



Funding Guide for Nontraditional Students

PointUniversity

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Introduction

Point University focuses on five [areas of value](#) for its students: the spiritual, social, physical, professional, and intellectual. The university welcomes students of all backgrounds, including nontraditional students, and helps them develop in these areas.

According to the [National Council on Education Statistics](#) (NCES), nontraditional students have at least one of the following characteristics:

- Delayed enrollment into postsecondary education;
- Part-time enrollment due to working a full-time job;
- Financial independence as far as financial aid is concerned;
- Having dependents excluding a spouse;
- Being single parents; or
- Not having their high school diploma.

Introduction

Nontraditional students can face challenges when financing their degree. Many scholarship organizations require students to have a certain GPA, maintain a certain grade level in high school or college, or meet other requirements that may not fit the circumstances of nontraditional students. For this reason, nontraditional students with funding struggles can face difficulties in finding the right program.

Financial aid is available to nontraditional students, including mid-career students and those who have children. This guide serves as a space for nontraditional students to explore their options with financial aid. It walks through the different types of aid available to nontraditional students, including a detailed list of scholarships.

Filling out the FAFSA

About the FAFSA

The [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) (FAFSA) provides assistance to applicants who need help filling out their application and gathering supporting documents. **Remember: There is no age limit in place for students applying for financial aid**, so nontraditional students should still fill out the FAFSA as long as they meet the [basic eligibility requirements](#).

To qualify for student aid, students must: demonstrate financial need; be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen; have a valid Social Security number; be registered with Selective Service if they are a male; be enrolled or accepted to a program as a regular student in an eligible degree or certificate program; be enrolled at least half time; maintain satisfactory academic progress; sign the certification statement for the FAFSA; and have a GED or a high school diploma.

Nontraditional students and traditional students follow a similar process in applying for financial aid. Nontraditional students must complete the entire FAFSA to find out how much financial aid they are eligible to receive. The application becomes available on Oct. 1 each year, and aid recipients must fill out the FAFSA each year to redetermine eligibility.

Filling out the FAFSA

Information needed for the FAFSA

Social Security Number: When filling out the FAFSA, students must enter their Social Security numbers. They assume responsibility for ensuring their applications are correct and accurate. Students who are still dependent on their parents must also provide their parents' Social Security numbers. Students cannot fill out their FAFSA without a Social Security number. [Undocumented](#) or DACA students do not qualify for federal student aid, but those with Social Security numbers can still complete the FAFSA and [receive a needs assessment](#) to help them qualify for aid from other sources, such as schools or state governments.

Driver's License Number: Students must include their driver's license number on their FAFSA application. Nontraditional students do not need to follow any extra steps for this requirement; simply add your driver's license number.

Filling out the FAFSA

Information needed for the FAFSA

Federal Tax Information: When completing the FAFSA, students must provide their federal tax information. The FAFSA pulls information from applicants' tax returns and IRS records to determine their financial need. Nontraditional students should remember to include any dependents other than their spouses when entering their federal tax information.

Records of Untaxed Income: Students must show records of any untaxed income they might have, such as personal assets. Some nontraditional students, such as single parents, might receive child support payments. These students must show records of the child support they receive for the U.S. Department of Education to review.

Information on Assets: Students do not have to include their homes when noting their assets on their FAFSA, but they do need to report other outside assets, like investments. Students must provide statements from any retirement, savings, or checking accounts they have.

Scholarships: Before students apply for a scholarship, they should complete a Free [Application for Federal Student Aid](#). This determines a student's financial need and is often required by organizations that offer student funding. Do you have questions about your financial aid options? You can view helpful videos about financial aid [here](#).

Determining Financial Need

How to calculate your financial need for college

Students have the ability to calculate their financial need for college. Students' eligibility depends on their Expected Family Contribution (EFC), year in school, and enrollment status. Eligibility also hinges on whether students attend school part-time or full-time, and what the cost of attendance (COA) at their school is. The financial aid office at each student's college or career school determines how much financial aid the student may receive based on the above information. The office first works to determine the student's COA and EFC, then subtracts the EFC from the COA to determine how much aid the student still needs.

