



Merrimack College

**Financial Aid
Policy Guide**

Undergraduate

Day Division

2011-2012


Merrimack
COLLEGE

Merrimack College is committed to assisting students in achieving their educational goals. This policy guide is provided so you can better understand your financial aid award. Please read it prior to signing your award letter, and keep it for future reference. If you have any questions regarding financial aid, please feel free to contact our office.

NOTIFICATIONS AND DEADLINES

Note to Incoming Freshmen and Transfer Students:

Sign and return one copy of your Financial Aid Award Letter to the Office of Financial Aid by May 1, 2011. If you receive your award letter after May 1, please return it within 14 days. You are not obligated to accept any or all of the aid offered.

Deposits are due as described in your Admissions Acceptance letter.

Note to Upperclass Students:

You will be able to electronically accept or decline your package. Instructions will be included with your award letter.

FILING FOR FINANCIAL AID

In order to apply for need-based, institutional, federal or state aid, the student must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at www.fafsa.gov. In order to file, the student and parent must obtain a Personal Identification Number (PIN) at www.pin.ed.gov. The Merrimack College Federal School Code is 002120 and must be included on the student's FAFSA application.

ENROLLMENT STATUS

All financial aid awards are tentative and will apply only if the student enrolls full-time (at least 12 credit hours) for the entire semester in a degree program at Merrimack College, and if the College receives the anticipated Federal and State funds. Awards will be adjusted for less than full-time attendance, a change in financial need, a change from day to evening enrollment, a change in housing status or as a result of verification.

Withdrawal from a course at any time which reduces the credit load to less than 12 credits could impact a student's scholarship or grant award. Students considering withdrawing from a class should check with the Office of Financial Aid regarding their aid package.

ESTIMATED EXPENSES

The 2010-2011 tuition, room, board and miscellaneous fees can be found in the Merrimack College web site on the Bursar page at www.merrimack.edu.

Next year's costs will be announced in the spring.

This example is based on 2010-2011 costs.

Cost Worksheet		
Tuition, Fees		Tuition, Fees Room and Board,
\$31,380	Billed Costs (estimates from 2010-2011)	\$42,080
minus _____	subtract all gift aid (scholarships, grants)	minus _____
minus _____	subtract Perkins or MA No Interest Loan	minus _____
minus _____	subtract 99.5% of Federal Direct Student Loan	minus _____
equals _____	approximate net cost after financial aid	equals _____

Do not deduct your work study award.

Remaining costs can be paid through a variety of resources, including:

1. savings
2. private scholarships
3. payment plan
4. parent PLUS loan
5. private/alternative loan
6. or a combination of the above



TYPES OF AID

GRANTS

Grants are gift aid which does not have to be repaid.

ATHLETIC GRANT IN AID: Recipients are selected by the Merrimack Department of Athletics. All questions regarding this type of aid should be directed to the Coach and the Assistant Athletic Director of Compliance.

DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS MATCHING SCHOLARSHIP: Merrimack allocates limited funds each year to provide up to \$500 in matching awards to students who are recipients of Dollars for Scholars Scholarships. For information on the application process, students should contact their local Dollar for Scholars Chapter.

ENDOWED/RESTRICTED SCHOLARSHIPS: A number of individuals, foundations and corporations have donated money to establish nearly 250 endowed/restricted scholarships to Merrimack College. These scholarships vary in character and purpose. Some support study in a particular field, others provide assistance to students from designated geographic areas.

All are based on merit, leadership capability and financial need. Returning students can apply for these scholarships by filing the FAFSA and completing the application which is available on myMack between February 1 and April 1.

Scholarships appropriate for entering students do not require a separate application.

If you are selected as a recipient you will be notified of the award name and to whom a letter of thanks must be addressed. Your acceptance of these funds implies permission for the College to publicize the award.

FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP: If two children are enrolled at Merrimack College in a full-time, day degree program, each child receives a 10% reduction in tuition. Three children receive 13 1/3% and four children receive 15% (reduction is taken after institutional aid is applied).

FEDERAL PELL GRANT: Pell grants are awarded to students who have filed the FAFSA and whose Expected Family Contribution falls within federal guidelines. Award amounts for full-time students in 2011-2012 expect to range from \$555 to \$5,550 per year, pending federal funding.

FEDERAL SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY GRANT:

Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants are awarded on a very limited basis first to Pell Grant recipients, pending federal funding. We have a limited amount of SEOG funds, so not all Pell grant recipients will receive SEOG funds.

