HOW TO PAY for your USF education

It's a life-changing investment, and we're here to help.
Congratulations on being accepted to the University of San Francisco! We’re excited to welcome you to the Hilltop. But first, we know you and your family need to look closely at what you can afford to pay, and what help is available to make attending USF possible. This is where our Offer of Financial Aid comes in.

The enclosed letter summarizes the aid being offered to you for the 2018-19 academic year, based on the financial information you provided. It can include merit aid, which we offer at admission to students who show exceptional promise, and federal and state aid, which is based on your family’s estimated need. When there is still a gap in what families need to help cover costs, USF steps in to provide additional financial help.

We know that this amount can’t cover all of a family’s need, but we do best we can to help as many students as we can with the financial aid dollars we have available. The bigger picture to keep in mind is that what you invest in a USF degree pays you back in important ways, like building your earning power over your career (see the back page for more).

This document will guide you through the steps you need to take to accept your financial aid award and renew it in future years. We’ll also cover the rights and responsibilities you have as a student receiving financial aid, and the basics of paying your bill. (Find more details at my.usfca.edu/onestop.) We want to do everything we can to help you and your family make an informed decision, so if you have questions about any part of this process, please contact us. We’re here to help.

HOW AID WORKS
DETERMINING YOUR FINANCIAL NEED

To figure out how much financial aid you’re eligible to receive, we first determine your parents’ ability to contribute to your college costs. We thoroughly review information in your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and CSS Profile (if you completed one), as well as your tax documents and any other information you provided. We look at your family’s income, assets, total number of family members, and the number attending college. We take into account necessary expenses, like reasonable living costs, taxes, and any unusual medical expenses. And we set aside a portion of your family’s assets to account for things like family emergencies and college savings for siblings.

After we calculate what we expect reasonable contributions from you and your parents, we deduct that “expected family contribution” from your cost of attendance, the difference equals your demonstrated financial need. USF can’t meet 100% of every family’s need, but we hope the aid we do offer makes it possible for you to enroll at USF.

SOURCES OF FINANCIAL AID

Your financial aid package may include money from a mix of sources:

1. Gift aid – This can include federal and state grants (for example, a Pell Grant or Cal Grant) and need-based university grants, all of which are awarded based on your FAFSA and/or CSS Profile. It can also include merit scholarships that USF awards based on the strength of your application admission. Gift aid does not need to be repaid.

2. Student employment – Your package may include either a Federal Work Study or Campus Employment offer. These are part-time positions that you pay directly for hours.

3. Federal loans – These can include unsubsidized loans (where the government pays the interest on the loan while you’re enrolled) or subsidized loans (where the government pays the interest while you’re enrolled or on your behalf). The amount you can borrow varies, depending on your family’s circumstances. Visit studentaid.gov for more information and the required forms to complete if you plan to accept your federal loans or apply for a Parent PLUS loan.

4. Outside scholarships – Money from private sources—for example, tuition grants from your parents’ employers or scholarships from organizations or clubs—are coordinated with the rest of your USF aid. We’ve taken steps to reduce the gap between your financial need and total aid awarded, then to replace any campus employment award. If your private funds exceed both of these amounts, any USF scholarship you’ve received is reduced by the remaining portion of the outside award.

COST OF ATTENDANCE FOR 2018-2019

Your financial aid budget is based on an estimated cost of attendance that includes both direct and indirect costs. Direct costs include tuition, fees, room and board, and any books, personal expenses, and travel. The total cost of attendance is work from determining the amount you and your family will be expected to contribute toward the cost of attending USF.

Tuition, fees, and room and board typically increase slightly each year. Over the last few years, annual increases have averaged from 2.8% to 3.9%. We estimate that personal expenses includes things like laundry supplies, telephone expenses, and recreation. This estimate is based on the cost of travel to and from USF, which can range from $300 to $450 per semester. Health insurance costs will be available later in the summer.

ACCEPTING YOUR FINANCIAL AID OFFER

Here’s what you need to do next:

1. If you haven’t already, accept your admission by taking the required steps to enroll, including sending the required deposit to the Office of Admission through the myUSF student portal at my.usfca.edu.

2. Use the myUSF portal to enroll and accept your financial aid offer online.

3. Submit signed copies of your and your parents’ 2016 federal income tax returns, including all schedules and copies of the W-2 to our Office of Financial Aid if it is not previously submitted through IDOC. Any differences between the income reported on your tax documents and the information provided on your aid application may result in your family’s contribution and eligibility being revised.

