



COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
IRVING MEDICAL CENTER

FINANCIAL AID HANDBOOK

2020-21 MD Program



TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Section</u>	<u>Page</u>
What is Financial Aid?	2
How Do I Apply?	2
Guidelines to Determine Whose Financial Information Must Be Reported	2
International and DACA Students Who Do Not Hold a Permanent Resident Visa	3
When Should I Apply?	3
Application Materials	3
How Does VP&S Determine Financial Need?	8
Determination of a Family's Financial Resources	9
Determination of Academic Year Expenses	10
The Financial Aid Package and Awarding Policies	11
VP&S Need-Based Scholarships	11
Columbia-Bassett Track	12
Tax Information for Students	12
Loans	13
Reduction of Loans by External Scholarships	13
Tuition Exemption	13
International and DACA Students Who Do Not Hold a Permanent Resident Visa	14
When Will I Hear?	15
Scholarships	16
Interschool Scholarships	16
External Scholarships	16
Service Scholarships	17
Rules for Refund and Return of Financial Aid Funds	18
Refund Policy	18
Return of Financial Aid Funds	18
Policy on Fraud and Abuse in Financial Aid	19



FINANCIAL AID HANDBOOK

ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-21

The Office of Student Financial Aid & Planning administers financial aid for the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, the College of Dental Medicine, the Institute of Human Nutrition, and the Programs in Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Genetic Counseling. We serve as a resource and as a link to your funding sources. Keep in mind that financial aid programs are subject to change due to legislative and regulatory changes.

Each class is assigned to a Financial Aid Officer who will determine "need", prepare financial aid offers and work closely with you throughout your time in the program.

Check our [website](#) periodically for up-to-date information and helpful links.

WHAT IS FINANCIAL AID?

Financial aid is any grant, scholarship, loan, or work-study award offered to help you meet educationally related expenses. Such aid is usually provided by or through the school, federal and state agencies, foundations or corporations and other entities.

Scholarships are generally regarded as "gift" assistance and need not be repaid.

Loans are borrowed monies, offered at various interest rates, which are repaid over an extended period after you graduate or leave the institution.

The primary responsibility to pay for medical school rests with you and your family, to the extent that you are determined able to do so. While we will do everything possible to assist, the school should be expected to assist only when you and your family are unable to meet the full cost of attendance. Since we have a finite amount of need-based school funds, some students may need to borrow.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Guidelines to Determine Whose Financial Aid Information Must be reported

- **IF YOU ARE SEEKING ONLY EXTERNAL LOANS** such as the Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford, Federal Direct Graduate PLUS (GradPLUS), private/alternative loans, and/or Federal Work Study

complete the FAFSA, student sections only. No parental information is required. If you are **married**, your spouse's financial information is required.

- **IF YOU ARE SEEKING VP&S SCHOLARSHIP ASSISTANCE** (institutional funds), you must **complete the FAFSA** (providing parental financial information as well as your own and your spouse's), and the **student/spouse and parent sections of the CSS Profile**. **International and DACA students** do not have to complete the FAFSA but should complete the **CSS Profile Application** and the **Certification of Finances Form**.
 - Parent information is **required** unless you will be **35 years old by the start of the academic year**.
 - **IF YOUR PARENTS ARE DIVORCED OR SEPARATED**, information is required from *both* of your parents and their current spouse(s).
 - **IF YOU ARE MARRIED or INTEND TO MARRY DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR**, your spouse's (or prospective spouse's) financial information is required.

We will assume that if **you do not complete a CSS Profile application, you wish consideration only for external loans** such as Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford, Federal Direct Graduate PLUS, private loans and/or Federal Work-Study.

International and DACA Students Who Do Not Hold a Permanent Resident Visa Cannot Receive Financial Aid from Federal or State Sources. An **international student** in the United States with an F1 or F2 student visa, with a J1 or J2 exchange visitor visa, or with a G-series or H-series visa **is not eligible for student aid from federal or state sources**, but you may qualify for and receive "alternative loans" from outside sources, and scholarships from funds which are not federally or state-sponsored. If you acquire permanent resident status prior to graduation, you will become eligible for "external" state and federal assistance.

Please note that a "Notice of Approval to Apply for Permanent Residence" (I-171 or I-464) does not make you eligible for federal student aid.

When Should I Apply?

New students should submit the FAFSA and the CSS Profile application by **March 13th** (or within 2 weeks after acceptance, whichever is later). The deadline for **returning students** is **April 10th**. **No awards will be made to continuing students whose application materials are not complete.**

Application Materials

Please keep copies of completed materials.

New students: Once you receive your CU ID, you will be able to log into NetPartner to check the status of your application materials and to see if any additional documents are needed. If we request supplemental tax information for 2018, please submit via IDOC. If it is for 2019, **please submit it [here](#).**

Returning students who need to submit pages 1 and 2 of the 2019 tax forms, please do so [here](#).

1. The **Free Application for Federal Student Assistance (FAFSA)** - This is the federal application required for all applicants that are U.S. citizens or permanent residents who wish to establish eligibility for financial aid offered by the United States Department of Education (Title IV), the United States Department of Health and Human Services (Title VII), and for any school funds.

