

FINANCIAL AID

WDT is pleased to be eligible to offer students federal financial aid through the U.S. Department of Education's Title IV Programs. Financial aid includes both gift aid such as grants and educational loans such as the student and parent loans. For a complete listing of federal financial aid programs, please visit the financial aid page at www.wdt.edu.

The Financial Aid Office of Western Dakota Tech provides financial assistance to students who, without such aid, would be unable to attend school. Students and/or their parents are required to complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and submit

STEPS TO APPLY

STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION

FEDERAL STUDENT FINANCIAL AID FUNDING SOURCES

OTHER STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

ONLINE FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION

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STEPS TO APPLY

Applying for Federal Financial Aid at WDT is a 5-step process!

Step #1: Complete the FREE Application for Federal Student Aid (www.fafsa.ed.gov)

Items needed include:

- 4-digit PIN (www.pin.ed.gov) to e-sign FAFSA
- 2009 federal taxes (Call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040 to obtain a copy)
- Social Security number
- Driver's license number
- Other income: SSI, food stamps, WIC, TANF, child support, etc.

Step #2: Complete the Federal Student Loan Application (www.wdt.edu)

Items needed include:

- 4-digit PIN (www.pin.ed.gov) to e-sign MPN
- You may have two options: 1.) select the lender you wish to select; or 2). Select "Direct Loans" through the US Department of Education
- Two personal references
- Social Security number
- Driver's license

Step #3: Complete WDT Aid Forms (www.wdt.edu)

Forms include (as applicable):

- Aid Information Sheet
- Verification Form (Student and parent) must submit a copy of their 2009 income taxes.
- Household Size Inquiry Form
- Dependent Status Inquiry Form

Step #4: Aid is Awarded

You will receive an email notifying you of your aid award. Print, sign, date, and return your award letter to complete the acceptance process.

Step #5: Aid is Disbursed

Financial aid is disbursed at the beginning of the term. However, the student must have registered for classes, and corresponding charges must be posted in order for a student's awarded aid to be available. Contact the Student Accounts Office to inquire about how your aid is disbursed. **NEW students MUST complete Entrance Counseling, presented during Welcome Day, BEFORE aid can be disbursed.**

The WDT Financial Aid Office is dedicated to administering the U.S. Department of Education's Title IV Financial Assistance Program in a fair, consistent, and efficient manner and assisting students in seeking funding opportunities in order to fulfill their post-secondary educational goals by providing personalized assistance, accurate and meaningful interpretation of federal eligibility regulations, and guidance regarding long-term financial considerations and default management.

STUDENT CONSUMER INFORMATION

The following information is available regarding the rights and responsibilities of students who are applying for or receiving any financial assistance from Federal Pell Grant, FSEOG, ACG, FWS, and Federal Stafford Loan Programs. The Financial Aid Office may be contacted for student consumer information listed below.

- Continued eligibility for financial aid
- Satisfactory academic progress
- Methods and means of financial aid payment

- Responsibility of student repayment of loans and grants
- Terms and conditions of work-study employment
- Costs of attending WDT
- Tuition and fees refund policy

FEDERAL STUDENT FINANCIAL AID FUNDING SOURCES

The following programs are available to students who demonstrate financial need, as determined by results of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Federal Pell Grant

The Federal Pell Grant program is a Federal Student Aid program designed to provide financial assistance to those who need it to attend postsecondary educational institutions. These grants are intended to be the foundation of a financial aid package and may be combined with other forms of aid. The Pell Grant award is a grant and, unlike a loan, does not have to be repaid, if the student finishes the term.

The amount of the Federal Pell Grant is contingent on the determined need of the student, the student's enrollment status, and the cost of the program of study for which the student is enrolled. Eligibility is based on information provided by the applicant and/or the applicant's family.

Disbursement of funds will be made (pending receipt of funds from the U.S. Government) near the beginning of each term for which the student is eligible. Equal disbursements of funds will be made near the beginning of each term. Funds may be in the form of a check or credit to the student account.

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)

This grant program is intended for students who demonstrate financial need, with preference going to the Pell Grant recipients. The receipt of a FSEOG is contingent on the need of the student. Similar to the Pell Grant, the FSEOG does not have to be repaid if the student finishes the term. Equal disbursements of funds will be made near the beginning of each term.

Academic Competitiveness Grant Program (ACG)

This grant program is intended for full-time students who are Pell eligible and have completed a rigorous secondary school program of study. First-year students cannot have been previously enrolled in a program of undergraduate education, and second year students must have earned at least a 3.0 GPA. An ACG grant may range from \$750 for a first-year student to \$1,350 for a second-year student.

Federal Work Study (FWS)

This program enables students to work while attending school. Students are paid an hourly wage for work performed either on campus or for a public or private non-profit employer off campus. (Almost all jobs are located on campus.) Students who demonstrate financial need will be referred to the Career Services Coordinator by the Financial Aid Office and must maintain satisfactory academic progress while employed. Students will usually work 10 to 20 hours per week and must average at least 5 hours per week. Wages will be paid based on the number of hours worked during a pay period. Students who have received a FWS award should contact the Career Services Coordinator for job assignments after the beginning of the school year. At least seven percent of FWS funds are allocated for employment filling community service requirements.

Federal Stafford Subsidized Student Loan

These loans are low-interest, deferred-payment educational loans. Students may borrow, depending on need, a set amount for school-related costs. The amount depends on the current year of the student. The maximum loan each year may not exceed the educational costs minus family contribution and other financial aid received. Students borrow this money from a lending institution (bank or credit union). The Federal Government insures these loans.