4. Complete and submit all required loan documents at studentaid.gov for timely disbursement of federal loans accepted.

5. Notify our Office of Financial Aid of any anticipated outside scholarships not already included in your aid offer. These would include any privately sponsored outside scholarships or parent employer sponsored tuition benefits.

COMPLETING APPLICATION/AID REQUIREMENTS

In some instances, “expected aid” doesn’t become “actual aid” until specific documents are completed and submitted to USF or to other grant or lending agencies. These include:

1. Verification: If you are selected by the U.S. Department of Education for verification, the procedures and documents involved must be completed before any federal funds become actual aid. The Office of Financial Aid will guide you through this process.

2. Noncitizens: Students who aren’t U.S. citizens must provide proof of their eligible noncitizen status (for example, an alien registration card or other documents designated by the Office of Financial Aid) before they can receive federal funds.

3. Work awards: If you have a work award, your earnings will be paid to you directly by check or direct deposit. To receive the biweekly paycheck, you’ll submit your hours on time sheets signed by your supervisor.

4. Outside scholarships: USF’s Office of Financial Aid coordinates all of your outside aid awards as part of your overall financial aid package. Before those awards can be released to us, scholarship sponsors typically require you to verify your registration or GPA. It’s your responsibility to get that proof from USF’s registrar in a timely way. If you receive an outside scholarship check directly, you’ll need to forward it to our Office of Financial Aid. If we don’t receive the expected outside funds, your aid award will be reconfigured.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES TO MAINTAIN YOUR AID

Enrollment requirement: To be eligible for any kind of financial aid, you must be enrolled at USF at least half-time. To retain your federal and state aid, you must maintain satisfactory academic progress (SAP) as defined for federal student aid and as described in USF’s SAP policy.

Satisfactory academic progress: Our SAP policy is designed to ensure that you are making progress toward completing your degree program with a goal of graduating in four years. Financial aid recipients must maintain a cumulative 2.0 GPA and earn 16 credits each semester of enrollment, which is standard, full-time enrollment. Academic progress is monitored yearly. Although you may be contacted sooner if current enrollment is not meeting the standard for progression. More detailed information can be found at my.usfca.edu/onestop/financial-aid.

HOW TO PAY YOUR BILL

The amount your family owes is based on the total cost of attendance, less any grants, scholarships, and aid for which you qualify, minus your scholarships, grants, and loans. Families can make two payments, one each semester, or pay in one lump sum through USF’s payment plan, as described below. Your online account is where you track your bills and payments. When you log in, you’ll see any outside scholarships, grants, and loans listed on your bill as credits, showing a status of “expected aid” if they haven’t been received by USF. These funds convert to “actual aid” once we’ve received them. (Your work or enrolment wasn’t included as credits on the bill since they’re paid directly to you.)

FINANCING OPTIONS

Monthly payments: USF’s monthly payment plan allows families to make their annual payments to USF in eight installments, four per semester. No interest is charged; however, there is a $50 per semester service fee ($500 annually), as well as penalties for late payments. Payments start in August and end in December. The signed payment agreement must be received by USF of Office of Student Financial Services no later than June 19.

Federal loans: Students can apply through the Federal Direct Student Loan program. If you do, you must complete counseling and a promissory note to make sure you understand what you’re committing to pay back. Parents can use the Federal Direct Parent Loan program to borrow as much as the total cost of attendance plus loan fees, minus any other financial aid or loans. A parent must also complete a credit check.

Detailed information on federal loan programs is available at studentaid.gov.

Private educational loans: We encourage you to exhaust all federal aid options before exploring private loan options. Private loans are credit checked. Students may get more favorable loan terms with a credit-worthy cosigner. Additional information on private loans is available at usfca.edu/admission/financial-aid/types-of-aid/loans.

Campus employment: USF’s Student Employment Program can be a valuable part of your college experience. Not only is it a practical way for you to earn money to contribute toward your educational expenses, it also gives you the opportunity to gain valuable hands-on experience in your field of interest. To be eligible for a student employment position, you will need to meet certain criteria, including having completed the required number of hours on time sheets signed by your supervisor. It’s your responsibility to verify your registration or GPA. It’s your responsibility to get that proof from USF’s registrar in a timely way. If you receive an outside scholarship check directly, you’ll need to forward it to our Office of Financial Aid. If we don’t receive the expected outside funds, your aid award will be reconfigured.