[StudentAid.gov](#) is the U.S. Department of Education website where you can complete and submit your FAFSA online. *The application is free.*

An **FSA ID** is a username and password you need to log in to and sign the FAFSA online. If you do not already have a FSA ID, you can [create a FSA ID](#) online. This is your electronic signature for FAFSA and Renewal FAFSA on the Web. It can also be used to access your Title IV federal student aid history [online](#) (select "Financial Aid Review").

At this same website, you can complete a **Renewal FAFSA** if you applied for federal student aid last year. Be sure to keep a copy of your application before you submit it.

Please select the option to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool when asked.

Read the instructions carefully when you complete your FAFSA or Renewal FAFSA. Most mistakes are made because students fail to follow instructions. Pay special attention to any questions on income as most errors occur in this area. Remember, **you will have to include parental information if you are applying for school funds. When completing your FAFSA, you will notice that the website will tell you that parental information is not required - but for health professions students, it is necessary for consideration of certain funds and you should include it.**

If you want consideration for school funds and your parents are divorced or separated, information is required from both of your parents and their current spouses. Information from you and one parent must be entered on the FAFSA and officially processed by the federal processor.

If you have already completed your FAFSA, and **Columbia University Title IV Code 002707** was not one of the schools you originally listed, please go [online](#) and add us.

Note: *There may be private companies who charge to help you complete this form. There is no charge for filing a FAFSA, so be sure to go to the correct website: [StudentAid.gov](#)*

2. Complete the [Aid Type Request Form on NetPartner](#) if you have never applied for aid with us before. This form asks you to indicate the type of financial aid for which you would like to be considered. This will determine which documents you need to complete for the financial aid application process.
3. The [CSS PROFILE](#) application is a fee-based online financial aid application which collects supplemental information for us (the fee for your first school is \$25). Since some of the information that you provide on the FAFSA is also required on the CSS Profile application, you may want to complete both applications at the same time. The **CSS Profile code for VP&S is 2148**. If your parents have separate households (separated/divorced) then you must provide complete financial information for each parental household. One parent will be called the custodial parent and the other will be called the non-custodial parent. There will be an additional charge for collecting the non-custodial parent's information. If you have questions about completing or submitting the application, contact [CSS PROFILE](#) at 844-202-0524.

4. We utilize the **College Board Institutional Documentation Service (IDOC)** to securely collect families' tax returns and other financial documents. You will receive an IDOC instruction email with your IDOC ID# after the online submission of the CSS Profile.

Application materials may be submitted via mail or electronic upload to IDOC:

Submit Documents Online:

<https://idoc.collegeboard.org/idoc/>

US Postal Service Address:

College Board Processing Center
P.O. Box 8570
Portsmouth, NH 03802

Courier Delivery (FedEx, etc.):

College Board Processing Center
124 Heritage Avenue, Suite #14
Portsmouth, NH 03801

Applicants may check the status of documents submitted to IDOC **online** by logging into IDOC. Please allow 5-8 business days for documents uploaded to IDOC to be received by Columbia University. Documents mailed to IDOC will take longer to process.

To see if Columbia has received processed documents, please use [Net Partner](#), our online document tracking system. It will be available after March 5, 2020.

5. **International and DACA Students** who want consideration for institutional funds should also complete the [CSS Profile](#). If you and/or your family file foreign tax returns, they will also need to be submitted along with the **Certification of Finances Form (international students only)** via IDOCs.
6. **IRS Tax Forms** - We require **signed and dated copies** of the 2018 IRS tax forms, **the 1040, W-2 forms,** and **all supporting schedules and statements** for all persons supplying information on the CSS Profile application. If there is a Partnership or S-Corporation listed on Schedule E, we need copies of the 1065, 1120S or K-1. You will submit all of these via IDOCs. **New students** should submit these documents no **later than March 13th**.

Returning students who had not applied for Columbia aid in 2019-2020 and who complete the CSS Profile will also have to submit 2018 tax returns via IDOC.

Returning students applying for school based aid who provided pages 1&2 of the 2018 tax returns for the 2019-2020 academic year will also need to submit signed copies of pages 1&2 of 2019 tax returns for you, your spouse, and your parents [here](#). Submit these documents no later than **April 15th**.

7. Non-tax Filers

New Students: If you did not have to file a tax return for 2018 you will be able to complete a “**Student’s Non-Tax Filer’s Statement**” on line when you are logged into IDOCS.

Returning students who received Columbia based aid in 2019-20 and who did not file a 2018 tax return will be able to complete a “**Student’s Non-Tax Filer’s Statement**” on line when you are logged into IDOCS.

Returning students who had not applied for Columbia aid in 2019-2020 and who complete the CSS Profile and did not file a tax return for 2018 will be able to complete a “**Student’s Non-Tax Filer’s Statement**” on line when you are logged into IDOCS.

Note: We may make **tentative aid offers to entering** students without complete tax information. However, **they are subject to change** based on a Financial Aid Officer’s review when complete 2018 IRS tax forms and any additional requested documentation are received.

We will not make any financial aid offers to returning students without complete financial aid application materials.

