

Important Terms



GEORGIA SOUTHWESTERN
OFFICE OF STUDENT
FINANCIAL AID

This section contains the definitions of the terms used throughout the OSFA web site and are linked to from the various OSFA web pages.

[A](#) | [B](#) | [C](#) | [D](#) | [E](#) | [F](#) | [G](#) | [H](#) | [I](#) | [J](#) | [K](#) | [L](#) | [M](#) | [N](#) | [O](#) | [P](#) | [Q](#) | [R](#) | [S](#) | [T](#) | [U](#) | [V](#) | [W](#)
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A

Academic Year

- The Georgia Southwestern State University Academic Year for the purposes of administering the [Federal Student Aid \(FSA\)](#) programs is defined as two fifteen (15) week semesters for a total of 30 weeks during which the average undergraduate student is expected to complete a minimum of thirty (30) credit hours.

Additional Documents

- Only applies if selected for verification.
- **Verification is the U.S. Department of Education required process whereby the OSFA confirms that the information reported on a student's [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) is accurate.**
See [Verification of FAFSA Information](#) for more information.

Annual Award

- The Annual Award is the maximum amount of [Federal Pell Grant](#) a student will receive during a full *Academic Year* based on his or her [enrollment status](#), [Expected Family Contribution \(EFC\)](#), and [Cost of Attendance \(COA\)](#). Therefore, for a full-time student, his or her Annual Award will be the same as his or her *Scheduled Award*.
- The Annual Award for a student with a less than full-time [Enrollment Status](#) will be less than his or her Scheduled Award.

Award Year

- The GSW Award Year begins each fall semester and is comprised of that fall semester, the following spring semester and summer sessions.

B

C

Campus-Based Programs

- See [Federal Campus-Based Programs](#)

Capitalized Interest (Capitalization)

- Capitalization of interest is the addition of any unpaid interest to the loan *principal* which increases the outstanding principal balance due on the loan. Interest is then charged on the higher principal balance which increases the overall cost of the loan to the borrower.
- For the above reason, borrowers should make every effort to pay the interest being charged on any disbursed loans rather than electing to capitalize the interest payments.

Central Processing System (CPS)

- The Central Processing System (CPS) is the automated system that processes the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#), conducts automated matches with various federal government agencies, calculates the [Expected Family Contribution \(EFC\)](#) and produces the [Student Aid Report \(SAR\)](#) and [Institutional Student Information Record \(ISIR\)](#)

Cost of Attendance (COA)

- Cost of Attendance (COA) parameters and components are determined by the Higher Education Act, Sec. 472.
- The COA is the cornerstone of establishing a student's financial need, as it sets the limits on the total aid that a student may receive from [Federal Student Aid \(FSA\)](#) and all other need-based programs.
- GSW COAs are calculated by the GSW Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA).
- Although a student's assigned COA is an **estimate** of his or her educational expenses for the period of enrollment during the *Award Year*, it is a very realistic estimation of those expenses and can be used by the student for personal budgeting purposes.
- The student's COA is reflected on his or her GSW financial aid Award in [RAIN](#).

D

Deferment

A postponement of payment on a loan that is allowed under certain conditions and during which interest does not accrue on [Federal Direct Subsidized Loans](#) and [Federal Perkins Loans](#).

- All other deferred federal student loans such as the Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan, Federal Parent PLUS Loan will continue to accrue interest. Any unpaid interest that accrues during the deferment period will be [capitalized](#).

Dependent Student

- A student who does not meet any of the [Federal Student Aid \(FSA\)](#) statutory criteria as an [independent student](#) is a dependent student for [Federal Student Aid \(FSA\)](#) purposes.
- If a student is considered a dependent student for FSA purposes, it doesn't necessarily mean the student's parent(s) are providing the student financial support, or that they are required to pay anything toward the student's education, but it does mean parental information must be provided on the student's [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#).