Subtract EFC from COA to calculate need-based aid, or how much aid the student still needs in order to pay for their education. The following programs provide financial aid based on students' need-based aid: [Federal Pell Grant](#), [Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant \(FSEOG\)](#), [Direct Subsidized Loan](#), [Federal Perkins Loan](#), [Federal Work-Study](#). Non-need-based aid is not determined with the EFC, but rather by considering the COA with the amount of aid the student has already received. Non-need-based federal student aid programs include [Direct Unsubsidized Loans](#), [Federal PLUS Loans](#), and [Teacher Education Access for College and Higher Education \(TEACH\) Grants](#).

Sources of Financial Aid

Where can students find financial aid for college?

School Aid: This financial aid is awarded to students directly from their schools, which determine need based on students' FAFSA information. Point provides students with a [scholarship page](#) detailing various school aid opportunities.

Federal Aid: Federal aid is awarded to students when they fill out their FAFSA. This aid comes from the federal government, and students must follow the terms and conditions as they are set by law. Interest rates for federal loans is fixed, and often lower than rates for private loans and credit cards.

State Financial Aid: State financial aid comes from state governments and does not necessarily depend on FAFSA information, though some states pull from the FAFSA to determine students' eligibility.

Privately Funded Scholarships: Private organizations often fund scholarships, which then follow rules and regulations set by the funding organization, not the government or law. Students can follow specific guidelines and requirements to achieve these types of awards.

Types of Financial Aid

Scholarships: Scholarships are awarded based on athletic, academic, and artistic merit. Some scholarships involve a need-based component, like the Gates Millennium Scholars program, but most are merit-based. Private scholarships are awarded by private organizations, community foundations, unions, nonprofits, for-profit corporations, and philanthropists.

Grants: Grants are usually awarded based on students' financial need, as demonstrated in their FAFSAs. Need-based grants typically come from federal and state governments and colleges.

Federal Loans: Federal loans are granted by the federal government to students who demonstrate financial need. Typically, borrowers do not begin paying interest on these loans until they graduate from school. Students do not have to undergo a credit check to qualify for federal loans, and interest may be tax deductible.

Types of Financial Aid

What are the types of financial aid available?

Private Loans: Private loans come from private organizations, with rules set in place by the organizations themselves. Interest rates for private loans are rarely subsidized, and students take responsibility for all their loan interest. Private loans can have variable or fixed interest rates, which may be higher or lower than the rates on federal loans, and are potentially subject to change.

Work Study: Students can pursue work-study opportunities, which allow them to work in return for financial aid to pay for their education. FAFSA information determines students' work-study eligibility.

Types of Financial Aid

Federal Loans vs. Private Loans

Students can receive federal or private loans to help pay for their education. Federal student loans come with many benefits, including income-driven repayment plans and fixed interest rates. These benefits are uncommon with private loans. Federal loans include direct subsidized loans, direct unsubsidized loans, and direct PLUS loans. These loans make up the most common type of financial aid for college students. For federal student loans, payments aren't due until after the student graduates, leaves school, or changes their enrollment status to less than half-time.

Private loans come from private organizations, including credit unions, banks, and state-based or state-affiliated organizations. Private loans follow conditions that are set by the lender, and they are generally more expensive than federal student loans. Private loans often require payments while the student is still in school, but some allow students to defer their payments until after graduation. These loans can have variable or fixed interest rates, and the rates may be higher or lower than those on parent loans and federal student loans.

Types of Financial Aid

Loan Repayment

Students have access to several [loan repayment options](#). Students must choose a repayment plan, and if they fail to choose one, they will be placed on the standard repayment plan, which gives them 10 years to pay off their loans. Students may switch to a different plan at any time. Monthly payments depend on how much the student makes. Income-driven repayment plans set monthly student loan payments at an amount that is intended to be affordable based on the student's family size and income.