8. **Permanent Resident Card** – If you have been selected for federal Verification and do not hold U.S. citizenship but have been accorded "permanent resident" status, you must submit a copy of both sides of your Permanent Resident Card (I-151, I-551, or I-551C) to our office. If you have an Arrival-Departure Record (I-94 or I94A), you may be eligible for federal financial aid. Please check with us.

If you have a Notice of Approval to Apply for Permanent Residence (I-171 or I-464), you are not eligible for federal student aid.

9. The [Request to be Classified “Disadvantaged”](#) helps us identify eligible candidates for Loans for Disadvantaged Students (LDS). Students may also find that this designation helps them in the future for possible HHS funding. LDS loans have very favorable repayment terms. Please review the eligibility criteria on the Form and submit it if you think you may qualify.
10. [Activity Questionnaire](#) – All applicants for VP&S Scholarship assistance must complete this form. We use the information you provide both to report to our donors on scholarship & loan recipients and to identify eligible students for targeted funds.
11. If you are interested in a **Federal Work-Study** award, you should contact our office for further information.
12. Students with dependents should complete the [Dependent Care Form](#) and contact their financial aid officer to discuss any budgeting concerns.
13. Single students with expenses greater than the published budget should submit itemized budgets to our office for review. Rents that exceed our average budgets may be approved for extra borrowing **BUT only to a maximum of \$1,400 a month**. The [Rent Adjustment Form](#) and a copy of **your lease** will be required before any adjustments to your budget are made. Check with your

Financial Aid Officer before committing to additional housing or other expenses that you cannot cover with personal funds.

14. Limited **scholarship** funds are **available** for travel expenses for MCY clerkships and D&I electives taken at Mary Imogene Bassett Hospital in **Cooperstown**, New York. Requests for these costs for all students should be submitted or **itemized separately** from other travel requests.
15. **Senior Elective Travel** – Differentiation & Integration (D&I) students should note that expenses incurred for away electives are **not** included in the standard budget. These expenses may be covered by external loans. You will need to submit a separate itemized budget with documentation in order to add these expenses to your budget and qualify for additional loans. We expect you to use the least expensive transportation options, i.e., use ground transportation to Boston and Washington, DC and public transportation, not car service, to local airports. Consult **beforehand** with your Financial Aid Officer if you have any questions about allowable expenses.

All requests for additional funds for senior elective travel, including Cooperstown, should be made in writing to the Office of Student Financial Aid & Planning by February 1 of the academic year.

16. **Residency Application and Interview Expenses** – Some expenses for residency applications and interviews may be added to your financial aid budget. This is done on an individual basis. You will need to submit a separate itemized budget with documentation in order to add these expenses to your budget and qualify for additional loans.
17. **Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan and Federal Direct Graduate PLUS (Grad PLUS) Loans** - Students who will not be applying for school need based funds should complete a separate **Master Promissory Note (MPN)** for the Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan. If you will also be applying for the Grad PLUS loan you will need to do a separate MPN. Please note that **Entrance Counseling** is required and can be completed at StudentAid.gov along with the MPN. Entrance Counseling is done once and applies to both loans. If you are a continuing student who borrowed from these programs in the previous academic year, you will not have to complete another MPN or redo the Entrance Counseling.

Please note the following: there is no place on the MPN to request loan amounts:

a) If you don't qualify or apply for school funds your financial aid award letter will include recommended amounts to borrow from the Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan.

You should review your financial aid award letter and then complete and submit the [Financial Aid Acceptance Form](#) within two weeks after receipt of the letter. Should you wish to borrow an amount that is different from what we recommend, please indicate the amounts you wish to borrow on the **Financial Aid Acceptance form**.

You can work with your Financial Aid Officer to make the necessary adjustments if you need help determining the proper amounts. These are the annual maximum amounts for Direct Unsubsidized Stafford, based on your year in school:

	1st Year	2nd Year	3rd Year	4th Year
VP&S	\$42,722	\$42,722	\$47,167	\$44,944

b) **We cannot originate either Stafford Loans or Grad PLUS Loans until you have “accepted” them on the Financial Aid Acceptance Form.** You have the right to cancel these loan amounts or to subsequently change them. However, please be advised that changes may cause a delay with disbursement. For a GradPlus loan you must also submit a Credit Authorization form; you will receive instructions in the award letter checklist which is part of your award letter.

18. **Sibling/Spouse Enrollment Verification** is required if you receive school need based funds and have indicated on the FAFSA or CSS Profile that you will have one or more siblings or a spouse who will be enrolled **full-time** in college or graduate school during the academic year. This form should be completed by each sibling's/spouse's school and returned to our office no later than September 30th of the academic year. **If either your sibling or spouse do not enroll as expected, your financial aid package may be adjusted.**
19. **Verification Worksheet** - To confirm the accuracy of data reported by financial aid applicants and their families, the federal government has a regulatory process called **Verification**. Verification applies to applicants for the Direct Unsubsidized, Graduate PLUS and Federal Work-Study programs.

