

HOW TO APPLY FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Students do not have to wait for an acceptance decision from the Office of Admissions to begin the financial assistance application process. Students should begin the financial assistance application process as early as possible.

1. A student must complete and file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as early as possible after Jan. 1. A new FAFSA or renewal FAFSA must be completed for each academic year. A FAFSA is required for most types of financial assistance. The FAFSA is on the web at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Francis Marion University must be designated as a school to which the student wants results sent by placing code 009226 on the FAFSA. Priority processing will be given to students who file a FAFSA prior to March 1 and complete his/her FA file by March 29.
2. New freshmen students who wish to be considered for scholarships should submit a scholarship application to the Admissions Office by March 15. The scholarship application is available online under the banner, "Admissions – Scholarship Forms."

Continuing students who wish to apply for institutional scholarships should submit the FMU scholarship application to the Office of Financial Assistance by March 1. Students interested in institutional scholarships are also encouraged to file a FAFSA. For scholarship purposes, a FAFSA is used to determine eligibility for need-based scholarships. The application can be downloaded from Jan. 1-March 1 by selecting "Financial Assistance" under "Quick Links" at www.fmarion.edu and then choosing "Download Forms."

3. After the student files a FAFSA, the federal processing center will generate a Student Aid Report (SAR). This SAR will be emailed to the student. Also, if FMU was listed on the FAFSA, the University will receive the same data electronically from the U.S. Department of Education. Requests for additional information will be sent to the student. Once all requirements are met and the student's file is complete, an offer of financial assistance will be made.

AWARD CRITERIA

Financial Assistance awards are based on the following requirements; non-compliance with these requirements may significantly alter or eliminate eligibility for assistance.

- Final acceptance by the University into an eligible program.
- Full-time enrollment. Financial assistance may be available at reduced levels to those enrolled less than full-time.
- The applicant is not in default on any federal student loan.
- The applicant does not owe a repayment on any Federal Pell or Federal SEOG grant.
- Maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress as defined by the University for financial assistance purposes. See "Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy" later in this chapter.
- The Office of Financial Assistance has been informed of all awards expected by a student from parties outside the University.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

For financial assistance purposes, an undergraduate or graduate student must generally be enrolled in a degree program at least half-time (six credit hours for undergraduates, three credit hours for graduate students). Some programs are limited to students who are full-time (12 or more undergraduate credit hours in a fall or spring semester or six or more graduate credit hours). Please check individual program descriptions for enrollment requirements.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The University offers a comprehensive program of student financial assistance in the form of scholarships, grants, loans, and part-time employment to assist both undergraduate and graduate students in meeting educational expenses. **FMU administers financial aid without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability.**

INSTITUTIONAL ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships are made available in varying amounts to students through the generosity and outstanding commitment of businesses, organizations, and individuals, including the Francis Marion University Foundation.

All institutional academic scholarships are renewable provided the student earns 30 semester hours a year and a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher.

Distinction Scholarships – This award is granted to first-year students with a minimum of a 3.0 grade point average and a 1100 combined SAT (CR + M) or 24 ACT Composite. Students are awarded this scholarship soon after being admitted.

Fellows Scholarships – These awards are granted to first-year students ranging from \$500 to \$2,500 a year. Students must complete an on-campus interview conducted by faculty. The deadline is March 15.

Konduros Scholarships – This scholarship is awarded by the University to first-year students. The award is for \$6,000 per year. Applications are available online. Students must complete an on-campus interview conducted by faculty. The deadline is March 15.

Robert E. McNair Scholarships – The McNair Scholarship is awarded to two or three students in each first-year class. The scholarship guarantees a student a full grant award to include tuition, room and board. Students must complete service learning while enrolled and a study abroad experience. First-year students will apply online and must apply prior to the third Friday in November.

Phi Theta Kappa Scholarships are awarded on a limited basis to members of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society who transfer to FMU. Students must have at least a 3.25 cumulative grade point average from the two-year institution where they are members of Phi Theta Kappa.

STATE SCHOLARSHIPS

Other scholarship opportunities that students should consider include:

S.C. HOPE Scholarships – The South Carolina HOPE Scholarship, established under the South Carolina Education Lottery Act, was approved by the General Assembly during the 2001 legislative session and signed into law on June 13, 2001. Act 356 authorizes funding for scholarships in the amount of \$2,800 per year to eligible students attending four-year public and independent institutions in South Carolina. The purpose of the S.C. HOPE Scholarship program is to provide funding to students who graduate from high school with a 3.0 cumulative grade point average but are not eligible to receive the LIFE or Palmetto Fellows scholarships. Act 356 authorizes the Commission on Higher Education to promulgate regulation for administration of the S.C. HOPE Scholarship program. There is no application for the S.C. HOPE Scholarship. All students who are accepted to the University will be automatically considered.

S.C. LIFE Scholarships – The South Carolina General Assembly passed legislation authorizing the creation of the Legislative Incentives for Future Excellence (LIFE) Scholarships in June 1998. This scholarship is valued at \$5,000 per year and is available to qualified S.C. residents who have