If students [cannot repay](#) their loans, they should not ignore them. They may instead change their payment due date by contacting their loan servicer. They can also change their repayment plan if they need lower monthly payments, or consolidate their loans if they have multiple student loans. Direct consolidation loans allow students to combine all their loans into one for one single payment. Students can access the [repayment estimator calculator](#) to plan for their loan repayment.

Types of Financial Aid

Loan Forgiveness

Forgiveness, **discharge**, or **cancellation** of a student's loan means they are no longer required to pay part of or all of their loan. If students are no longer required to make payments on their loan because of the job they have, that is either **forgiveness** or **cancellation**. If the student is no longer required to make payments due to other circumstances, including a permanent or total disability or the closure of the school that received their loans, that is considered **discharge**. Students must repay their loans even if they do not finish their education or fail to find a job related to their major area of study. They must also still pay if they are unhappy with the education they received.

Students cannot claim that they do not have responsibility to repay their loans because they were minors when they received them or signed their promissory notes. However, in certain circumstances, students can have their loans cancelled, discharged, or forgiven. Depending on their career and life paths, graduates may have access to teacher loan forgiveness, death discharge, public service loan forgiveness, Perkins Loan cancellation, closed school discharge, unpaid refund discharge, false certification of student eligibility or unauthorized signature or payment discharge, bankruptcy discharge, or total and permanent disability discharge.

Types of Financial Aid

Financial Aid for Graduate Students

Students can receive several [types](#) of student aid. The **direct loan** program is the largest federal student loan program, through which the U.S. Department of Education acts as the lender.

Students may choose from two types of direct loans: **direct unsubsidized** loans and **direct PLUS** loans. Direct subsidized loans are awarded up to \$20,500 per school year, and direct PLUS loans are available to students who need to borrow more than the maximum unsubsidized amount to meet their education costs.

The **TEACH grant program** provides students who plan to complete teaching coursework with grants of up to \$4,000 each year. This program requires students to take specific classes and follow a certain career path.

Scholarship Guide

Scholarships for Adult and Mid-Career Students

[\\$1,000 College JumpStart Scholarship](#)

Who Can Apply: Open to nontraditional adult students; 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students; and college students, the \$1,000 College JumpStart scholarship helps finance education for students.

Amount: \$1,000

[College America Adult Student Scholarships](#)

Who Can Apply: Offered to adult students pursuing higher education degrees, College America offers a range of scholarships and grants geared toward students returning to school. Applicants must submit a 500-word essay and maintain a 3.0 minimum GPA.

Amount: Varies

[Jeannette Rankin Women's Scholarship Fund](#)

Who Can Apply: The Jeannette Rankin Women's Scholarship Fund is available to low-income women who are 35 and older and are working on their vocational or technical education, associate degree, or first degree. Applicants must submit two letters of recommendation, proof of community involvement, and their transcripts.

Amount: Varies

Scholarship Guide

Scholarships for Adult and Mid-Career Students

[P.E.O. Program for Continuing Education Scholarship](#)

Who Can Apply: Offered to women whose educational journey has been interrupted, the P.E.O. Program for Continuing Education Scholarship is meant for any woman who is within 24 consecutive months of completing her degree.

Amount: \$3,000

[Adult Students in Scholastic Transition \(ASIST\) Scholarship Program](#)

Who Can Apply: Meant for nontraditional adult students in a variety of transitional situations, the Adult Students in Scholastic Transition Scholarship Program sets out to positively impact the lives and education of scholarship recipients.

Amount: Varies

Scholarship Guide

Scholarships for Students with Children

[Ford Opportunity Program for Single Parents](#)

Who Can Apply: Hallie E. Ford (1905-2007) founded the Ford Family Foundation and launched the Ford Opportunity program to support single parents in their pursuit of a degree. Up to 50 single-parent students are selected each year for this generous award, which covers up to 90% of unmet college costs. Applicants must be residents of Oregon or Siskiyou County, California.