E

Entrance Counseling

- Information about loan terms and conditions, along with debt management strategies, that first-time student borrowers are required to complete before they may receive their first Federal Direct Loan disbursement. For more information, see your student category under [Federal Direct Loan \(FDL\) Application Steps](#).

Eligible Non-citizen

- See [U.S. Citizen and Eligible Non-citizen](#)

Enrollment Status

- Generally, a student's [enrollment status](#) for [Federal Student Aid \(FSA\)](#) purposes is based on the number of credit hours in which the student is enrolled at the end of each semester's drop/add period.
- The enrollment status of students who complete the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) process during the semester but following the end of the semesters drop/add period will be based on the number of hours in which they are enrolled on the date the FAFSA process was completed.
- The enrollment status of students who complete the FAFSA process after semester final grades are posted will be based on the number of hours they completed.
- Only courses required for the student's degree can be counted when determining the student's enrollment status for [Federal Student Aid](#).

Estimated Financial Assistance (EFA)

- In general, Estimated Financial Assistance (EFA) includes all educational benefits paid to or on behalf of a student because of his or her enrollment in postsecondary education. Forms of EFA are:
 - [Federal Student Aid \(FSA\)](#)
 - [State of Georgia Financial Aid](#)
 - Scholarships;
 - Waivers of tuition and fees;
 - Employer reimbursement of or payment for employee tuition;
 - Fellowships or assistantships;
 - Income from insurance programs that pay for the student's education.
- EFA must be taken into consideration when determining eligibility for [Federal Campus-Based programs](#), [Federal Direct Loans](#) and any other [need-based](#) aid.
- EFA is ultimately reflected on the student's financial aid Award in [RAIN](#).
- Also see *Outside Scholarships and Other Resources*.

Estimated Financial Need (EFN)

- Estimated Financial Need (EFN) is the difference between the student's [Cost of Attendance \(COA\)](#) and his or her [Expected Family Contribution \(EFC\)](#).
-

Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

- The U.S. Department of Education calculates the student's EFC using the *Federal Methodology (FM)* and the information the student and the parent of a *dependent student* provide on the student's *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)*.
- The EFC is reported to the student on his or her *Student Aid Report (SAR)*.
- The EFC **does not** represent an amount of money the student's family is expected to contribute to his or her education or pay to GSW. The EFC **is an index number** used to determine the types and amounts of financial aid for which the student may qualify.

Extenuating Circumstances

- As defined within the *GSW Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal Policy*, mitigating circumstances are essentially unanticipated and unavoidable circumstances beyond the student's control which directly affected his or her ability to be academically successful, **and which have either been resolved or stabilized so that he or she is now able to be academically successful**. Examples of mitigating circumstances are:
 - serious injury/illness or an acute mental health condition of the student, or of an immediate family member, or
 - death of an immediate family member, or
 - other special circumstances deemed to be sufficiently mitigating by OSFA
 - See Mitigating Circumstances

F

Federal Campus-Based Programs

- These are *Federal Student Aid (FSA)* programs with limited funds allocated by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) each *Award Year* to GSW to in turn award to students with *unmet need* based on federal student aid general eligibility criteria and GSW awarding policy.
- *The Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)*, and *Federal Work-Study (FWS)* comprise the Federal Campus-Based programs.

Federal Direct Loan (FDL) Interest Rate

- FDL interest rates are set by Congress.
- The interest rate for a loan will apply for the life of the loan; thereby, making it a fixed rate.
- Since interest rates tend to change for new loans first disbursed on or after July 1 of each year, many borrowers will have a set of fixed-rate loans, each with a different interest rate.
- See the *Federal Direct Loan Interest Rates*

Federal Direct Loan (FDL) Origination Fee

- The origination fee is the amount a borrower is required to pay the U.S. Department of Education to help reduce the cost of supporting FDLs.
- The origination fee is withheld from each loan disbursement and is calculated by multiplying the semester's gross loan award amount by the applicable origination fee percentage.