If you are selected for Verification, our office will contact you with the appropriate Verification Worksheet. It must be returned to our office no later than **three weeks** from the date you are notified that you must complete the form (see below for late penalties). The completed Worksheet plus all required documentation must be reviewed by your Financial Aid Officer before Direct Unsubsidized Loans, Graduate PLUS Loans and Federal Work-Study can be awarded.

Please note also that if you or your spouse receives untaxed benefits, the Verification process requires documentation from the appropriate agency.

If you submit subsequent applications for additional federally-regulated aid after you have filled out a Verification Worksheet, federal regulations require that you "update" your household size, and number of household members in a postsecondary school.

Important Note on Penalties: If the required information has not been submitted by the stated deadline then:

- Our office will consider your application for aid **withdrawn**. You may reactivate it by supplying the information.
- Our office will then certify Federal Direct Stafford and GradPlus loan applications. This will be done only following a review of all on-time applications.
- In any case, if you miss the deadline and your financial aid is delayed because of this, you will be responsible for all late charges assessed on your school account.

HOW DOES VP&S DETERMINE FINANCIAL NEED?

Our financial aid program is designed to help meet the demonstrated need of our students. **"Need" is defined as the difference between anticipated expenses and family financial resources.** Every

application is individually reviewed by a Financial Aid Officer. Students with special family circumstances are encouraged to discuss their situation with a Financial Aid Officer.

Determination of a Family's Financial Resources for Institutional Funds

Family resources are assessed based on the financial information provided by the family on the required FAFSA and CSS Profile applications (from the College Board). A family's total income (taxable and untaxed), as well as all assets (cash, investments, real estate, business value, etc.), are considered in the calculation. **The result of this calculation is used as a rationing index to determine eligibility for institutional need-based funds.**

Assessing Parent Contribution for Institutional Aid

Financial information from parents is **required** of all applicants for **institutional aid regardless** of marital status or length of time a student has been self-supporting. VP&S does not recognize "independence" when determining eligibility for school-based scholarships unless you are age 35 or older by the start of the academic year. This means that **parents who are divorced** must **each** provide the information requested on the CSS Profile. They can use passwords to complete these sections to ensure their information is private. Please be aware that stepparents must also provide their financial information.

All families (of both new and continuing students) whose total annual income falls below \$125,000 a year will be assessed a zero contribution from income; there may still be a parental contribution assessed on the family's assets.

Waiver of Parental Information

Parental information may be waived only in very rare cases should extreme circumstances warrant it. The family situation must be well documented. Such documentation should include third-party verification, i.e. attorney, social worker, member of clergy or family physician who has personal knowledge of the family situation. Complete the required [Waiver of Parental Information](#) and submit it along with the required supplemental materials. Please contact your Financial Aid Officer if you wish to pursue this.

Parent Contribution(s) Are Not Assessed for Certain Funds

Financial information from parents is not required if you are **applying only for Federal Work-Study, and external loans** such as the Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan, Graduate PLUS, or other "alternative" loans.

Assessing Your (and your Spouse's) Contribution for Institutional Aid

We expect that you will pay for a portion or all of your educational expenses. We will evaluate your (and your spouse's) ability to contribute from income and assets. VP&S expects all first and second year students who are applying for institutional funds to contribute a **minimum** of \$1,200 from earnings. Most students will find summer to be the best time to work. On an individual basis, a Financial Aid Officer may reconsider this required "contribution" where a student's academic schedule or circumstances preclude working.

If you are employed in a research or medically related program with limited remuneration, an adjustment may be made. You must provide a letter describing the nature of employment, income from the position, other resources for this period, and a list of expenses for the period covered by

employment. If this pertains to a summer period, you should submit the request and itemization at the end of the summer, but **no later than September 30th**. A revised award will be made where appropriate.

We expect spouses to work outside the home unless they are full-time students or caring for young children. Only student and "dependent/child care" costs can be included in the student's budget.

A contribution is also expected from any assets you and/or your spouse hold, including all assets where you and/or your spouse are the taxpayers of record.

Determination of Academic Year Expenses

Student budgets are divided into two areas: **direct costs** (tuition, fees, books & supplies, transportation to clinical courses, and board exam fees), and **indirect costs** (living expenses such as food, housing, clothing and miscellaneous expenses). The budgets are used to calculate eligibility for all types of financial aid.

A student's budget is computed only for enrolled periods - the summer between first and second year is not an enrolled period, so plan your finances carefully. The length of the academic year varies from class to class. Once you begin your second year, your academic periods run consecutively.

Adjustments to student budgets may be made for the following items, where applicable:

- ✓ If you opt in to the "Medical Insurance Premium Plan" your budget will be increased by an equal amount and your financial aid package will be adjusted accordingly.
- ✓ Transportation home - Varies with final destination, to a maximum of \$1,033 per year. No more than two round trips will be included.
- ✓ Medical/dental care costs - Medical care costs in excess of the benefits provided by the CUIMC Student Health Service Program or dental costs that exceed \$200 per year will be considered if documentation is provided.
- ✓ Child care for a single parent or when spouse is working outside the home.
- ✓ Expenses for students with dependents are reviewed on an individual basis. Be sure to discuss your situation with your financial aid officer when applying for aid.
- ✓ "Away electives" - consideration can be given for ground and air transportation, and for lodging expenses on an individual basis.
- ✓ Residency interview expenses – consideration given on an individual basis.
- ✓ International Student Fee - \$110 assessed each semester by the International Students & Scholars Office – CUIMC (ISSO-CUIMC).
- ✓ Rent – if it exceeds the rent in our "Average Student Budget", up to a maximum of \$1,400 a month.