FEDERAL TEACH GRANT: Teach grants are funded by the federal government. Teach grants are awarded to students who meet certain academic requirements and indicate they intend to teach in a federally defined high need school for 4 years upon graduation. The grant reverts to an unsubsidized federal student loan if the obligation to teach is not fulfilled within 8 years of graduation. The FAFSA is the annual application and an Agreement to Serve and entrance and exit counseling must be completed. Teach does not require that the student have financial need. For complete details about the Teach Grant, go to www.teachgrant.ed.gov.

GILBERT GRANT: Gilbert Grants are one-year grants made available by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to eligible Massachusetts residents. Awards are determined annually pending state funding.

MASSGRANT: Massachusetts provides educational grants to qualified students who have completed the FAFSA. Eligibility is based on residency, financial need according to the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and enrollment status. For the 2010-2011 academic year, the Massgrant awards ranged from \$300 to \$1,600. The Massgrant is not automatically renewed as students must file the FAFSA before May 1, 2011 to determine eligibility.

If you have received state notification you may deduct the state scholarship from your bill only with the understanding that you are responsible for any balance due if the state subsequently adjusts or cancels your award.



MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS: Scholarships are renewable for four years or eight semesters as long as the student maintains good academic standing as defined in the Merrimack College catalog.

MERRIMACK NEED-BASED GRANT: In order to qualify for need-based aid, a student must file the FAFSA and demonstrate financial need. The award amount in subsequent years will be determined by the demonstrated level of financial need.

MERRIMACK NON-RENEWABLE GRANT: These grants are funded by the College and are awarded for one year and are not renewable.

STATE SCHOLARSHIPS: Your state agency will notify you directly of your tentative award. States which have reciprocal agreements with the Commonwealth are: Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and the District of Columbia. If you have received state notification, you may deduct the state scholarship from your bill only with the understanding that you are responsible for any balance due if the state subsequently adjusts or cancels your award.

TUITION EXCHANGE: This is a scholarship based on parental employment at another participating institution. For additional information, contact the Tuition Exchange liaison at your college.

LOANS

FEDERAL PERKINS LOAN: The Federal Perkins loan is available to students with financial need. Loan amounts range from \$500 to \$5,500 per year. These loans require no principal or interest payments while the student is pursuing a degree. Ordinarily, a repayment period of ten years is permitted at an interest rate of 5% on the unpaid balance beginning nine months after graduation. Funding is limited.

MASSACHUSETTS NO INTEREST LOAN: The Massachusetts No Interest Loan Program is a state-funded, no interest, deferred loan offered to qualified Massachusetts residents. Repayment does not begin until six months after graduation. Loan amounts range from \$1,000 to \$4,000 per year. Students must file the FAFSA and have an EFC range between \$0 and \$15,000. Funding is limited.

FEDERAL DIRECT LOAN PROGRAMS: Federal Direct Student Loan provides loan funds to students to help pay college costs. This is a student loan, therefore the student is responsible for repayment. Repayment begins six months after graduation.

This loan is available to students who have demonstrated financial need calculated by the federal formula of the FAFSA. Students are eligible for either a Subsidized Student Loan (the government pays the interest while the student is in school) or an Unsubsidized Student Loan (interest is the responsibility of the borrower) or a combination of both.

The anticipated 2011-2012 interest rate for the Subsidized Loan is 3.4% fixed. The anticipated 2011-2012 interest rate for the Unsubsidized Loan is 6.8% fixed and accrues while the student is in school. The student may pay the interest while in school or capitalize it and pay it along with the principal upon leaving school.

Direct Loan eligibility is based on FAFSA filing. The loan is awarded to the student by the college. New student borrowers must complete the Entrance Counseling and electronically sign the Master Promissory Note at www.studentloans.gov. After the electronic MPN and Entrance Counseling notifications have been received by the College from the federal website, the net amount of the loan will be credited to the student's account, half in each semester.

The amount that the student may borrow depends on the number of earned credits. The federal government deducts 0.5 % in fees from the gross loan amount before forwarding the proceeds to the school.



Maximum annual Student loan limits

Status:	Earned credits:	Base Subsidized/Unsubsidized	Additional Unsubsidized
Freshman	0 to 28	\$3,500	\$2,000
Sophomore	29 to 60	\$4,500	\$2,000
Junior	61 to 92	\$5,500	\$2,000
Senior	93 +	\$5,500	\$2,000

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

There are two types of work programs administered by the College.