- See the [Federal Direct Loan Origination Fees](#) chart.
- Since origination fees tend to change if loans do not disburse by October 1st each year, many loans will be cancelled (if the borrower responsibilities are not met by October 1st). If the borrower simply has not had attendance/participation verified loans will be re-originated at the new rate.

Federal Direct Subsidized & Unsubsidized Aggregate Loan Limits

- Federal Direct Aggregate Loan Limits are the maximum amount of outstanding Federal Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans (excluding any [capitalized interest](#)) a student can borrow.
- A student who has reached his or her aggregate borrowing limit may not receive additional Subsidized and/or Unsubsidized loans.
- Once the loans are repaid, in full or in part, the student may apply for additional loans.
- See the [Federal Direct Subsidized & Unsubsidized Aggregate Loan Limits](#) chart

Federal Methodology (FM)

- The statutory formula used to calculate a student's [Expected Family Contribution \(EFC\)](#). The FM is found in Part F of Title IV of the Higher Education Act, as amended (HEA).
- The FM considers the family's taxable and untaxable income, assets, the number of household members and the number of those members (other than parents) who are attending college on at least a half-time basis.

Federal Pell Grant Payment Schedule

- A payment chart issued annually by the U.S. Department of Education reflecting the dollar amount of [Federal Pell Grant](#) payable to an eligible student based on his or her [Enrollment Status](#), [Cost of Attendance](#), and [Expected Family Contribution \(EFC\)](#).

Federal Perkins Loan

- The Federal Perkins Loan Program is no longer funded, and is therefore unavailable as an award option.

Federal School Code

- The Federal School Code is an institution specific identifying number assigned by the U.S. Department of Education to each college or university that participates in the [Federal Student Aid \(FSA\)](#) programs. Students completing the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) need to enter the Federal School Code of the institution they wish to receive their [Institutional Student Information Record \(ISIR\)](#).
- **GSW's Federal School Code is 001573.**

Federal Student Aid (FSA)

- Federal Student Aid (FSA) refers to the student aid programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act (as amended) that provide financial assistance to eligible students

enrolled in postsecondary education. The FSA programs currently available to qualifying GSW students are:

- The Federal Pell Grant Program
- The Federal Supplemental Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) Program
- The Federal Work-Study (FWS) Program
- The William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (FDL) Program:
 - The Federal Direct Subsidized Stafford Loan
 - The Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan
 - The Federal Direct Parent PLUS Loan
- [Types of Aid](#) for more information regarding these programs.

Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID

- Students (and parents of [dependent students](#)) must use their respective Federal Student Aid (FSA) IDs to log on to [FAFSA on the Web](#) and the various U.S. Department of Education systems. Each individual will create an FSA ID consisting of a personal username and password.
- [Click here for a quick guide to the FSA ID from Federal Student Aid. \(PDF\)](#)
- **Remember that your FSA ID serves as your electronic signature when completing Department of Education Web-based applications. It also provides access to your personal information on these sites, so do not share your FSA ID with anyone!**

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

- To be considered for [Federal Student Aid](#) for a specific *Award Year* students and parents of [dependent students](#) must complete the U.S. Department of Education's FAFSA applicable to that *Award Year*.
- The FAFSA collects financial and other information used to calculate the [Expected Family Contribution \(EFC\)](#) and to determine much of a student's *basic eligibility* through computer matches within the U.S. Department of Education and with other federal agencies.
- The FAFSA can also be used to apply for the [HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarships](#), but it must be completed every *Award Year*.
- Students can begin the FAFSA application process by clicking on the [Apply for Aid](#).

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Process Completion

- The [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) process is completed:
 - once the student and parents of a [dependent student](#) have completed the FAFSA, and
 - the OSFA has received from the [Central Processing System \(CPS\)](#) the student's [Institutional Student Information Record \(ISIR\)](#), and
 - if selected, the student/family must complete the [Verification of FAFSA Information](#), and
 - the student/family have provided OSFA any other requested documentation (citizenship, Selective Service registration, etc.), reflected in [RAIN](#), and
 - the student/family have resolved all issues affecting the student's federal aid eligibility.

