

# Applying for Financial Aid Checklist

## *To Do:*

- ...Apply for admission to the college(s) of your choice. *Note: Admissions application deadlines and financial aid priority filing dates are usually different. Keep a calendar!*
- ...File a 2010-2011 FAFSA on the Internet ([www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)) as soon as possible after January 1, 2010. Be as accurate and complete as possible. Keep materials used to complete the FAFSA, such as worksheets and tax forms. If you do the FAFSA on-line, you need to request a pin number from the US Department of Education ([www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov)) so you can sign the form on-line. High School Counselors will have the paper FAFSA if you do not have access to the Internet.
- ...Obtain and file any other required financial aid form(s) from the colleges of your choice. **Meet all deadlines!**
- ...Explore other sources of aid such as local civic organizations, private foundations, professional organizations, and place of employment. (Also, check out the Mason Office of Student Financial Aid website at <http://financialaid.gmu.edu>)
- ...Respond to all requests for information quickly and completely.
- ...When you receive a written offer of financial aid, read it, understand what you are being offered, and respond to the college by its deadline.

## *Additional Tips:*

- ...Determine the costs of attending the college(s): tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, transportation, personal and miscellaneous expenses. Remember to consider both direct and indirect costs.
- ...If you have unusual circumstances, contact the college's financial aid office to discuss your situation.
- ...Remember - know the conditions to continue your financial aid after the first year. You must file the FAFSA or the Renewal FAFSA each year, and you may need to complete other required forms each year.
- ...College financial aid offices and high school guidance offices/career centers are excellent sources of information!

This checklist brought to you by:

George Mason University  
Office of Student Financial Aid  
MS 3B5  
Fairfax, VA 22030-4444  
[finaid@gmu.edu](mailto:finaid@gmu.edu)  
(703) 993-2353



See back of page for important contact information.

# Important Financial Aid Phone Numbers and Internet Contacts

---

- ❖ Federal Student Aid Information Center
  - (800)-433-3243
  
- ❖ FAFSA on the WEB
  - <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>
  
- ❖ Department of Education PIN Web Site
  - <http://www.pin.ed.gov>
  
- ❖ College Scholarship Service for information about the PROFILE Form
  - <http://www.collegeboard.org> (general information and to register on-line)
  - (305) 829 – 9793 (for questions)
  
- ❖ Financial Aid Information Page
  - <http://www.finaid.org>
  
- ❖ Mason Office of Student Financial Aid
  - <http://financialaid.gmu.edu>
  
- ❖ Mason Office of Student Financial Aid
  - (703) 993 – 2353
  
- ❖ State Council for Higher Education for Virginia
  - <http://www.schev.edu>
  
- ❖ Commonwealth of Virginia College Savings Plan
  - <http://www.virginia529.com>



### Hunting for Scholarships: How to Start

Go online to [financialaid.gmu.edu](http://financialaid.gmu.edu) click on "GMU Scholarships"

Review online scholarship search engines  
Search your community, church, and civic organizations

Talk to your faculty, academic, or guidance advisor

Check with your parent's employers

Speak with campus organizations

### Scholarship Scam Warning Signs

Fees

Credit card/bank account information needed

Scholarship guarantee

No work involved

No contact information

Unsolicited scholarships

Pressure tactics

Claims of "exclusive" scholarships

An official-sounding name or endorsement

doesn't automatically mean legitimacy

Your questions aren't answered directly

### What Do Judges Look For?

Do you qualify?

Is your application presented well?

Did you include all required documents?

Did you answer all the questions?

### Scholarship Essays: Master the Basics

Get organized

Follow directions

Demonstrate originality and creativity

Develop a theme that fits the scholarship

Turn in a professional looking essay

Give it the "once over"

### Scholarships and Taxes

A scholarship is considered tax-free if used only for tuition, fees, books, and supplies.

A scholarship is considered taxable if it is used to cover room & board, travel, clerical help, research, non-course-related equipment.

Questions? Contact the IRS at:

[www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) or 1-800-829-1040

### Internet Sites to Begin Your Search

[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) FastWeb

[www.iefaf.org](http://www.iefaf.org) International Education Finaid

[www.college-scholarships.com](http://www.college-scholarships.com) 2006 Colleges

[www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org) Financial Aid Information Page

[www.financialaid.com](http://www.financialaid.com) Financial Aid.com

[www.freschinfo.com](http://www.freschinfo.com) FreSch

[www.review.com](http://www.review.com) Princeton Review

[www.absolutelyscholarships.com](http://www.absolutelyscholarships.com) Absolutely

Scholarships and College Express

[www.search4careercolleges.com](http://www.search4careercolleges.com) Search 4

Career Colleges

[www.edupass.org](http://www.edupass.org) Edupass

[www.collegequest.com](http://www.collegequest.com) Thomson-Petersons

[www.supercollege.com](http://www.supercollege.com) SuperCollege.com

[www.scholarshiphunter.com](http://www.scholarshiphunter.com) Scholarship

Hunter

### Application Tips

Apply early

Pay close attention to deadline dates

Allow enough time for recommendation letters

Provide good contact information for yourself

If you win a scholarship inform the financial aid

office at your school

Always be sure to send a thank you letter if

awarded a scholarship

**George Mason University**  
**Office of Student Financial Aid**  
**4400 University Dr, MSN3B5**  
**South Chesapeake Module**  
**(703) 993-2353**