- ✓ Monthly metro card expense if living outside of Washington Heights.

The budget shown on an award letter reflects a student's expenses, with some adjustment for dependents if applicable. Students with dependents should meet with their Financial Aid Officer at the start of each year to review the items that were included for their family's living expenses.

PLEASE NOTE!

Other expenses will be considered if they are necessary and related to attendance at medical school, **BUT** you should not incur expenses that exceed the standard budget unless: a) you can cover them with assistance from family or friends, or b) if you will need financial aid to cover them, you have **first** cleared the expenditure(s) with your Financial Aid Officer. Be prepared with itemized documentation of any additional expenses. If you do not get Columbia owned housing, we may be able to approve broker's fees and higher rent, BUT only to a predetermined maximum. Potentially refundable deposits cannot be covered.

In most cases you will have to pay for additional expenses by accessing higher cost alternative loans, so it is to your advantage to **"think frugally"**.

THE FINANCIAL AID PACKAGE AND AWARDING POLICIES

Once your demonstrated financial need is ascertained, a Financial Aid Officer will construct a "package," or list of funds you can use to supplement the calculated family contribution in order to pay for medical school.

VP&S Need-Based Scholarships

VP&S need based scholarship funds are awarded to meet the gap between the standard Cost of Attendance and the "calculated Estimated Family Contribution" for the academic year. The maximum scholarship is derived from a single student budget with a zero Estimated Family Contribution.

The basic formula is: Cost of Attendance Budget - Resources = Need.

Cost of Attendance Budget = total costs for one year including tuition, fees, approved study materials, room/board, and other expenses.

Resources = funds available from the student, spouse, and a calculated parent contribution.

Need = difference between the total budget and total available resources. Once a student's calculated need is determined, scholarship funds will be offered to meet this need. Under the Vagelos Scholarship Program, the package of support made available to meet need will not include any loans.

Columbia-Bassett Track

If you are in this track, you will receive a \$30,000 Columbia-Bassett tuition Scholarship for each of the four years of medical school, as long as you make satisfactory academic progress. If you leave the 'regular' curriculum, the scholarship will be suspended. It will be restored when you return to the 'regular' curriculum.

Since this scholarship can be used only toward tuition, should you receive another award that also pays your tuition, this scholarship will be reduced so that your tuition is not overpaid. The following programs would be examples of awards that could reduce or cancel the scholarship: an Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship (Army, Navy, or Air Force), a National Health Service Corps Scholarship, an Indian Health Service Scholarship, or tuition exemption (because a relative is an employee of Columbia University). The only exception would be an award from the VA's Yellow Ribbon Program - it will not affect this scholarship.

Students demonstrating high need will also be eligible for some need-based VP&S Scholarships. The total of this Scholarship and other financial aid cannot exceed the total cost of attendance.

Tax Information for Students

This information is of a general nature, and does not constitute tax advice. Students should consult the Internal Revenue Service, the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance, or a certified tax professional for tax counsel.

Scholarships and Fellowships

Grant aid (scholarships and fellowships) covering the cost of tuition and required fees, books and related classroom expenses, is non-taxable.

Grant aid used for room, board, travel, and incidental living expenses is subject to US federal and state income taxation. In all cases, students are responsible for accurately reporting grant aid amounts, filing returns, and making estimated tax payments, if appropriate.

- There is no withholding on scholarships disbursed to US students and permanent residents. Columbia University is not required to, and does not report, this income to the IRS.
- International students can refer to [this page](#) for withholding information.

Additional Information

For additional information, please consult:

- The [Tax Information page](#) provided by Student Financial Services
- The [Tax Benefits for Education page](#) provided by the IRS

- [Foreign Students and Scholars page](#) provided by the IRS

Loans

There are several scenarios where students may still wish to borrow:

- 1) To borrow the calculated "Estimated Family Contribution";
- 2) To cover eligible expenses that are not in our standard budget; and
- 3) Students who do not receive institutional scholarships, but need assistance to pay for school.

Students in these circumstances are eligible to borrow external loans such as the Direct Unsubsidized, GradPLUS or private alternative loans. Please see Item #18 on page 7 for more information.

For a full description of Institutional Loans (prior borrowers only), Federal Direct Loans, and private alternative loans [click here](#)

Reduction of Loans by External Scholarships

You are encouraged to seek scholarships and loans from funds that are not administered by VP&S (such as National Medical Fellowships, scholarships offered by county medical societies, private foundations, union, or fraternal organizations, etc.). Please visit our website for links that provide information about some "external" sources of financial aid.

If you receive externally awarded scholarships or loans, you **must** notify your Financial Aid Officer. You will be granted a dollar for dollar substitution of the financial aid in the standard package in an amount equal to the "external" award in the following order: Grad PLUS or Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford will be reduced first, and then the VP&S Scholarship, if applicable.