Amount: Up to \$25,000

[Patsy Takemoto Mink Foundation Scholarship](#)

Who Can Apply: Established in 2003, the Patsy Takemoto Mink Foundation Scholarship is awarded to females who are at least 17 years of age and pursuing a degree. Applicants must be mothers.

Amount: \$5,000

Scholarship Guide

Scholarships for Students with Children

[EFWA Scholarships](#)

Who Can Apply: The Educational Foundation for Women in Accounting offers a variety of scholarships designed for women who are the primary source of support for their families, including single mothers. Women with an aptitude for accounting and business are encouraged to apply.

Amount: \$1,000 to \$16,000 each year

[Custody X Change](#)

Who Can Apply: Custody X Change supports parents returning to school to improve their family. For consideration, students must have at least a 3.0 GPA and complete a 500-word essay explaining how the funds can help their family.

Amount: \$1,000

[Live Your Dream](#)

Who Can Apply: The Live Your Dream foundation allocates over two million dollars in education grants each year to help single mothers pursue higher education. There is no GPA or specific major requirement.

Amount: \$500, \$1,000, and \$2,000

Scholarship Guide

Scholarships for Online Students

[Point Community Scholarship](#)

Who Can Apply: New online students at Point University can receive the Point Community Scholarship over the life of their degree. Applicants must explain how an education from Point would help them make a positive impact on their community. This scholarship is awarded to one student per session.

Amount: Up to \$15,000

[Undergraduate Distance Learning Degrees Academic Scholarship](#)

Who Can Apply: Once a year, the Undergraduate Distance Learning Degrees Academic Scholarship is awarded to a student pursuing any undergraduate degree online, regardless of their study location. They must have at least 30 credit hours left in order to apply.

Amount: \$500

[Get Educated Online College Scholarship Program](#)

Who Can Apply: Offered to students enrolled in accredited online programs in any area, the Get Educated Online Scholarship Program requires students to write a 500-word essay, provide their tax information, and submit their transcripts.

Amount: \$1,000

Scholarship Guide

Grants and Fellowships for Nontraditional Students

[American Association of University Women's Career Development Grant](#)

Who Can Apply: Aimed at women who have their bachelor's degrees and are returning to an advanced degree program to change careers, the American Association of University Women's Career Development Grant places a preference on women of color.

Amount: Varies

[General Henry H. Arnold Education Grant](#)

Who Can Apply: The U.S. Air Force awards the General Henry H. Arnold Education Grant to students who are dependent sons and daughters of active-duty military service members, Title 10 Reservists on extended active duty, retired Reserve and deceased Air Force members, Title 32 Guard performing full-time active duty, and spouses or widows/widowers of active-duty and Title 10 Reservists.

Amount: \$2,000

[National Black Nurses Association](#)

Who Can Apply: Created for students of color who are returning to college to finish their nursing degrees, the National Black Nurses Association provides a variety of scholarships and grants to nontraditional students.

Amount: \$500-\$2,000

Scholarship Guide

Additional Resources

- [Association for Nontraditional Students in Higher Education](#)
 - ANTSHE's mission is to provide scholarship opportunities, academic resources, and motivational support for non-traditional students, building on the network of faculty, administrators, and advisors that work with and inspire non-traditional students to succeed.
- [Nontraditional Students: Supporting Changing Student Populations](#)
 - NASPA is a national organization dedicated to supporting those in the student affairs profession. This report explores the expanding demographic of the nontraditional student and details methods for supporting them to ensure academic success.
- [Nontraditional Student Populations](#)
 - The mission of NODA (the National Orientation Director's Association) is to provide education, leadership, and professional development in the fields of college student orientation, transition, and retention. They have created the Non-Traditional Student Populations Network to support nontraditional students and help them optimize their education experience.

Scholarship Guide

Point University: A Respected Christian Institution

Point University is an accredited, private, Christian university that offers a wide range of 100% online programs, including:

- Associate Programs
- Bachelor's Programs
- Master's Programs
- Certificates

Find the online program that works with your career goals and your busy lifestyle at online.point.edu, or give us a call at [844-671-5839](tel:844-671-5839).