Financial Aid Process Completion

- The financial aid process has been completed once a student has:
 - completed the [FAFSA process](#) and [GSFAPPS](#) for the *Award Year*, and
 - has either an Estimated Award or an Official Award in [RAIN](#), and if the student completed the FAFSA Process and has an Official Award in Athena:
 - has also accepted or declined any offered *Federal Direct Loans (FDLs)*, and if he or she accepted one or more FDLs,
 - has completed the required [Federal Direct Loan \(FDL\) Application Steps](#) applicable to his or her student category and type of FDL(s), and
 - the student has accepted or declined any offered student loans and completed the required [Master Promissory Note and Entrance Counseling Requirements](#), and
 - has accepted or declined any offered [Federal Work-Study \(FWS\)](#)
 - If the biological or adoptive parent of a [dependent student](#) chooses to borrow a Parent PLUS Loan has completed the [Parent PLUS Loan Application Steps at <https://www.studentloans.gov>](#) with the parent's FSA ID and a specified award amount.

Georgia Residency for HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarships

- Students who meet the Georgia Residency requirements of the University System of Georgia (USG) Board of Regents at the time of their high school graduation, Home Study program completion or successful GED test, must also meet those requirements for 12 consecutive months immediately prior to the first day of classes of the school term for which the HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship is sought.
- Students not meeting the preceding requirements at the time of high school graduation, Home Study program completion or successful GED test, must meet the requirements for 24 consecutive months immediately prior to the first day of classes of the school term for which the HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship is sought.
- The GSW OSFA **does not** determine a student's Georgia residency status. The Georgia residency determination of incoming undergraduate students is made by the [Office of Admissions](#). The [Office of the Registrar](#) determines the Georgia residency for enrolled students and former GSW undergraduates re-admitted as a former GSW undergraduate.

Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC)

- The Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) is the name traditionally used to refer to the GSFC and its companion student finance entities – the Georgia Student Finance Authority (GSFA) and the Georgia Higher Education Assistance Corporation (GHEAC). Although statutorily created in Georgia law as separate entities, these three agencies work closely together to provide integrated state student financial aid services. They have the same mission and vision and share common board members, executive leadership, facilities and administrative support. The term “Georgia Student Finance Commission” usually denotes the three agencies viewed as a single organization.
- The GSFC is the State of Georgia entity responsible for regulating the [State of Georgia Financial Aid Programs](#).

Georgia Scholarship/Grant Application (GSFAPPS)

- The GSFAPPS is the [Georgia Student Finance Commission \(GSFC\)](#) application for

the [HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarships](#).

- Once a student has submitted a GSFAPPS **and it has been accepted on GSFC's system as a valid application**, it will remain on GSFC's system as a valid application for 84 consecutive months (7 years) following the application's approval date; therefore, Georgia residents applying only for the HOPE or Zell Miller Scholarship are not required to complete another application as long as they have a valid GSFAPPS.
- [Click here](#) to begin the GSFAPPS.

Gift Aid

- Grants and scholarships are often referred to as "gift aid" because they do not have to be earned thru employment or repaid as long as the student fulfills the grant or scholarship eligibility requirements.
- The [Federal Pell Grant](#) and the [HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarships](#) are examples of gift aid. When the GSW OSFA awards you any gift aid, we pre-accept it on [RAIN](#) for you.
- Also see *Non-Gift Aid*

Grace Period

- The period of time before a borrower must begin or resume repaying the federal student loan principal.

Grade Level

- A student's Grade Level is used in determining the annual maximum Federal Direct Subsidized/Unsubsidized Loans limits applicable to the student.
- A student's Grade Level is the total number of GSW hours earned at the student's current degree level plus any accepted transfer hours applicable to the student's current degree level.