Recipients of the Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship, the National Health Service Corps Scholarship, the Indian Health Service Scholarship, and full time tuition exemption are not eligible for school need-based grants.

Tuition Exemption

If you are a spouse, same-sex partner or child of University personnel, you may be eligible to receive tuition exemption benefits. If you are eligible for fulltime tuition exemption benefits you would not be eligible for Need Based aid from the school. Partial tuition exemption benefits for spouses or children of University personnel are evaluated on an individual basis and may be used to reduce outside loans if you also qualify for need-based school funding. Eligibility guidelines and filing procedures may be obtained through the [Office of Human Resources](#).

International and DACA Students who do not hold a Permanent Resident Visa

International and DACA students may face special challenges in financing their medical education. There are no fully funded scholarships, no federally guaranteed assistance programs, and private educational loans cannot be obtained without a US cosigner. Therefore, early financial planning is essential.

In addition, we request that by **July 1st prior to 1st and 2nd year, and by June 1st prior to 3rd and 4th year** international financial aid applicants or financial aid recipients provide our office with proof of their approved loan(s) in the amount(s) they will need.

If you will be applying for **consideration for school-based scholarships**, you must complete the CSS Profile and the Certification of Finances Form. You will also need to submit additional documents, including tax forms (with English translation, if necessary). These forms must provide parental income and asset information translated into US dollars at official rates of exchange as of the day of filing the form. If a tax return is not filed in your country, please provide a letter from each working parent's employer(s) reporting the yearly earnings. Please have all documents translated into English.

We do not provide any institutional funds to replace the "calculated Estimated Family Contribution" or to cover additional eligible expenses greater than the standard student budget. Therefore, in such cases you must find other means to pay for your education.

Some lenders offer private educational loans to international students who can provide a credit-worthy cosigner who is a US citizen or, for some programs, a US permanent resident. At a minimum, the cosigner should have at least a two-year employment history, good credit, and the ability to repay the loan in case of default on the part of the student. For more detailed information regarding private educational loan programs, please visit the [University's Student Financial Services Web site](#). Please be aware that you have the right and ability to select the education loan provider of your choice, are not required to use any suggested lenders and will suffer no penalty for choosing a lender that is not a suggested lender.

For private loan programs, it is your responsibility to secure an eligible cosigner, and it is very important that you do so as soon as possible. It is also vital that you submit applications for private loans well in advance of the July 1st deadline, preferably by May or early June so that you can find out whether your cosigner meets the credit criteria of the lender you choose. Once you and your cosigner have applied for a loan, the lender will inform you if the loan is approved or denied.

Check with the private loan lender if you are required to have a US Social Security Number (SSN), [Individual Taxpayer ID Number](#) (ITIN) or if it's required only for the cosigner at the time of application. You may need to begin the ITIN or SSN application process as soon as you are considering a private loan. International students should note that you cannot obtain a US Social Security Number unless you are currently living in the United States.

For the purposes of **visa documentation**, you should note that **loans are accepted as documentation of financial resources only if they have been approved for credit by the lender and certified by us**. Therefore, in order to avoid delays with your visa, apply early so that you have your loans finalized by the end of June if you are a 1st or 2nd year student, and by the end of May if you are a 3rd or 4th year student.

Students holding a nonresident visa will be charged an International Services Charge each term (\$110 for 2020-21, but subject to change). This fee supports the University's services to international students.

Completion of the I-20 Form - You will work with International Students and Scholars Office-CUIMC ([ISSO-CUIMC](#)) to obtain the Form I-20 Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status needed to apply for your F-1 student visa. Whether or not you are applying for any financial aid, you must complete the online Application for Visa Certificate of Eligibility (AVC). If you are financing part of the cost with alternative loans, we will require approval from those lenders before your I-20 can be issued. Application materials for the I-20 form should be submitted according to the instructions on the [AVC web site](#). Processing time is usually four weeks after all materials have been submitted; allow at least 3 to 4 months before you plan to enter the United States.

All questions related to the issuance of visa documentation should be addressed to the [ISSO-CUIMC](#) at 212-305-8165.

Withholding Tax - United States tax law requires the University to withhold tax at the rate of 14% on scholarship and fellowship grants paid to nonresident aliens in excess of the cost of tuition, books, fees and related classroom expenses. Although a VP&S Scholarship awarded to an international student never exceeds this amount, the University's accounting system makes an across-the-board assumption that stipends are only given if other scholarship funds already cover tuition. **Therefore, to avoid having stipends incorrectly taxed, a VP&S scholarship or grant will be applied towards your bill. This means that you need to be prepared with adequate personal funds to meet out-of-pocket expenses at the start of the year.** See [here](#) for more information.

Certain countries have entered into tax treaties with the United States that may serve to reduce this rate of withholding. However, even when such a treaty applies, both you and the University must report the full amount of such excess to the Internal Revenue Service. If you claim tax treaty benefits, you must also report this amount to your country of residence.

Because of legal restrictions, our staff and the staff of ISSO-CUIMC are not permitted to answer individual questions from international students regarding tax liabilities. To assist you in complying with your tax obligations, the ISSO-CUIMC offers annual tax workshops for international students in February, March, and early April. You may also wish to consult the consulate of your country of residence or a qualified professional.

