Financial Aid Policy Statement
Carleton assumes that parents have the primary responsibility for financing their student's education. Implied in that philosophy is an expectation that students will participate in financing their Carleton education. The Office of Student Financial Services will do what it can to enable a student to continue for a total of 12 terms or until graduation, whichever occurs first.

Your Financial Aid Award
Need-based financial aid awards for returning students will be calculated once Carleton receives all required documents: FAFSA, PROFILE, 2014 federal income tax return(s), and supporting W-2(s).

It is important that students and their parents provide accurate and timely information. We will check to ensure that figures on the PROFILE and FAFSA are consistent with submitted federal tax documents. In addition, the federal government will select some applicants for a more complete verification process. Those individuals will be contacted separately and should respond accordingly.

All untaxed income must be reported properly on the PROFILE and FAFSA. Carleton reserves the right to request copies of tax returns directly from the IRS. Once we have verified the accuracy of the application data, financial need is calculated.

Those students not qualifying for need-based aid may request student employment by submitting a Work Preference Form on our website. They will be considered for positions as jobs become available. In addition, students interested in non-need-based loans may inquire at the Office of Student Financial Services or consult our website.

Carleton Grants/Scholarships
Carleton grants/scholarships are institutional funds given to students as a means of meeting their financial need. These funds are made available through College donors and the general operating budget. At a later time, students may be notified of which specific endowed or gift fund to the College provided their funding. Some students may be asked to write a thank you note to the donor(s). Carleton grants are applied to student accounts once the aid award has been accepted on The Hub. The College does not expect students to repay these grants or maintain a specific grade point average. However, students need to maintain satisfactory academic progress (i.e., remain off academic suspension) throughout the year to ensure continued funding.

State Grants
Minnesota State Grant: Minnesota residents apply by completing the FAFSA. At the completion of the FAFSA, eligible students may be prompted to complete an online questionnaire for the Minnesota State Grant program.

Minnesota State Grant recipients should be aware that the definition of a full-time student for State Grant purposes is 15 credits per term. Students who take fewer than 15 credits in any term will find their State Grant reduced. (Note: Carleton students normally carry 18 credits per term.)

Federal Grants
Pell Grant: Students apply for federal Pell Grant funding by completing the FAFSA. Official notification of Pell Grant eligibility will be sent to the student in the form of a Student Aid Report (SAR). Students should review the SAR for accuracy of data and notify the federal Department of Education with any corrections.

Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (SEOG): Students apply for federal SEOG funding by completing the FAFSA. These limited grants are awarded to students with the greatest demonstrated need.

Loans
Students should refer to the loan chart online if a loan is part of their award. Although the recommended loan(s) will appear on the aid award, no assumptions will be made about a student's intention to accept the loan(s), and no loan funds will be applied to a student's account until they are received in the Business Office. Students may apply for these loans at any time during the academic year. Federal regulations require that all first-time Direct Stafford and Perkins loan borrowers complete the applicable entrance counseling requirement(s) and promissory note(s) before funds can be disbursed and credited to a student's account.

Federal Direct Stafford and Perkins loans are made directly with the student, and no cosigner is necessary. Detailed information can be found online at go.carleton.edu/loans.

Parents interested in applying for a Direct PLUS loan and students interested in alternative loans can find information on these and other sources online at go.carleton.edu/altloans.

Student Employment
Students may receive student employment as part of their financial aid package. Students eligible for student employment may work on campus or at a non-profit off-campus position if they have been awarded Minnesota or Federal Student Employment. Students who receive student employment as part of their financial aid package are given preference as positions become available. Upper-class students may work up to 10 hours per week and are paid $9.28 per hour.
In mid-August, students with financial aid awards will receive an e-mail with their job assignment for the 2015–2016 academic year. Federal regulations require that all students with authorized student employment must have a completed Employment Eligibility Verification (Form I-9) and W-4 Withholding Allowance Certificate on file with Human Resources before starting to work. All income earned is subject to applicable federal and state income tax laws. Students will receive their W-2 forms in January. Students will be paid via direct deposit to their checking or savings account for the hours worked during a payroll period. If they wish to apply all or a portion of their earnings toward their student tuition account, arrangements must be made with the Business Office. The maximum amount of a student’s employment award is the amount listed on the financial aid award. Students are not permitted to exceed the amount of their work award.

