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 matriculate. Financial aid eligibility is for a maximum of 12 terms or until graduation requirements are met, whichever occurs first.

Your Financial Aid Award
Initial Awards
Awards based on our analysis of financial aid data using estimated figures are considered Initial Awards and are not credited to student accounts. Awards labeled “Initial” will be considered as such until Carleton receives all required material verifying or correcting estimated data.

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

All untaxed income must be reported properly on the PROFILE and FAFSA. Once we have verified the accuracy of the application data, students will receive a letter with their finalized aid award. In selected cases, Carleton reserves the right to request copies of tax returns directly from the IRS.

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 from the general operating budget. At a later time, students may be notified of which specific endowment or gift to the College provided their funding. Some students may be asked to write a thank you note to the donor(s). Carleton grants/scholarships are applied to student accounts once the aid award has been finalized, accepted, and signed by the student. The College does not expect students to repay these grants/scholarships 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: Students eligible for the Minnesota State Grant apply by completing the FAFSA. Eligible students may be sent a questionnaire to complete and return in order to confirm their residency and eligibility.

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 of any corrections.

Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants (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 enclosed loan chart if a loan is part of their award. Loan application information and instructions will be included with the student’s finalized award letter beginning in June. Although the recommended loan appears on the aid award, no assumptions will be made about a student’s intention to accept a loan. Federal regulations require that all first-time federal Direct Stafford loan borrowers complete the applicable entrance counseling requirement(s) and promissory note(s) before funds will be disbursed and credited to a student’s account. Federal Direct Stafford loans are made directly with the student and no cosigner is necessary. Students may apply for these loans at any time during the year. Detailed information can be found by visiting go.carleton.edu/loans.

Student Employment
Students may receive student employment as part of their financial aid package. Students eligible for student employment may work on campus or, if they have been awarded Minnesota or Federal Student Employment, at a non-profit off-campus position. Students who receive student employment as part of their financial aid
package are given preference as positions become available. Normally, first-year students can work up to 8 hours per week and upper-class students up to 10 hours per week.

Federal regulations require that an Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9) be completed with Human Resources BEFORE beginning employment at Carleton. A W-4 Withholding Allowance Certificate must also be on file.

During New Student Week, Human Resources hosts a special session devoted to assisting students with their I-9 and W-4 forms. The I-9 requires ORIGINAL documents—you can view these acceptable documents at apps.carleton.edu/campus/human_resources/studentemployment.

All income earned is subject to applicable federal and state income tax laws. Students will receive their pay advices (earnings statements) electronically. These documents are delivered through Carleton’s secure internet portal, The Hub. Students will be paid via direct deposit to their U.S. bank account or to their Carleton tuition account. Students may elect to have their earnings split between their bank account and their tuition account. This process is completed on The Hub. Students will receive a W-2 in January.

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, outside 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. The exception to this policy involves federal Pell Grant, Minnesota State Grant, and other need-based state grant programs. Students may request in writing to reduce their student employment first, to keep their loan at the maximum legal limit, or to replace a need-based loan with a non-need-based loan.

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 tuition account only upon receipt of a scholarship check.

### Accepting Your Award

Return a signed and dated copy of the initial financial aid award, as well as any subsequent revisions, to the Office of Student Financial Services.

Any accepted loans will be processed only after Student Financial Services receives notice that an accepted student has electronically submitted an acceptance of finalized award or revision on The Hub. In addition, any applicable entrance counseling and promissory note requirements must be completed.

### Crediting Aid to Your Account

Students whose financial aid files are finalized and from whom we have received an applicable loan application will have their fall term aid credited to their account. All aid, with the exception of student employment, is credited to the student’s account as follows: 33 percent fall term, 33 percent winter term, and 34 percent spring term.

### Noncustodial Parent

Carleton requires noncustodial parents to complete and submit the Noncustodial PROFILE to the College Board. Access to this form will be sent to the student and should be forwarded to the noncustodial parent.

### Special Circumstances

Unusual circumstances that affect a student’s ability to afford Carleton should be reported to the Office of Student Financial Services in writing. Be as specific as possible to give us a clear understanding of your situation.

### Determination of Financial Aid for Subsequent Years

Students will receive aid throughout their undergraduate years at Carleton as long as they continue to make satisfactory progress toward their degree and continue to demonstrate financial need. Financial aid eligibility is for a maximum of 12 terms or until graduation requirements are met, whichever occurs first.

No awards are renewed automatically. Students must re-apply each year for financial aid and all loans. Both students and their parents must submit signed copies of their federal tax returns, including all schedules, 1099s and supporting W-2s to the College Board 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.
**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 award 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 award. However, we are 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 in writing 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 most 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 similar to the federal income tax structure that applies a lower rate (23 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 postsecondary 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 use only a small percentage of their total assets for college expenses. Based on a graduated structure like that for 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 an initial EFC. We also ask that the noncustodial parent submit the Noncustodial PROFILE for analysis. A contribution from the noncustodial 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 and save the majority of their earnings for college expenses. Carleton assumes a minimum student contribution of $2,000 for the first 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 the need analysis we use is available upon request.

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Additional Online Resources

- **College Board**
  - www.collegeboard.org
- **CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE Application**
  - student.collegeboard.org/css-financial-aid-profile
- **FAFSA Online Application**
  - www.fafsa.gov
- **Scholarship Search**
  - www.fastweb.com
- **Federal Student Aid**
  - www.studentaid.ed.gov
- **Minnesota Office of Higher Education**
  - www.ohe.state.mn.us
Navigating Your Financial Aid Award
Need help understanding your financial aid award? Here’s a short video to help: go.carleton.edu/navigate

There are four main parts to your aid award. We will explore each one and provide explanations of how you should interpret the components of your aid award.

1. Estimated Cost
2. Your Financial Aid Award
3. Additional Notes and Options
4. Accepting Your Award

We encourage everyone to review your aid award carefully to make sure you have a good understanding of what is being offered to you.

Making Sense of Your Financial Aid Award
(for more detailed information: go.carleton.edu/decoding)

When students and families receive financial aid award letters they are often overwhelmed and confused by what’s in front of them. Here are some ways to make sense of your financial aid award letters and financial information that can help make the financial piece of selecting a college more understandable.

Step #1 | Set some time aside
Students and their families should approach the financial aid process with the understanding that a considerable amount of time, discussion, and planning is necessary to come to a decision about what is the best way to pay for college expenses.

Step #2 | Gather the data
Financial aid awards from colleges all look a little different. Look at the cost of attendance. What are the direct costs (what the college is billing you)? Indirect costs (expenses related to attendance)? Gift aid (funding that doesn’t have to be paid back)? Student loans (funding to be paid back to the federal government, bank or college)? Student employment/Work-study (funding to be earned)?

Step #3 | Calculating the balance
Direct Costs - Gift Aid = what the institution will bill you. Is this affordable? If not, how much can you pay? How much student loan debt are you willing to take to cover the balance? How much will your parent/family be paying?

Step #4 | Compare
Create a chart or download one from our website to compare each college’s cost and financial aid award.

Additional website with comparison worksheets:
College Board: http://bit.ly/1jrydmB
FinAid: http://mnstr.me/1vSCsLY