A default fee is deducted from each loan disbursement. The interest is fixed. Loan repayment will normally begin six months after the student leaves school. Payments are usually scheduled for five to ten years with a minimum payment required each month. The amount of the monthly payments will depend on the total amount of the debt.

Students may defer repayment for a period if they meet the deferment criteria for the loan. Borrowers are provided deferment information for each type of loan before receiving the first loan disbursement and prior to graduation.

Student eligibility for the Stafford Student Loan is determined by the results of a Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Before the school can certify the Stafford Student Loan application, the student must be eligible. The lending institution each term makes disbursement of loan funds. The WDT Student Accounts Coordinator releases the loan checks after the student has attended a required entrance counseling session and/or classes. Disbursements of Stafford Loan checks are usually scheduled for registration days. Enrollment for less than a full academic year may result in prorating loan amounts.

Federal Stafford Unsubsidized Student Loan

These loans are the same as the Stafford Subsidized loan, with the following exceptions:

- Borrowers are responsible for interest while in school and during the grace period.
- For “Dependent or Independent Students,” the total annual maximum with any subsidized Stafford Loan may not exceed a certain amount for first- and second-year students.
- Eligibility for the loan is calculated by subtracting the estimated financial aid from the cost of education.

Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students (PLUS)

This Federal program was established for parents of dependent students to borrow funds to meet postsecondary education costs. The student must be enrolled in an eligible program. The student’s parents may borrow up to the cost of attendance minus other aid per year. The rate of interest is fixed. The loans, in no case, can exceed the student’s estimated cost of attendance minus the estimated financial assistance that the student will be awarded for the period for which the loan is intended. Repayment begins within 60 days after the last disbursement.

OTHER STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

The Employment Assistance Program of the Bureau of Indian Affairs assists “diploma” students who reside on or near the reservation to enroll in and pay for vocational education programs. Students must be one quarter or more Native American descent. Financial aid may cover the cost of tuition, school fees, tools, books, and a monthly living expense allowance. In order to determine eligibility for the program, the student should contact the Employment Assistance office on their home reservation. The student is expected to apply for other types of aid and the amount of this aid may be deducted from the amount the student is eligible to receive from Employment Assistance. The Higher Education Fund may assist Native American students who are enrolled in degree-granting programs. Applicants should contact the Higher Education office on their home reservation; there are application deadlines for each school term.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA)

WIA established a program to provide comprehensive services, which include the training, education, and other services needed to enable individuals to secure and retain employment. Eligible students may receive financial assistance in meeting direct school costs at Western Dakota Tech. To determine eligibility, check with your area South Dakota Career Center representative.

National Guard Benefits

Members of the South Dakota National Guard may be eligible for educational benefits. Students should contact their unit to determine eligibility and certification procedures. The Financial Aid Office at Western Dakota Tech will accept tuition certification forms from eligible students each term until the date for submission of the roster to the state. This date will be listed in student announcements each term. No certification will be honored after that date. The student will forfeit the benefit for the term in progress; he/she may submit the request for the tuition waiver for the next term before the date stated for submission of the roster.

Migrant & Seasonal Farm Workers Program

Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers program pays some school and living costs for eligible students who have earned wages as farm employees or ranch hands. To determine eligibility, students should apply to the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers program.

Scholarships

Numerous scholarships are available from private organizations, public entities, and individuals. A list of scholarships is available from the WDT Financial Aid Office. For additional scholarship information, contact local organizations, school counselors, and local libraries, or search the Internet.

Service to the Visually Impaired

The Service to the Visually Impaired is a special section of the Division of Rehabilitation Services. It assists those individuals who experience some type of visual disability. In the case of persons who are in need of training or retraining in order to obtain gainful employment, this agency may provide financial assistance to those who need it. Students are expected to apply for all other aid, which may be available. If the student’s need for funds is not met, the Service to the Visually Impaired may provide the needed funds. In order to determine eligibility, students must contact their local office of the Service to the Visually Impaired.

Special Services Office

This program provides resource and referral to first generation college students, single parents, displaced homemakers, minority students, single pregnant women, and nontraditional students. Limited emergency assistance may be available. In order to determine eligibility, students should request an appointment with the Special Services Coordinator.

Veteran’s Administration (VA)

Veterans, members of the National Guard, and/or dependents of veterans who are disabled or deceased may qualify for educational financial assistance through the Veteran’s Administration. Since the regulations regarding eligibility are quite extensive and many

times need interpretation, the student is referred to the Veteran's Administration Center, Box 5046, Sioux Falls, SD 57117, 1-800-827-1000, or contacts your local County Veteran's Service Office for more information. The Rapid City Veteran's Service Officer located in the Public Service Building, 725 North La Crosse Street, Rapid City, SD 57701, 605-394-2266.

Vocational Rehabilitation

The Vocational Rehabilitation program is intended to assist those students with physical and/or mental disabilities to become active members of the labor market. Students who think they may qualify are encouraged to contact their local office of the South Dakota Division of Rehabilitation Services, 111A New York Street, Rapid City, SD 57701, 605-394-2261. Students will be expected to apply for the Federal Pell Grant.

ONLINE FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION

There are many financial aid sites available on the Internet providing student financial aid assistance and information for students and their families. The websites are maintained by a variety of institutions, professional organizations, and governmental agencies. Visit Western Dakota Tech's Financial Aid (www.wdt.edu) web page for important links.