

# FINANCIAL AID CHECKLIST



GEORGIA SOUTHWESTERN  
OFFICE OF STUDENT  
FINANCIAL AID

## STEP 1 – Applying for Financial Aid:

### Electronically submit your FAFSA using 2020 tax information!

Go to [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov) to complete your FAFSA; include the School Code: **001573**. Complete your FAFSA at least 30 days prior to the published deadline to allow enough time for us to receive your FAFSA and for you to submit any additional documentation.

**HELPFUL TIP:** Use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool when completing your FAFSA to speed up processing if your file is selected for verification.

### Respond timely to any request for verification/documentation!

The Department of Education randomly selects FAFSA applications for verification. If your FAFSA is selected, you will be required to submit additional documentation.

**HELPFUL TIP:** IRS Tax Transcripts can take 5-10 days to be mailed to you, if unable to access them using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool.

**NOTE:** It can take up to two weeks to receive an award once you have submitted all required documentation.

**Check your status:** Visit [gsw.edu/status](https://gsw.edu/status) for updates until you register. Once registered, you should check the financial aid tab in RAIN.

**Financial aid does not transfer from one school to another!** If you are a transfer student, you will need to add the 001573 school code to your FAFSA and cancel all pending loans or grants at the school where you last attended. After requesting cancellation at your previous school, please notify GSW that your loans and grants have been canceled by emailing: [finaid@gsw.edu](mailto:finaid@gsw.edu)

If you had HOPE at your previous school, please complete a HOPE Evaluation Form. The form is available at [gsw.edu/StudentForms](https://gsw.edu/StudentForms).

**HELPFUL TIP:** Aid will not show as canceled until your previous school reports the cancellation to the Department of Education and the cancellation shows in the National Student Loan Database System (NSLDS). We cannot proceed with processing until aid is fully canceled.

## STEP 2 – View Detailed Information on your Outstanding Requirements:

Please follow these steps once you have registered:

1. Go to [gsw.edu](https://gsw.edu).
2. Click “RAIN” (at the bottom right of the page).
3. Enter your GSW username and password and click “Log In.”
4. Click on “Financial Aid.”
5. Click “Eligibility.”
6. Click “Student Requirements.”
7. Select the “Award Aid Year” from the drop down menu and click “Submit.”

**ALL UNSATISFIED** requirements will show here. The “Additional Documents” requirement remains outstanding until the verification process is completed, which may take up to four weeks.

If you have been selected for verification, please go to [gsw.verifymyfafsa.com](https://gsw.verifymyfafsa.com).



If you are a **New User**, you must first create an account. From the **Account Creation** screen enter your first and last name, date of birth, and social security number exactly as you provided them on your FAFSA and click the **“Create Account”** button. Once the account is created, **log in and complete the noted tasks**.

### **STEP 3 – How to Accept your Terms and Conditions:**

Georgia Southwestern State University requires you to accept the Terms and Conditions before loans and scholarships will be disbursed.

Please follow these steps once logged into RAIN at [gsw.edu](http://gsw.edu):

1. Click on **“Financial Aid”** (top menu).
2. Click **“Award.”**
3. Click **“Award by Aid Year.”**
4. Select the **“Award Aid Year”** from the drop down menu and click **“Submit.”**
5. Please click on **“Terms and Conditions”** tab.
6. Read the **“Terms and Conditions.”**
7. If you accept the Terms and Conditions, please click on **“Accept”** button.

### **STEP 4 – How to View and Accept your Awards:**

Check RAIN frequently to review your financial aid award(s)! If you are awarded student loans, you must follow the instructions to accept them in RAIN. You may accept full or partial amounts. **Remember the amount accepted will be split in half between two semesters, unless otherwise noted.**

**HELPFUL TIP:** Once you have accepted your loans, it can take up to five business days to process.

Please follow these steps once logged into **RAIN**:

1. Click on **“Students.”**
2. Click on **“Financial Aid.”**
3. Click **“Award.”**
4. Click **“Award by Aid Year.”**
5. Select **“Aid Year”** from drop down box and click **“Submit.”**
6. Click **“Accept Award Offer”** on each type of aid you wish to accept.
7. Next to fund select **“Accept”** and put the appropriate amount in the box and click **“Submit Decision.”**

### **STEP 5 – Next Steps after you Accept your Awards:**

Complete Loan Entrance Counseling at [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov) using your FSA User ID and password.

**HELPFUL TIP:** Loans will disburse 7-10 business days after completing Entrance Counseling (EC) & Master Promissory Note (MPN).

Sign Your Master Promissory Note (MPN) at [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov) using your FSA User ID and password.

**HELPFUL TIP:** Loans will disburse 7-10 business days after completing EC & MPN.

To apply for a Parent PLUS Loan, please have your **parent** visit [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov) to submit a PLUS Loan application using the parent FSA User ID and password. A credit check will be performed during the application process and a decision will be made once the application is submitted. **Loans will be awarded 7-10 business days after completion.**

If the PLUS loan is approved, your parent must complete a Parent PLUS Loan Promissory Note at [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov) using their FSA User ID and password. The PLUS Loan will not disburse until this step has been completed and confirmation received by GSW.

If the PLUS loan is denied, your parent must select **“Will not Pursue PLUS loan”** during the application process for GSW to award you additional loan funding. The student should visit [gsw.edu](http://gsw.edu) ~ Financial Aid ~ Forms and complete the Direct PLUS Loan Options Form and choose Option B. The signature of both Parents and Students is required.