Total Earned	Grade Level
0-29 Undergraduate Hours	01
30-59 Undergraduate Hours	02
60-89 Undergraduate Hours	03
90+ Undergraduate Hours	04
2nd Undergraduate Degree	05
0-24 Graduate/Professional Hours	06
25+ Graduate/Professional Hours	07

Graduate Degree

- A degree program in which the student is awarded a masters or specialist upon completion.

Graduate Student

- A student accepted into and pursuing a graduate degree.

H

HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship Attempted Hours

- **All the college credit hours the student has attempted since high school graduation are counted** in determining the number of HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship Attempted Hours regardless of whether or not the student was receiving the HOPE or Zell Miller Scholarship at the time, and whether or not GSW accepted any of the credit hours as transfer credit.
- GSW uses a Plus/Minus grading system; however, HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship regulations only permit the use of letter grades of A through F, so pluses and minuses are disregarded in the HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship GPA calculation.
- For these reasons, the HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship Attempted Hours usually do not match the attempted hours reflected on official GSW transcripts/Athena.
- **Students are no longer eligible once they have 127 HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship Attempted Hours.** This is a "hard cap"; therefore, should a student begin a semester with 126 HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship Attempted Hours, the HOPE or Zell Miller Scholarship will provide only 1 credit hour of HOPE or Zell Miller Scholarship eligibility.
- Also see [HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship Paid Hours](#).
- See [Section 105.14. Attempted-Hours Calculation \(PDF\)](#) in the 2018-19 HOPE Scholarship Public Institution Regulations

HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship Grade Point Average (GPA)

- The HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship GPA is calculated using the student's [HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship Attempted Hours](#).
- GSW uses a Plus/Minus grading system; however, HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship regulations only permit the use of letter grades of A through F, so pluses and minuses are disregarded in the HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship GPA calculation.
- For these reasons, the HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship GPA usually does not match the cumulative GPA reflected on official GSW transcripts

HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship Paid Hours

- The number of credit hours for which payment was received for any combination of HOPE or Zell Miller Scholarships, HOPE or Zell Miller Grants, and Accel (through Spring term 2011) Program funds.
- **Students are no longer eligible once they have accumulated 127 HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship Paid Hours.** This is a "hard cap"; therefore, should a student begin a semester with 126 HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship Paid Hours, the HOPE or Zell Miller Scholarship will provide only 1 credit hour of HOPE or Zell Miller Scholarship eligibility.
- Also see [HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship Attempted Hours](#).

I

Independent Student

- A student's responses to a series of questions on the [FAFSA](#) determine whether the student meets the statutory criteria to be considered an independent student for [Federal Student Aid \(FSA\)](#) purposes. [Click here](#) to review the FAFSA dependency status questions.
- When a student meets one or more of the statutory independent criteria then parental information is not required on the FAFSA.

- As a review of the FAFSA dependency questions will reveal, a student not living with parents or not being claimed by the parents on tax returns does not make the student independent for financial aid purposes.

Ineligible Non-Citizen

- Persons with non-immigrant visas (includes those with work visas, students, visitors and foreign government officials) **are not eligible** for [Federal Student Aid \(FSA\)](#), [State of Georgia Financial Aid](#) and other [need-based](#) aid administered by the OSFA.
- See [U.S. Citizen and Eligible Non-Citizen](#) for the eligible citizenship statuses.

Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR)

- This is GSW OSFA electronic version of the [Student Aid Report \(SAR\)](#).

J

K

L

Learning Support Courses

- Learning Support) is remedial coursework that prepares a student for study at the college/university level.

Legal Guardian

- An individual appointed by a court to be a “guardian” of a person and specifically required by the court to use his or her financial resources for the support of that person.

