

Financial Aid

Federal Pell Grant

SMAT operates a clock-hour program which consists of two, 26 week Academic Years, compiled into one 12 month period. Academic year one begins in late August and runs through late February, while academic year two begins immediately behind year one and continues until late August of the next calendar year. Undergraduate students have the opportunity to receive a Pell Grant in both academic years, provided they continue to meet the progress to completion requirements. However, since this Academic calendar includes two different award years, the year that crosses over the Department of Education's fiscal year date of July 1 will be reviewed to determine if the Pell grant award is more beneficial from the current year FAFSA or the previous year FAFSA. For all other federal aid purposes, the previous year FAFSA will be used.

Disbursement of Pell grant money will be in two equal amounts and at two equal payment periods within each academic year. The first disbursement will be no earlier than 30 days from the start of the academic year. The second disbursement will be at the beginning of week 14 of the current academic year. Assuming the first academic year of 475 hours and 13 weeks has been completed, disbursement for the third and fourth periods will be made during the first week of the period. Each disbursement will be applied directly to the recipient student's account for the purpose of paying their tuition, fees and FAFSA calculated personal expenses.

Payments for part-year student will be calculated using a Department of ED pre-described formula and payment shall be the lesser value of either the hour or week calculation. This adjustment to the payment shall be made for any student who transfers into our program part way through the year. However, a transfer student's remaining Pell eligibility at SMAT is reduced if the student received Pell funds for the same award year at any prior school. To assess a transfer student's eligibility for a second Pell award in an award year, we will use the assumption method for calculating earned clock hours to match SMAT's requirements. A student who attends 60% or more of an academic year (570 hours/15.6 weeks) shall earn their total calculated Pell award.

Any student who completely withdraws from the program before meeting the above requirement, or who does not successfully complete the course load, must return any unearned Pell grant award amounts to the Department of Education. This amount will be determined by the Finance Director by completing the R2T4 worksheet provided by the Department of Education. See Return or Refund of Title IV Funds under the Refund Policy Document.

The Pell Grant is not available to students who have previously completed an academic degreed program.

Students wishing to use the available balance of their Federal financial aid, including Pell grant money, for other educationally related expenses after tuition and fees have been satisfied may do so by completing an "Authorization to Withdraw Funds" form available at the Finance Office.

Federal Direct Loans (Subsidized) and (Un-subsidized)

The Pell Grant award is always the foundational item of the financial package. Pell is gift aid and does not need to be paid back. A government payment schedule is provided annually to be used for determining the amount of Pell aid to be awarded.

For additional need, the student has available several self-help options in loans. The Federal Direct Subsidized loan would be the next item in the package for a qualifying student. This need-based loan is drawn from the U. S. Treasury with interest rates set by law. The Federal government subsidizes the interest and principle of the loan while the student is still in school, meaning no accumulation of interest will be accrued, and no payments need to be made on the loan until six months (grace period) following graduation, at which time, a regular loan repayment schedule will go into effect. The school, not the Department of Education, determines the borrower's eligibility for the direct loan program.

If there is still additional need, the Federal government offers a Federal Direct Un-subsidized loan which begins accumulation of interest upon its inception; however, no payment is required to be made on this loan until six months following graduation. This loan is not need-based and usually offers higher limits to the amount of funds available. These Federal Direct loans are available to all students who qualify. The Un-subsidized loan may be used to cover of the EFC amount due, if desired.

Federal Direct PLUS Loans

There is yet one more Federal option for loans that SMAT makes available which is the Direct PLUS (Parents of Undergraduate Students) Loan. This loan is taken out by the parents of their dependent student and is not based upon need.

In order to participate in the Federal Direct Loans Program, students must:

- Complete the FAFSA
- Meet the general eligibility requirements
- Apply for a Personal Identification Number (PIN) www.pin.ed.gov
- Submit a signed Master Promissory Note (MPN)

The MPN form can be found on the FSA Student Loans website and can be electronically signed and submitted. <https://studentloans.gov/myDirectLoan/index.action>

If the student meets all the eligibility requirements and all application materials are received along with the Student Aid Report (SAR) or the Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR), the Financial Aid Administrator determines from this information the necessary need and prepares a Notification of Student Aid letter. This notification letter becomes a permanent part of the student's file and serves to document exactly how and why a student received a particular award. This letter is also useful when completing the origination record, disbursement record and the student's Financial Aid Award Letter. Once the student approves the Financial Aid Award Letter and submits it to the Financial Aid Director, the request for funds is processed. Once requested loan proceeds are available, the packaged amount of aid is ready to be disbursed. There is a waiting period of 30 days before the first disbursement can be made.