WHEN WILL I HEAR?

Current students should receive financial aid award letters no later than the beginning of June, provided all required documents and requested information have been submitted in a timely manner.

Entering students in the Class of 2024 with complete should receive award letters by April 13th.

Prior to matriculation, **all notices and letters for entering** students will be sent to the email address you provided to the VP&S Admissions Office, until you have been instructed to activate your UNI (Columbia email address). Once activated, all mail will go to your UNI.

You should periodically check [NetPartner](#) to see if any items are still needed to complete your application.

You can also expect to receive notification from us when the following events occur:

- ✓ If you are selected for Verification;
- ✓ When loan checks arrive, for example from a private “alternative” loan or “outside” foundation;
- ✓ If adjustments are made to your initial award.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Interschool Scholarships

A number of scholarships are awarded directly by the University and are available only to students who meet specific criteria. **If you meet any of the following criteria, please write to our office explaining how you qualify, no later than June 1, 2020. If you are accepted after this date and feel you are eligible for these scholarships, please contact our office to see if we can still submit nominations.**

Ellis	Graduate students who are residents of Vermont who have graduated from an accredited Vermont college or university.
Hollingworth	Female Graduates of the University of Nebraska.
Nichoplas	Male or female student of any area of the University who has attended college or university in Greece. Available to graduate or undergraduate students for a maximum of two years.
Poder	Candidates must speak Estonian.
Upton	Children of employees of the Houghton Mifflin Company, Lexington, Massachusetts.

External Scholarships

We encourage you to look at the [outside scholarship opportunities on our website](#) to assist in your efforts to obtain support for your studies. Other good sources are the websites [Foundation Grants to Individuals Online](#) and www.finaid.org.

We expect that **all** eligible students will apply for grants that are administered by their states of legal residence. You should investigate the availability of scholarship programs in their home state.

[National Medical Fellowships \(NMF\)](#)

To qualify for these need-based fellowships, an applicant must be a U.S. Citizen from one of the following underrepresented minority groups as defined by NMF: African-Americans, Mexican-Americans, Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and mainland Puerto Ricans who permanently reside within the 50 U.S. states. NMF is a non-profit organization, which provides grants-in-

aid for first-and second-year students judged by NMF to be in need of financial assistance. Applications and additional information on need-based scholarships as well as special fellowships may be obtained from National Medical Fellowships, Inc, 12 East 46th Street, Suite 5E New York, NY 10017 by phone at 212-483-8880. Check their website for deadlines.

Service Scholarships

A limited number of **Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarships** are available. These scholarships provide full payment of direct (tuition, fees, books, etc.) educational costs and a stipend for living expenses. Each carries a service commitment.

Students interested in applying for these programs are encouraged to discuss these options with us and with Dr. Lisa Mellman, Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs, before making a commitment. You may obtain descriptive brochures and applications for these programs by contacting the following:

Phillip Archunde, HMC
[Navy Medical Officer Recruiter](#)
26 Federal Plaza, Suite 13-100A
New York, NY 10280
Cell: 718-812-8892
E-mail: phillip.a.archunde@navy.mil

Shawn A. Williams, SFC
[U.S. Army Professional Health Care Recruiter](#)
26 Federal Plaza, Suite 1415
New York, NY 10280
Office: 212-962-3182
Cell: 443-694-9570
E-mail: shawn.a.williams2.mil@mail.mil

Jonathan Castroman, TSgt
[Air Force Health Professions Recruiter](#)
26 Federal Plaza, 13th FL, Suite 30-131
New York, NY 10280
Cell: 347-573-3111
Office: 212-233-4560 x 205
E-mail: jonathan.castroman@us.af.mil

Scholarships are also available from the **[National Health Service Corps Scholarship Program](#)** for students who will become a primary care physician. For more information about scholarship opportunities through NHSC, you can also call 800-221-9393.

The **[Indian Health Service Health Professions Scholarship](#)** covers tuition, required fees and other educational and living expenses for qualified American Indian and Alaska Native students (members

of federally recognized tribes only) applying to, accepted by or enrolled in health professions programs. Students incur service obligations.

RULES FOR REFUND AND RETURN OF FINANCIAL AID FUNDS

Refund Policy

If you withdraw, take a leave of absence, leave the University without formal notification, or if you are requested to leave, you may be eligible for a refund of all or a portion of your tuition, fees, and dorm charges based on the earlier of the date of formal withdrawal or the documented date of last attendance. The [tuition adjustment schedule](#) is published on the VP&S website under Policies – University Policies. All students are charged a withdrawal fee of \$75.

Withdrawal is defined as dropping the entire academic program in a given term, not a portion of the program. The Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs determines the formal withdrawal or date of last attendance to be one of the following:

- The date the student began the school's withdrawal process or officially notified the institution of intent to withdraw.
- The date of last documented academic activity.
- The midpoint of the semester for those students who do not formally withdraw.

The Senior Associate Dean for Student Affairs determines the formal start and end date for a **leave of absence**. If you are approved for a leave of absence you will be subject to the *Refund and Return of Aid Calculations* listed below.