Lifetime Eligibility Used (LEU)

- Lifetime Eligibility Used (LEU) is the maximum duration of a student's eligibility to receive a [Federal Pell Grant](#) and is equal to 12 full-time semesters, or six (6) Scheduled Awards.
- The calculation of a student's LEU includes all the years the student received a Pell Grant. See [StudentAid.gov](#) for additional information.

Loan Principal

- Initially, the loan principal is the amount that was borrowed plus the loan Origination Fee charged at the time the loan was disbursed.
- Later, the loan principal includes the outstanding (unpaid) amount of the borrowed loan funds plus the loan origination fees charged, and any [capitalized interest](#) minus any amount paid by the borrower and credited to the principal.

M

Master Promissory Note (MPN)

- A legally binding contract between a lender and borrower that can be used to make one or more loans for one or more academic years (up to 10 years). An MPN lists the terms and conditions under which the borrower agrees to repay the loan and explains the borrower's rights and responsibilities.
- There are specific MPNs for the various types of *Federal Direct Loans (FDLs)* which borrowers must complete and sign (usually on-line) before receiving their first loan disbursement.

Merit-Based Aid

- Financial aid awarded on the basis of specific accomplishments or talents rather than financial need.

Mitigating Circumstances

- As defined within the *GSW Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Appeal Policy*, mitigating circumstances are essentially unanticipated and unavoidable circumstances beyond the student's control which directly affected his or her ability to be academically successful, **and which have either been resolved or stabilized so that he or she is now able to be academically successful**. Examples of mitigating circumstances are:
 - serious injury/illness or an acute mental health condition of the student, or of an immediate family member, or
 - death of an immediate family member, or
 - other special circumstances deemed to be sufficiently mitigating by OSFA
 - See Extenuating Circumstance

N

National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS)

- NSLDS is the U.S. Department of Education's central database for student financial aid. It contains student-level data received from schools, the Federal Direct Loan Program, the Pell Grant Program, and other Department of Education programs and offices.
- NSLDS provides a centralized, integrated view of federal student loans and Pell Grants and tracks them through their entire cycle.
- Students can access NSLDS by <https://studentloans.gov>

Need

- A student's Cost of Attendance (COA) minus his or her Expected Family Contribution (EFC) equals Need.

Need-Based Aid

- Financial aid awarded on the basis of documented need. Need is determined through the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)* process.

Non-Gift Aid

- Federal Direct Loans and Federal Perkins Loans borrowed while an undergraduate or graduate/professional student and Federal Work-Study (FWS) are often referred to as “non-gift aid” or “self-help aid” because loans must be repaid and FWS must be earned through employment.

Non-Successfully Completed Hours

- Non-Successfully Completed Hours are course hours with grades of F, W, WF, I, U or NR.
- Non-Successfully Completed Hours are found in the GSW *Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy*.

O

Origination Fee

- The amount a borrower is required to pay the U.S. Department of Education to help defray the cost of a Federal Direct Loan (FDL).
- The applicable origination fee is withheld from each FDL disbursement.
- See the chart reflecting the [*Federal Direct Loan Origination Fees*](#)

Outside Scholarships and Other Resources

- Outside Scholarships are scholarships awarded to the student by individuals, agencies, non-profits, etc. which are sent to GSW or directly to the student. Other Resources include GSW scholarships, waivers of tuition and fees, employer or other outside agency payments toward a student’s tuition/fees, books, supplies and other educational expenses.
- Also see *Estimated Financial Assistance (EFA)*
- *Students must report all outside scholarships and other resources to the OSFA.*

Overall Grade Point Average (GPA)

- The Overall GPA is the Measurement of Quality component of the GSW financial aid *Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy*. The Overall GPA is calculated using the student’s *Total Attempted Hours*.

Overaward

- An overaward occurs either when a student’s *Need Based* aid exceeds his or her *Unmet Need*, or when the student’s total amount of awarded aid which includes *Federal Student Aid (FSA)* exceeds his or her *Cost of Attendance (COA)*.
- When an overaward situation arises, the OSFA is required to review the student’s financial aid Award and determine if any of the Federal Student Aid (FSA) or other need based aid must be reduced in order to eliminate the overaward.
- Overawards become overpayments if the OSFA cannot eliminate the overaward before funds have been disbursed to the student.