Loan disbursement is the responsibility of the Finance Office. Student and parent loans must be multiple-disbursed, meaning there will be two equal payments during the academic year. The disbursement of all financial aid must comply with all current federal or other awarding agencies regulations concerning these disbursements. All aid will be disbursed according to approval granted on the Federal Aid Award Letter, however a notice of at least 14 days must be given before the payment start date should the student for some reason decide to revise or cancel the whole or some part of the loan package. The student can make the adjustments they desire to the package by using the Financial Aid Revision Request Form which is available at the Business Office.

Federal loans may be denied if a student is in loan default status, owes a Title IV refund, is not creditworthy, has already received the maximum grade-level loan amounts for the academic year, or has already received the total aggregate loan amount(s) permissible as a an undergraduate student. In some cases, the denial can be reversed if remedial action is put into action, such as repaying the overpayment, etc.

A student may request a review of special circumstances or the Financial Aid Administrator may determine, after reviewing the student's application, that the student may need special consideration. This request might also come from the Department of Education, requesting that the student's application information must go through their pre-described verification process. No aid will be disbursed until the issue which triggered this request has been satisfactorily corrected. The Financial Aid Administrator will request the student or parent to file the Application for Review of Special Conditions which describes a questionable situation or special circumstances. Official documents, such as court orders, or other evidence such as receipts, bills, tax forms and schedules will be required. The Financial Aid Administrator must document the decision, how the decision was reached and the action to be taken. The student's request or written explanation, along with supporting documentation and the decision of the Financial Aid Administrator will be filed in the student's financial aid file. Students who feel their request for review of special conditions has not been processed properly have the right to appeal such decisions to the President of SMAT. The form, Application for Review of Special Conditions, is available in the Financial Aid Director's office to help with this process.

If none of the above issues are evident but the application for the loan has still been rejected, opportunity will be available to correct any wrong or misleading information which has caused such rejection. Comments will appear on the Student Aid Report (SAR) explaining the application rejection and indicating action the applicant may take to correct his/her information so that eligibility may be determined. The Financial Aid Administrator reviews the comments which explain why the SAR/ISIR rejected the application and assists the applicant in corrective actions required to repair the information.

Veterans Benefits

The School of Missionary Aviation Technology is authorized by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to offer eligible veterans, student assistance through the following:

- Chapter 30, Montgomery GI Bill, (MGIB),
- Chapter 33, Post 9/11 GI Bill,
- Chapter 35, Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program,
- Chapter 1606, Montgomery GI Bill / Selected Reserves, (MGIB-SR),

Chapter 31, Vocation Rehabilitation Assistance,
Michigan National Guard Tuition Assistance (MINGSTAP) & Federal Tuition Assistance
(FTA)

Chapter 1607, Reserve Educational Assistance Program, (REAP).

Students who qualify for this assistance should contact the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs at (888) 442-4551 to determine VA benefits available. Once a benefit package has been determined, contact the SMAT Financial Aid Administrator for the procedure in applying for VA education benefits.

Other Financial Aid

There are a wide variety of available scholarship monies available for students, which require persistent and diligent pursuit. Applying and securing any scholarship money is the sole responsibility of the student. Any money received from this effort must be reported to the Finance Office so that the student's aid package can be adjusted accordingly.

Sponsoring churches or other organizations are a great source of not only financial assistance but an invaluable partner to your mission career going forward. The student is encouraged to seek this partnership with their home congregation and any other groups with which they might have connections. Individuals cannot send designated money directly to the student if they expect a tax deduction for charitable contributions; however, if those funds are channeled through another non-profit organization (church), the donor may receive the tax break from that institution which in turn can forward the donor's request for designated funds for a specific student.

All other financial aid or gifts must be included in the student's financial aid package.