Return of Financial Aid Funds

If you have received financial aid and subsequently withdraw during a semester, the Office of Student Financial Aid & Planning must recalculate eligibility for financial aid, and determine if any financial aid funds must be returned or cancelled.

You will receive a revised award letter based on the new period of attendance and must attend an exit interview with the Office of Student Financial Aid & Planning. We must process all award changes to Title IV, and Columbia-administered funds, and determine if a return of financial aid funds is due, within 30 days from the date the school has determined you withdrew.

Title IV and Title VII Funds Calculation - Students who received Title IV and Title VII aid are subject to a recalculation of their eligibility according to the federal "Return of Title IV Funds" formula.

- Title IV funds are the federal financial aid programs authorized under the Higher Education Act of 1965 (as amended) and include the following programs: Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford and Federal Direct Graduate PLUS loans.
- Title VII funds are the federal financial aid programs authorized under the Health Professions Training Act and include: LDS- Loans for Disadvantaged Students, HPSL- Health Professions Student Loan (DDS candidates only), PCL- Primary Care Loan (MD candidates only).

- Allowable charges include tuition and all “billable” fees (excluding the withdrawal fee) paid directly to Registration & Student Financial Services, as well as rent paid for Columbia owned housing.
- The percentage of Title IV and Title VII aid returned is determined by dividing the number of days of attendance in a semester by the total number of days in that semester. Scheduled breaks of five (5) consecutive days or more are excluded.
- The federal formula is applicable up to the 60% point of the semester. After the 60% point, the student is eligible for 100% of Title IV and Title VII aid disbursed or scheduled to be disbursed for that semester.
- Students will be requested to approve any post withdrawal disbursements after the Return of Title IV Funds Calculation is completed. The Office of Student Financial Aid & Planning will contact the student one time via email. If there is no response within 14 days a late disbursement of funds will not be authorized.

School Funds and Private Loans Calculation - Eligibility for school funds and private loan funds will be prorated based on actual costs incurred for the enrolled period.

Columbia University's Responsibility

- Perform Return of Title IV and Title VII Funds calculation. Federal funds will be returned in the following order:
 - Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford
 - Federal Direct Grad PLUS Loan
 - PCL
 - LDS
- State aid funds will be returned according to state guidelines.
- External scholarships will be returned according to external granting institution guidelines.
- Perform Return of School Funds and Private Loan Calculation. Order of the return of funds will be:
 - School Scholarships
 - Columbia University Loans (prior borrowers)
 - Private Loans

Student's Responsibility

- Repay loans according to the terms of the loan program(s).
- Repay any scholarship/grant funds required by the calculation.
- Repay any funds released to the student because of a credit balance that now have to be returned as part of the Return of Title IV aid formula.
- Collection of any grant overpayments will be handled through Student Financial Services, utilizing the regular student billing system.
- You must notify our office in writing if you wish to have more loan money returned to the lender than is prescribed by the formula.
- Complete required on-line loan Exit Counseling.

POLICY ON FRAUD AND ABUSE IN FINANCIAL AID

The Office of Student Financial Aid & Planning for the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, the College of Dental Medicine, the Institute of Human Nutrition, and the Programs in Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Genetic Counseling is responsible for overseeing the disbursement of educational funds provided by a number of state and federal programs as well as loans and scholarships from Columbia University. These total over \$80 million dollars during the 2019-20 academic year.

This stewardship includes validating of submitted information, awarding aid, monitoring students' and their families' changing financial circumstances, and dealing effectively and fairly with instances of suspected fraud and abuse.

Information submitted by students and families must be accurate. Changes in personal and family financial circumstances which may change a student's eligibility must be reported, documented, and financial aid packages reexamined, to give the student all potential benefits and to fairly distribute funds.

Discrepancies in reported information and IRS 1040 forms or other income and asset verification materials must be clarified. The Office of Student Financial Aid & Planning must, under the law, award funds only to students who prove their eligibility.

We may declare students ineligible for financial aid if there are significant unexplained discrepancies, if students' applications are delayed beyond the filing deadlines published in the Office of Student Financial Aid & Planning Handbook, or if there is intentional misrepresentation on the part of the student and his or her family.

Acts of fraud and abuse will result in loss of financial aid eligibility, and may result in termination of matriculation and/or referral to the responsible agency of the federal or state governments for investigation and potential prosecution.

The information in this HANDBOOK is compiled to help students understand the financial aid process at Columbia University's Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, College of Dental Medicine, the Institute of Human Nutrition, and the Programs in Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Genetic Counseling. It is as accurate and complete as we can make it at the time of printing. We cannot be responsible for subsequent changes to information or programs over which our office has no control; or for inadvertent omission, misinformation, or typographical errors.

The Office of Student Financial Aid & Planning is located in Rm 139 of the Black Building.

We are open from 9 am to 5 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Wednesdays we are open from 12pm to 5pm.



**COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
IRVING MEDICAL CENTER**

Office of Student Financial Aid & Planning
Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons
College of Dental Medicine
630 West 168th Street
New York, NY 10032
(212) 305-4100
ps.columbia.edu/financialaid