Available later in the summer.

Student Employment Office partners with members of the campus community and, in some situations, provide vital support to students. Student Employment Office partners with members of the campus community and, in some situations, provide vital support to students.
RECONSIDERATION OF AID
Some students and their families experience unique circumstances that affect their ability to pay their college costs. Families facing severe financial problems due to job loss, death of a parent, or business declines should contact the Office of Financial Aid for a review of their financial aid eligibility. You’ll need to provide documentation of your circumstances (for example, a letter of termination from an employer or tax statements showing reduced personal or business income). A request submitted without documentation will not be reviewed.

RENEWING YOUR AID IN FUTURE YEARS
Because USF offers federal need-based financial aid as well as our own merit scholarships, students are required to reapply for assistance each year. This allows us to assess your family’s financial need based on the most current income information available. As a result, your aid may increase or decrease each year.

To renew your financial aid, you must complete the following forms by March 1 each year:

Domestic students
- The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is required for all U.S. citizens and permanent residents who are applying for federal student aid.

Dream/DACA students
- The Dream Act application (CA residents) or CSS Profile (out-of-state residents)

STUDENTS LIVING OFF CAMPUS
It’s important to understand that your financial aid is applied first to your tuition and fees, and is paid directly to the Office of Student Accounts. Then, if your total grant and loan aid is greater than your tuition and fees, you’ll receive a refund of the difference to help pay your off-campus living expenses. Refunds are paid within 10 days of the start of classes. (Please note that the budget we use to estimate your off-campus housing costs is the same as the budget we use for on-campus room and board.)

REFUNDS
If you withdraw, take a leave of absence, or change the number of courses you’re enrolled in after the first day of class, you can receive credit against the semester’s fees. After the Office of Student Accounts verifies the need for a refund, the Office of Financial Aid calculates the amount to be returned to any federal, state, or institutional aid programs, and to you.

When returning federal funds, the U.S. Department of Education “Return of Title IV Funds” policy is applied and funds are returned in this order: 1) Unsubsidized Stafford Loan; 2) Subsidized Stafford Loan; 3) Perkins Loan; 4) Parent Loan for Undergraduate Student (PLUS); 5) Pell Grant; 6) Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG); and 7) Other Title IV programs. State funds are returned according to the individual state program requirements.

LEAVES
Your aid is discontinued when you’re not enrolled in school. Before you take a leave of absence, be sure to talk with the Office of Financial Aid (and with the sponsors of any outside aid you receive) to make arrangements for consideration for aid once you’re back at USF. (You’ll also need to talk through any loan obligations you might have while on leave.) When you return, you’ll apply to renew your financial aid following the same steps and deadlines as any current student.

HEALTH INSURANCE
Every student is required to have health insurance while enrolled at USF. This insurance must cover off-campus medical or specialty care and hospitalization not provided through USF. Students can either enroll in USF’s Health Insurance Plan or choose to waive automatic enrollment by providing evidence of comparable coverage on or before June 15, 2018.

THE VALUE OF A USF EDUCATION
Keep in mind that the investment you make in your USF education will pay benefits for a lifetime.
- Our alumni salaries rank in the top 3% of U.S. graduates (Federal Scorecard)
- Mid-career earnings, on average, are $92,400
- Our graduates rank among the top 25 U.S. universities for outperforming expectations for graduating on time (U.S. News & World Report)
- More than 90% of 2017 graduates are either working full-time or attending grad school

DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS
CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY
We hold in strict confidence any sensitive financial information that families share with us as they apply for financial aid, and we use that information only for its intended purpose. All electronic and physical records are protected to prevent unauthorized access and ensure safe storage and disposal when no longer needed. No information is shared with anyone other than students and their immediate family. Organizations outside of USF must obtain permission from the student and provide a signed release before receiving aid records.

GENERAL COLLEGE INFORMATION
The University of San Francisco admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin, sex, and age to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at USF. It does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin, sex, or age in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, or other programs administered by USF.

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) gives eligible students specific rights to protect the privacy of their education records. You can find a full description on the USF website. Any complaints may be sent to: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202.