P

Parent(s)

- Click [here](#) to learn who is considered a *dependent student's* parent for [Federal Student Aid \(FSA\)](#) purposes, and which parent(s)' information must be reported on the dependent student's [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#).

Private (Alternative) Education Loan

- A private (alternative) education loan is a non-federal education loan borrowed from a private lender such as a bank, credit union or other financial entity that should be a student's last resort for educational assistance.
- Only students who need additional funds beyond what they do qualify for in [Federal Student Aid \(FSA\)](#) and non-federal aid should consider applying for a private education loan.
- See Private (Alternative) Education Loans under Undergraduate Aid or Graduate/Professional Aid as appropriate.

Professional Student

- A student pursuing a *professional degree*.
- Also see [Graduate Student](#).

Q

R

Rain

- [RAIN](#) is the GSW integrated student information system which enables secure web-based access to student information, including the student's financial aid application status and Award.
- [Click here](#) for instructions regarding how to access and view your financial aid Application Status in RAIN.
- [Click here](#) for instructions regarding how to view your financial aid Award in RAIN, and how to accept or decline any awarded *non-gift aid*.

Regular Student

- A student who is enrolled or accepted for enrollment into an eligible undergraduate, graduate or professional degree program for the purpose of obtaining said degree.

Remaining Need

- Remaining Need equals *Need* minus other *Estimated Financial Assistance (EFA)*.

Repayment Period

- The time during which a borrower is obligated to make payments on the federal loan principal according to the terms and conditions of the loan's promissory note.

S

Scheduled Academic Year (SAY)

- The Scheduled Academic Year (SAY) applies to the administration of *Federal Direct Loans (FDL)* at the Georgia Southwestern State University (GSW).
- The SAY begins with the first day of class each fall semester and ends with the last official exam day of the following spring semester.
- The [Federal Direct Subsidized & Unsubsidized Loan Annual Limits](#) apply to the SAY.
- Summer sessions at GSW are considered a “trailer” to the SAY; therefore, the Federal Direct Subsidized & Unsubsidized Loan Annual Limits apply to the fall, spring and summer sessions.
- Also see *Academic Year*.

Scheduled Award

- The Scheduled Award is the maximum [Federal Pell Grant](#) amount a student can receive during the *Award Year* if he or she attends *full-time* for a full academic year, and is based on the student's [Expected Family Contribution \(EFC\)](#) and [Cost of Attendance \(COA\)](#).
- The student's Scheduled Award is established by applicable Award Year *Federal Pell Grant Payment Schedule*.
- Also see *Annual Award*.

Self-Help Aid

- See “Non-Gift Aid”.

State of Georgia Financial Aid Programs

The following are State of Georgia financial aid programs and are regulated by the [Georgia Student Finance Commission \(GSFC\)](#):

- [The HOPE Scholarship](#)
- [The Zell Miller Scholarship](#)
- [The Georgia HERO Scholarship](#)
- [The Georgia Public Safety Memorial Grant](#)
- [The Georgia Student Access Loan Program](#)
- [The Dual Enrollment Program \(formerly Move on When Ready and Accel\)](#)

Student Aid Report (SAR)

- After the U.S. Department of Education [Central Processing System \(CPS\)](#) processes the student's FAFSA, they produce a Student Aid Report (SAR) reflecting the information the student and the parent(s) of a [dependent student](#) provided on the FAFSA, along with the calculated [Expected Family Contribution \(EFC\)](#), as well as the results of the eligibility

matches with other federal agencies, any identified inconsistencies, and messages the student needs to read and possibly act on.

