep a preferred lender list as interest rates and loan terms change frequently. For more information, see our [Private loan comparison tool](#).

**Billing and Payment** – The Business Office is responsible for billing, maintaining tuition accounts, and disbursing financial aid after it has been authorized by the Office of Financial Aid. All tuition and fee charges, on campus housing and meal plan expenses (if applicable) are due seven (7) days from the start of semester. A statement of account bill is generated each month and email will be sent to the student.

Students may view and pay their accounts online by accessing [MyBenU](#). Benedictine University provides interest-free monthly payment options through [MyBenU](#) (administered by TouchNet). Students may set up plans to manage their out-of-pocket costs annually or per semester. Students or their authorized user (parent/guardian) may enroll online through MyBenU to set up a payment plan. Please visit the Business Office's [website](#) for enrollment instructions. For questions on payment plans or billing, contact Ben Central at [financialaid@ben.edu](mailto:financialaid@ben.edu) or by visiting our office in Goodwin 214.

**Appeal Process for Special or Unusual Circumstances** – The U.S. Department of Education regulations allow the financial aid office to determine which circumstances warrant further review. To ensure fairness and compliance with the federal regulations, all circumstances are considered on a case-by-case basis.

Benedictine University recognizes that families can experience changes or have additional expenses that are not reflected in the FAFSA. This could affect the family's ability to contribute to the student's education.

Consideration will be given in any of the following situations:

- Financial hardship or change in income
- Unemployment
- Death of a parent or spouse
- Unusually high medical expenses not covered by insurance
- Parental abandonment

Types of circumstances we cannot consider.

- High consumer debt, including credit cards
- Mortgages or car payments
- Educational expenses for other family members

The family that has experienced a major change in their financial status since filing the FAFSA may submit a formal appeal letter to pursue an adjustment to their financial aid application. Submissions of an appeal does not guarantee an increase or adjustment to financial aid and additional documentation will be required before an adjustment can be made. If changes are made to the student's financial aid application, the student will receive notification regarding the changes. All submitted appeals whether approved or denied will receive a letter within 60 days as to when the appeal letter was submitted.

For more information and required documentation, visit our financial aid [website page](#) regarding Special Circumstance Information.

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress**

Federal regulations require that Benedictine University establish standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for students to receive federal financial aid funds. Minimum standards of academic progress are established to encourage students to successfully complete coursework for which financial aid is received and to make progress toward a degree. SAP for traditional undergraduate students is reviewed on an annual basis. You may review the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy by clicking [here](#).

**Loan Deferment** – If you have previous student loans and are currently enrolled in an eligible degree-seeking program, you may be eligible for a deferment. A deferment allows you to temporarily postpone your student loan payments for a certain period of time. Your deferment eligibility depends on the date your student loan was first disbursed. Your current enrollment is updated with the National Student Loan Clearinghouse after the start of each term. Continue to make student loan payments until your loans are listed as deferred.

Students can access loan and grant information by logging into [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov) and viewing their Dashboard. For questions related to NSLDS functions such as student eligibility, overpayments, loan history, and enrollment reporting, contact the NSLDS Customer Support Center at 1-800-999-8219.