1. Federal Work Study is a federally subsidized part-time employment program. Jobs are available on or off campus.
2. College Employment is an on-campus, part-time employment program funded by the College.

The amount shown on the Financial Aid Award letter is a limit on the amount a student can earn during the academic year.

Paychecks are issued bi-weekly via direct deposit, therefore the award amount is not deducted from the tuition account.

Jobs and employment announcements will be posted on the Student Employment web site. Details will be available by mid-summer.



FINANCING OPTIONS

There are some other opportunities for families to meet their tuition obligation.

FEDERAL PARENT DIRECT (PLUS) LOAN for Undergraduate Students

The PLUS loan is available to credit-worthy parents of dependent undergraduate students. Parents may borrow up to the full cost of education less any financial aid. The first step in applying for a PLUS loan is to be sure that the student for whom a PLUS loan is being processed has filed the FAFSA. This is a new federal regulation.

The anticipated 2011-2012 interest rate for the PLUS loan is 7.9% fixed with a 4% net origination fee. The origination fee is deducted from the loan before funds are sent to the college. Some borrowers may qualify for a 1.5% rebate of the origination fee. Repayment begins 60 days after final disbursement and is based on a 10 year repayment. The borrower may also contact the loan servicer to pay interest only or defer payment completely until the student is no longer enrolled in school at least half time.

Parents may apply for the PLUS loan at www.studentloans.gov. Parents must electronically sign the Master Promissory Note before funds will be disbursed to the College.

PRIVATE/ALTERNATIVE LOAN OPTIONS

Students may apply for a private/alternative loan with a credit-worthy co-borrower up to the annual cost of attendance less any financial aid received. Loans vary in interest rates, fees and repayment options. Repayment of interest usually begins immediately, with some lenders offering deferment options.

The College has selected a variety of lenders that may meet your circumstances. You are not obliged to borrow from this list of lenders. You may use any private lender of your choice. Refer to www.merrimack.edu/finaid.



PAYMENT PLANS

Merrimack College is pleased to offer an interest free monthly payment plan through Tuition Management Systems. You have the option of spreading your payments over 8, 9, or 10 months. This plan is available to you for an annual enrollment fee of \$85. In addition, Education Payment Life Insurance covering the balance of your payment plan amount is also included.

AWARD POLICIES

1. All federal and state awards are subject to government funding.
2. If your FAFSA is selected for verification, you will be required to complete the 2011-2012 verification worksheet and provide the requested documentation, which may include federal tax returns and W2s.
3. If the student withdraws from any course or courses after the drop/add period or otherwise decreases his/her course load, withdraws from the College or changes housing status, the package may be adjusted.
4. As noted on the Financial Aid award letter one half of the institution and government aid is credited to your account each semester. Please be advised that work study is not deducted from your tuition.
5. Financial Aid, including merit and need-based grants, can be used for study abroad costs approved by and administered through Merrimack.
6. In order to receive federal and state aid, students must maintain satisfactory academic progress as defined in the Merrimack College catalog.
7. Merrimack scholarships and grants are awarded for full-time undergraduate enrollment. Awards are renewed for four years or eight semesters providing the recipient is enrolled full-time and maintains good academic standing as defined in the Merrimack College catalog.
8. Receipt of outside scholarships may affect the aid package. Outside awards are first used to meet financial need not already met by the aid package. If a student's financial need is met, the outside scholarship may affect his/her eligibility for a subsidized loan.
9. Merrimack College reserves the right to correct any errors in notification of awards.

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Merrimack College does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, disability, age, marital status, religion, color, sexual orientation, veteran status, national origin or any status protected by or which may become protected by law in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its programs and activities, except where such conditions may constitute bona fide qualifications for the programs or activities in question. The following person has been designated to handle student inquiries regarding the College's nondiscrimination policy: C. Alexa Abowitz, Vice President of Administration and General Counsel

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Office of Financial Aid is located in Austin Hall. Our office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. If you wish to call us and discuss your financial aid, you may reach us at 978-837-5186 or by email at financialaid@merrimack.edu.

Telephone numbers you may find helpful:

Admission Office

978-837-5100

Bursar Office

978-837-5105

Financial Aid Office

978-837-5186

Residence Life

978-837-5507

Registrar Office

978-837-5320

School for Advanced Studies

978-837-5202

Federal Student Aid - Information Center

800-433-3243



Office of Financial Aid
315 Turnpike Street, North Andover, MA 01845

www.merrimack.edu