Aid Revisions Based on Outside Scholarships/Grants

Students are expected and encouraged to apply for outside scholarships, with the understanding that their aid package will be adjusted to remain within a family’s calculated need. Under Carleton’s outside aid policy, private scholarships reduce the student’s self-help awards (loan and/or student employment) on a dollar-for-dollar basis. For example, if a student receives an outside scholarship in the amount of $1,000, we will reduce the student’s loan by this same amount. If a student’s loan is totally eliminated, any additional outside aid will decrease the student employment award. Students may request in writing to have their student employment reduced first. Pell Grants, Minnesota State Grants, and other need-based federal and state programs will not be adjusted.

The College will not authorize need-based financial aid in addition to the outside award(s) if the total amount of outside aid equals or exceeds the student’s demonstrated financial need. We will assume that all outside aid will be sent directly to the Office of Student Financial Services to be credited to the student’s account. Please notify our office if this is not the case.

Students should send us a written list of outside awards expected for the coming year. Awards will be applied to a student’s account only upon receipt of the scholarship funds.

Accepting Your Award

Students accept their initial award and any subsequent revisions online. Students will be notified of the need to accept an award or revision by e-mail and will access the aid award through The Hub. Any accepted loans will be processed only after Student Financial Services receives notice that a student has submitted their acceptance of an award or revision and completed any applicable entrance counseling and/or promissory note requirements.

Crediting Aid to Your Account

Students who have accepted their financial aid award on The Hub and have completed the necessary loan application(s) will have their aid credited to their student account. All aid, with the exception of student employment, is applied as follows: 33 percent fall term, 33 percent winter term, and 34 percent spring term.

Other Notes About Your Award

Students will receive aid throughout their undergraduate years at Carleton as long as they continue to make satisfactory academic progress toward their degree and continue to demonstrate financial need. Normally, financial assistance is not extended beyond 12 terms. Students must re-apply each year for financial aid and all loans. Both students and their parents must submit signed copies of their previous year’s federal tax returns to CollegeBoard upon their request. Application information will be available on the Student Financial Services website each subsequent year.

If students marry while attending Carleton, financial aid will continue to be based upon their parents’ financial resources. Students or their parents must report to us any significant changes in their family’s financial situation as soon as they occur. This includes increases of $1,000 or more in income or assets.

Report in writing any unusual circumstances that affect a student’s ability to afford Carleton. Be as specific as possible and provide documentation to give a clear understanding of the situation.

Off-Campus Study Programs

Students who receive financial aid from Carleton and/or other sources may apply their aid to any College-approved off-campus study (OCS) program. The Office of Student Financial Services maintains the following policies (which are subject to change according to available funding):

• A student’s financial aid package will be available for an OCS program that has been approved by the Office of Off-Campus Studies.

• Carleton students may use their financial aid package for any Carleton-sponsored OCS program. Financial aid will transfer to one (1) non-Carleton-sponsored, OCS-approved program.

• The entire financial aid package, including grants, loans, and student employment, is based on the cost of a year at Carleton. If a student participates in a program that is more costly than Carleton’s costs, grant funds will not be increased, but additional loan funds may be requested. If a student’s total program expense is less than the cost at Carleton, financial aid is subject to review and will be adjusted proportionally.

• Program deposit fees and expenses not included in the program fee, such as travel, are a student’s responsibility. Students receiving need-based aid may request additional loan assistance to cover costs directly associated with the program which exceed those incurred for a comparable time on campus.

• Normally, annual financial aid is applied according to the following schedule: 33 percent to fall term, 33 percent to winter term, and 34 percent to spring term. In an academic year in which a student takes a semester-long off-campus program for 27 credits and attends Carleton for only one term, he or she may request in writing to have one-half of his or her aid applied to the semester program and one-third to the Carleton term, for a total of five-sixths the annual amount.

