**Freshman Financial Aid FAQS**

**Awards & Expenses FAQs**

# *I received my award letter, what do I do next?*

Upon receipt of award letter you can access your online student account to accept awards that are at “offered” status.

1. Sign in to Banner Self-Service using your **Banner ID** and **Banner Password**
2. Select **Financial Aid**
3. Select **Award**
4. Select **Award for Aid Year** (and choose **Current Semester)**
5. Click on **Accept your Award Offer**.

*\*Contact the IT help desk if you need instructions on how to access your online student account. They can be reached at 256-372-4357.*

# *Why haven’t I received an award letter?*

There could be a number of reasons for having not received an award letter. i.e. your FAFSA could have been selected for verification or you could have neglected to include our school code (001002) on your FAFSA. Keep in mind that after completing your FAFSA, it takes 3-5 business days for our office to receive it. Also note that the name spelling, date of birth, and social security number submitted on your FAFSA must match your application to AAMU. Email us for further info [*sfainfo@aamu.edu.*](mailto:financialaid@aamu.edu)

# Is it mandatory that I accept the loans offered on my award letter?

Acceptance of the loans is not mandatory; however you can use them as a resource if needed. \*Please note the instructions that were included with your award letter.

**What charges does financial aid help to pay?**

* Tuition
* Room and Board (Housing and Meal Plan)
* Mandatory fees

**Can financial aid be used to cover my SOAR fees, housing application and housing deposit?**

No, those charges are Out-of-Pocket expenses.

# How do I determine how much I owe after my awards are taken into consideration?

Your financial obligations will vary depending upon your class enrollment, if you reside in campus housing etc. However, as a general rule of thumb, please note the following:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sample Cost Analysis**  *(Annual amounts based on 2018/19 fee schedule and are subject to change depending upon fee increases etc.)* | | |
|  | **Resident** *(In-State)* | **Non-Resident** *(Out-State)* |
| **Tuition** | $8,610.00 | $17,220.00 |
| **Room** | $3,682.00 | $3,682.00 |
| **Board** | $3,620.00 | $3,620.00 |
| **Fees** | $1,596.00 | $1,596.00 |
|  |  |  |
| **Total Cost** | **$17,508.00** | **$26,118.00** |
| \*To get a general idea of your remaining obligations, you may subtract your total award amount from the totals above. Keep in mind that the totals may vary depending on choice of housing assignment etc. | | |

**Does financial aid cover books?**

Book charges are not usually covered by general financial aid proceeds. However, if the total financial aid for the semester exceeds the total charges, the excess can be used to purchase books during the book voucher availability period. \*Book voucher awards are also included with some scholarship awards. *(This will be indicated on your award letter*)

**What are my next steps if my total financial aid award will not cover my total charges?**

We recommend that you pursue outside scholarships and other forms of non-university funding. You can also touch base with the department in which you plan to major; sometimes they have funding to offer. Lastly, payment plans can be setup to cover remaining balances. The payment plan option is done by contacting The Office of Student Accounts. Typically, payment plans can be setup after you have completed your SOAR session.

**What is the possibility of my financial aid award being increased to further help defray my costs?**

Financial aid awards are system generated based on your FAFSA information as well as your academic performance. We won’t be able to increase your award until funding availability is confirmed. This typically takes place after departmental budgets are confirmed in June of each year. You can also touch base with us during your SOAR session. ***(No awards will be increased prior to this timeframe).***

**Scholarship FAQs**

**How will I know if I have been awarded an AAMU scholarship award?**

Scholarship award offers are made after successful completion of the Admissions process to include the submission of your high school transcript and ACT/SAT test scores. Heritage Scholarship Award offers are indicated on the student’s financial aid award letter. The Merit and Presidential Scholarship Awards are offered with a scholarship contract. The Normalite Opportunity Scholarship will post to the student’s account after enrollment verification.

**What Academic scholarships does AAMU offer and what are the criteria?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **AAMU Academic Scholarships**  AAMU scholarship offerings begin with a minimum high school GPA of 2.7 and a minimum ACT score of 17/SAT score of 900. | | |
| **Scholarship Award** | **Criteria** | **Value** |
| Heritage Bronze Award  *\*In-State students only* | HS GPA 2.7-2.99  ACT 17-22/SAT score of 900 | Total value of $1,000 per year plus a  $250 book voucher per semester |
| Heritage Silver Award | HS GPA 2.99-3.24  ACT 17-22/SAT score of 900 | Total value of $3,000 per year plus a  $250 book voucher per semester |
| Heritage Gold Award | HS GPA 3.25 or above  ACT 17-22/SAT score of 900 | Total value of $4,500 per year plus a  $250 book voucher per semester |
| Merit Scholarship | HS GPA 3.25 or above  ACT 23 or above/SAT score of 1130 | Covers the cost of *tuition for enrollment up to 18 hours* |
| Presidential Scholarship | HS GPA 3.75 or above  ACT 28 or above SAT score of 1310 | Covers the cost of tuition for enrollment up to 18 hours, room, board and fees. Also includes a $2,000 book allowance per year |
| Normalite Scholarship  \*Out-of-State students only | Composite Index Score of 20 or above  HS GPA + ACT/SAT score = 20 or above | Currently $4,305.00 per semester |

**Can I receive more than one AAMU Academic scholarship?**

Neither the Merit nor the Presidential Scholarships can be combined with other scholarship awards. However, you can receive the Normalite Scholarship award in combination with a Heritage award.