- If the student provides his/her e-mail address on the FAFSA, the CPS e-mails the student a direct link to the FAFSA login page with instructions to view his/her SAR; otherwise, they will mail the student a paper SAR or SAR Acknowledgement.
- The student and parent(s) of a dependent student should carefully review the SAR to make sure it is correct and complete. If there are any errors needing correction, [click here](#) for guidance. If there are no corrections to make to the information, the student just keeps the SAR for his/her records.
- If the student provided the GSW Federal School Code 001573 on the FAFSA, the OSFA will receive the [Institutional Student Information Record \(ISIR\)](#) two to three days later. If the student did not provide the GSW Federal School Code on the FAFSA, he/she needs to login to www.fafsa.gov and add the code.

Successfully Completed Hours

- Successfully Completed Hours are all completed GSW and transfer course hours with a final grade of A, B, C, D, or S as long as credit is earned.
- Audited courses are not included in determining the number of successfully completed hours.
- Also see *Non-Successfully Completed Hours*.

T

Total Attempted Hours

As defined for [Federal Student Aid \(FSA\) Grade Level](#) determination and the [Satisfactory Academic Progress \(SAP\)](#) Policy:

For a baccalaureate degree:

- The total of all undergraduate course hours attempted at GSW (including any repeated courses) and all undergraduate transfer hours (including AP credits) accepted by GSW, as well as any graduate level courses taken while in the undergraduate program.
- Audited course hours are not included in determining the Total Attempted Hours.
- All undergraduate hours are included in Total Attempted Hours whether or not the student was receiving federal or state aid when they were attempted and regardless of whether or not any of the attempted hours apply toward the student's current undergraduate degree program.
- The University's granting of Academic Renewal does not change or alter in any way the calculation of the student's Total Attempted Hours.

For a graduate or professional degree:

- The total of all same degree level graduate and professional course hours attempted at GSW (including any repeated courses) and all the same degree level graduate or professional transfer hours accepted by GSW.
- Audited course hours are not included in determining the Total Attempted Hours.
- All same degree level graduate and professional hours are included in Total Attempted Hours whether or not the student was receiving federal or state aid when they were

attempted and regardless of whether or not any of the attempted hours apply toward the student's current graduate or professional degree program of the same level.

- Any different level graduate and professional hours that were taken during the student's current program.

For the HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarships, see [HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship Attempted Hours](#).

Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)

- The Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) is a supplemental educational assistance program for employees of the University System of Georgia (USG).
- [Click here](#) for more information on the TAP program.

U

Unmet Need

- Unmet Need is a student's *Estimated Financial Need (EFN)* minus the total of his or her *Estimated Financial Assistance*.

Unofficial Withdrawal

- Federal regulations require students who have been awarded [Federal Student Aid \(FSA\)](#) to fulfill their academic requirements. An "unofficial withdrawal" occurs when a student stops attending all classes and stops participating in any academic activities beyond the date he/she last attended classes.
- Occasionally a student will receive all "F" and/or "U" grades for a term and the University is required to determine if the student "unofficially withdrew" from the University.
- [Click here](#) for more information regarding Unofficial Withdrawals.

U.S. Citizen and Eligible Non-Citizen

- A U.S. citizen or one of the non-citizen statuses designated by law as eligible for [Federal Student Aid \(FSA\)](#) and [State of Georgia Financial Aid](#).
- The general requirement for eligible non-citizens is that they are in the U.S. for other than a temporary purpose with the intention of becoming a citizen or lawful permanent resident as evidenced by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). **To be considered for financial assistance administered by the Office of Student Financial Aid, a student must meet one of the citizenship or eligible resident classifications.**
- [Click here](#) for more information regarding U.S. Citizens and Eligible Non-Citizens.

V

Verification

Verification is the U.S. Department of Education required process whereby the OSFA confirms that the information reported on a student's [Free Application for Federal Student](#)

[Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) is accurate.

- [See Verification of FAFSA Information](#) for more information.
- Also see Additional Documents

W

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