• During terms in which a student is enrolled on campus, he or she may be eligible to work up to 15 hours per week to make up lost hours from terms the student is not enrolled on campus. If it is impossible to fulfill his or her full work award due to the length of time off campus, a student may request in writing a loan for the unearned amount.
• A written request for additional loan funds along with an OCS Budget Worksheet must be submitted to the Office of Student Financial Services 30 days prior to the starting date of the program. Discretionary travel expenses should not be included in the OCS budget. Only legitimate costs directly associated with the program will be considered.

• A student must maintain full-time student status (enrolled for at least the equivalent of 15 Carleton credits for Minnesota State Grant recipients and 12 Carleton credits for other aid recipients) to qualify for financial aid.

Student Rights and Responsibilities
Students have many responsibilities when applying for financial aid. They are expected to submit all required forms in a timely manner. All reported information must be accurate. A prompt response to any request for information is essential. These requests are often necessary to complete a financial aid application or to meet federal/state guidelines. Most communications from the Office of Student Financial Services will be made directly with the student.

Carleton treats every family’s financial situation as fairly and equitably as possible when completing a financial aid application. However, we are also aware that a family’s finances can change unexpectedly, hampering their ability to contribute to college expenses. In such cases, students have a right to request a review of their award.

Any review will be consistent with the standard principles and practices used in determining every award.

Students also have a right to speak with a financial aid officer in the Office of Student Financial Services. Please contact us to schedule an appointment or to inquire about your concern.

Students and parents should know that the information provided to determine a financial aid award will remain confidential within the Office of Student Financial Services and other appropriate Carleton offices. Release of specific student information to other entities will be made only with proper authorization from the student.

Understanding Need Analysis
In order to help parents and students understand how Carleton makes financial aid decisions and to acquaint families with the principles of our need analysis, we offer the following brief explanation of the major factors involved with this process. We assume that both the parent(s) and student will contribute toward college expenses. We use a standard formula based on the information reported on the PROFILE to determine the expected family contribution (EFC). The EFC takes into account both student and parent contributions. The EFC is not something families can realistically take out of one year’s income; most families finance their share of college costs through a combination of savings, current income, and loans.

Parent Contribution
Parents are expected to contribute a portion of all income and assets, after appropriate allowances are made. One factor is income from all sources, making allowances for essential expenses such as reasonable living costs; federal, state, and local taxes; unusually high medical expenses; and educational expenses for other children. The expected parent contribution is based on a graduated rate structure that applies a lower rate (22 percent) to the first dollars of available income and progressively higher rates to additional dollars of discretionary income.

We also examine parent assets when determining the expected family contribution, because a family with assets is in a stronger financial situation than a family with similar income but no assets.

We consider savings and investments, as well as home equity, real estate, and business and farm assets. Allowances are subtracted from assets for unanticipated emergency expenses and anticipated post-secondary school costs for the family.

We do not expect families to deplete their assets in order to finance an education, but assets are important in determining a family’s overall financial strength. We expect families to contribute only a small percentage of their total assets for college expenses. Based on a graduated structure like income, the percentage ranges from 3 to 5 percent of total assets.

If the parents are separated or divorced, we use information from the custodial parent to determine the federal EFC. We also ask that the noncustodial parent submit the Noncustodial PROFILE. A contribution from this parent is normally expected.

Student Contribution
Because education should be a top priority, students are expected to contribute a greater percentage of income and assets than their parents. We assume that students will work during summer and term breaks, saving the majority of their earnings for college expenses. Carleton assumes a minimum student contribution of $2,100 per year. Additionally, students are expected to apply 25 percent of the value of their assets toward their education.

Final Determination of an Award
Carleton tries to make a fair and accurate determination of a family’s ability to finance an education. We consider as many factors as possible, including income, assets, and the number of children in college, with allowances for a variety of extenuating circumstances.

Note: A more detailed explanation of our need analysis is available upon request.