**I qualify for a scholarship but it does not appear on my award letter?**

All scholarship awards are contingent upon funding availability. The Presidential and Merit Scholarship offerings require a signed contract. Be sure that you have signed and returned the contract to our office. If you do meet the qualifications for one of the scholarships indicated above and have not received a scholarship offer, please contact us at [*scholarships@aamu.edu*](mailto:scholarships@aamu.edu) or [*sfainfo@aamu.edu*](mailto:sfainfo@aamu.edu).

**Parent Plus Loan FAQs**

# I was offered a Parent Plus Loan on my award letter. Am I required to accept this loan?

No, the parent loan is offered as an option to help you meet your financial obligations. Acceptance of this loan is not required.

# What procedure is required to accept and receive the Parent Plus Loan? Since it appears on my award letter, am I automatically approved for it?

In order to receive the parent loan, the parent must apply for it using the directions included on your award letter. The parent must be approved in order for you to receive the loan. There is credit criteria involved.

# The Plus Loan offer on my award letter seems to be for an exceptionally large amount. Is this how much it costs to attend AAMU?

No, the amount of the parent loan represents the difference between the total aid offer that the student is receiving and the total maximum allowable aid that can be received for the year.

**How does a parent apply for the Parent Plus Loan?**

The parent of the student (preferably the parent that is on the FAFSA) must go to [*www.studentloans.gov*](http://www.studentloans.gov), and sign in under their profile using their FSA ID to complete the Parent plus loan. Once the parent signs in they will choose the **“Request Plus Loan”** option, and then choose the **“Parent Plus Loan”** option, then proceed to fill out the application. At the end of the application the parent will submit the application, and at that point the parent’s credit will checked.

In the event that the credit is approved the parent will notify a financial aid counselor. The counselor will accept the loan for the parent, and make any needed adjustments to the loan. In the event that the parent’s credit is denied, then they have the choice to either choose **“I do not wish to pursue the Parent Plus Loan any further” (counselor will increase the student’s unsubsidized loan)** or **“I wish to use an endorser for the Parent Plus Loan” (cosigner).**



**Verification FAQs**

# What does it mean if I am selected for verification?

Each year the U.S. Department of Education randomly selects a certain percentage of FAFSAs for verification; this means that the school must collect certain documentation prior to being able to award federal financial aid to the students selected for verification.

# What are my next steps if I am selected for verification?

If you are selected for verification, please submit the required documentation to IDOC. The required documentation is indicated on the verification correspondence you received from our office and/or from IDOC.

**What is IDOC? (Institutional Documentation Service)**

The College Board Institutional Documentation Service is a third party vender that Alabama A&M’s Financial Aid Office uses to collect and process all verification documentation that is submitted. IDOC will place the student’s documentation onto a secure sever allowing the AAMU Financial Aid Office to retrieve and examine the information to complete the verification process.

**How do I submit my documentation to IDOC?**

There are two options in which you may submit required documentation. The required documentation maybe submitted online or by mail.

If you are submitting online:

* Sign in to ***idoc.collegeboard.org*** with the student’s Social Security Number and Date of Birth. You should see the “**Document Management Dashboard”** after you’ve signed in. *\*Note if the student is logging into IDOC for the first time they will need to add a primary parent onto the IDOC account under Primary Parent household.*
* View documents to be uploaded under section “**Required Documents”**.
* Make sure documents are saved in an accessible place on your computer or device.
* Click “**Upload Documents”** (Check to see if Parent Info or Family Info is correct)
* Click **“Next”** if all parent and family info is correct.
* Navigate to **“File”.** Browse Desktop for your file.
* Once you have found the file click on **“Upload Files”**.
* Click **“Submit”** and add **“More files”**.
* When you have finished uploading files, your files will appear under **“My Uploads”.***(Uploaded documents may still appear as “****Required Documents”, i****t takes 2-3 business days for the validation process to be completed)*

If you are submitting by mail:

* Sign in to ***idoc.collegeboard.org*** with the student’s Social Security Number and Date of Birth. You should see the “**Document Management Dashboard”** after you have signed in. *\*Note if the student is logging into IDOC for the first time they will need to add a primary parent onto the IDOC account under Primary Parent household.*
* View documents to be mailed under section “**Required Documents”**.
* To access and print cover sheet, scroll over to “**What do I need to Do”** click on “**Through the Mail”** and click on “**IDOC Cover Sheet”**.
* Print Cover Sheet. *(Materials mailed without a Cover Sheet will not be processed)*
* Gather required documents.
* Mail Required Documentation to

**College Board Processing Center**

P.O. Box 8570

Portsmouth, NH 03802

**What is the turnaround time for my verification to be completed once I submit the needed information to IDOC?**

We typically ask that you will allow 7-10 business days for your file to be updated after successful submission of verification documents. Keep in mind that it takes 2-3 business days for IDOC to validate your submitted documents. Please do contact us if you do not receive additional correspondence after this timeframe.

**What if I have questions regarding the student’s tax transcript being requested for verification? i.e. the student did not work or did not file taxes?**

If the student did not work:

* Indicate this on the standard verification worksheet. The student Tax Transcript requirement will be waived during the verification process.

If the student did work but did not file taxes:

* Report earnings on the 2019-2020 AAMU Verification Worksheet.
* Submit a copy of all 2017 W-2s or a 2017 Wage and Earnings Statement from the IRS.



**Other FAQs**

**What is meant by Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)?**

The federal government requires that all students meet and maintain certain academic progress standards in order to receive financial aid funding. A minimum GPA must be obtained and you must complete a certain percentage of the hours you attempt.

**What level of academic performance must I achieve in order to maintain eligibility for financial aid funding?**

* You must complete 67% of the total hours you attempt each semester.
* You must achieve and maintain a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA). [For example; a minimum 1.50 GPA is required for students with 24-30 attempted hours.]
* You must finish your program of study within 150% of the timeframe allowed to do so. (Example, most programs require 4 years to complete, in this case you would need to complete the program within 150% of 4 years [6 years].

**What happens if I don’t meet these SAP requirements?**

If you do not meet these minimum requirements, your eligibility for financial aid funding will be rescinded.

**When will I be reviewed for (SAP) compliance?**

All students are initially reviewed for SAP compliance after the completion of 24 credit hours. You will then be reviewed at the end of each spring semester thereafter.

**What options do I have if I don’t meet SAP requirements and my financial aid eligibility is rescinded?**

You can appeal to explain why you didn’t meet the minimum requirements. Or you can pay for your education using personal resources. Your appeal will be reviewed by a committee, and a decision rendered.

**Where can I find additional information regarding the AAMU Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy?**

You may view additional information on this policy by accessing the following link from our website: [*https://www.aamu.edu/Admissions/fincialaid/importantinformation/Pages/Satisfactory-Academic-Progress-Policy.aspx*](https://www.aamu.edu/Admissions/fincialaid/importantinformation/Pages/Satisfactory-Academic-Progress-Policy.aspx)

**What additional information do I need to remember going forward beyond my Freshman year?**

Be sure to complete your FAFSA each year. The FAFSA is made available online beginning October 1 of each year. Returning students will select the “renewal” option. ***AAMU’s Priority processing date is February 1 of each year.*** Submit your FAFSA prior to this date to insure that you are considered for the maximum financial package you qualify for.

**Where Can I find My Banner ID and PIN once I am admitted?**

* Go to [*www.aamu.edu*](http://www.aamu.edu)*,* and look for **“myAAMU”** on the right hand side of the home page.
* Click on **“Banner”**
* Click on **“Look-up Banner-ID and PIN”**
* Fill in the **last four digits of your SSN#,** **your Date of Birth,** **and your last name.**
* Press **“Show me my Banner ID/PIN number”.**

**How do I apply for a FSA ID and FSA Password?**

Students and Parents can apply for a FSA ID and Password at *www.studentloans.gov* under FSA ID (first option).

# How do I contact The Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships if I have additional questions?

The best way to reach us is by email. Email us at [*sfainfo@aamu.edu*](mailto:sfainfo@aamu.edu) or [*financialaid@aamu.edu*](mailto:financialaid@aamu.edu)*.* The [*sfainfo@aamu.edu*](mailto:sfainfo@aamu.edu) email address has been setup to specifically expedite the questions and concerns of our new students. ***We do encourage you to you utilize this email address for your questions.*** For scholarship specific questions, email us at [*scholarships@aamu.edu*](mailto:scholarships@aamu.edu). You may also contact us by phone at 256-372-5400.

**Can I contact my financial aid counselor/analyst directly if I have specific questions?**

Financial Aid Counselors may be emailed directly.

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| --- | --- |
| **Financial Aid Counselors** | **Email Address** |
| Beverly Bradley | beverly.bradley@aamu.edu |
| Joanie Fletcher  Academic Scholarships | joanie.fletcher@aamu.edu |
| Terrence Jennings | terrence.jennings@aamu.edu |
| Theresa Mitchell  Athletic Scholarships | theresa.mitchell@aamu.edu |
| Frank Pope | frank.pope@aamu.edu |