Financial Aid

The Office of Financial Aid’s primary goal is to ensure that students have access to available resources to fund their education. CU Boulder students may be eligible to receive financial aid from our office each year from federal, state, university and private sources.

Applying for Financial Aid

Students apply for financial aid by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) (https://studentaid.gov/sa/ffasf). Once the student lists CU Boulder on the FAFSA (using school code 001370), the Office of Financial Aid receives results electronically and uses them to help determine a student’s eligibility for grants, work-study and loans, as well as some scholarships.

FAFSAs are school-year specific. For financial aid for Fall 2020, Spring 2021, and Summer 2021, the 2020–21 FAFSA must be submitted. Students should apply as soon as possible after it opens on October 1, 2019, as some funds are limited and eventually run out. Students must apply for financial aid every year.

Eligibility

Financial aid eligibility is based on a variety of factors, such as the student’s FAFSA, the cost to attend CU Boulder and the availability of funding.

The FAFSA determines the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). This is a reference number schools use to best determine the family’s financial situation. It’s not the amount of money a family will pay for college, nor is it the amount of financial aid a student will receive.

Each year the Office of Financial Aid calculates the estimated Cost of Attendance (COA) for an academic year. This COA estimate includes both university-bill costs (tuition, fees, on-campus housing and dining) as well as out-of-pocket expenses (books and supplies, transportation, and personal expenses). The FAFSA EFC reference number is subtracted from the cost estimate to determine a student’s financial need. This financial need is considered when determining eligibility for aid.

View more information on cost and budget examples (https://www.colorado.edu/financialaid/node/51).

Types of Financial Aid

Financial aid offers begin as early as February for the upcoming fall semester, but aid is continually offered as long as funds are available. First-year and transfer students applying for aid for the 2020–21 school year are encouraged to submit their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) (https://studentaid.gov/sa/ffasf) and any additional documentation requested as soon as possible, as some funding is limited. In previous years, some funding has run out as early as late-February or early-March before the fall semester.

Types of financial aid available to CU Boulder students are listed below.

Grants

Grants (https://www.colorado.edu/financialaid/node/71) are a type of aid that don't have to be repaid. Students should submit the FAFSA to be considered for federal, state and institutional need-based grants (including Pell, Colorado Student Grant, etc.).

Loans

Students submit the FAFSA (https://studentaid.gov/sa/ffasf) to be considered for the following loan programs:

Federal Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans

Federal Direct Loans (https://www.colorado.edu/financialaid/node/98) are federal student loans that are offered and disbursed by CU Boulder. Undergraduate students may qualify for a combination of subsidized (i.e., federal government pays the interest) and unsubsidized loans. The interest rates for direct loans are determined annually. An origination/loan fee is charged based on when the loan is disbursed. Annual limits depend on the year in school: first-year students can be awarded up to $5,500, sophomores $6,500, and juniors and seniors $7,500. Independent students may borrow an additional amount of unsubsidized loans (first-year students and sophomores $4,000 and juniors and seniors $5,000).

Interest on unsubsidized loans can be repaid while the student is in school. Repayment begins six months after the student graduates or ceases to be enrolled at least half-time (6 credit hours for undergraduates; 4 credit hours for graduates).

Federal Parent PLUS Loan

Federal PLUS loans (https://www.colorado.edu/financialaid/node/23) are available to parents of dependent undergraduate students. The origination fee and interest rates are dependent on when the loan is paid to the student’s university bill, but interest rates are fixed for the life of the loan.

Borrowers must complete a credit check, but it’s possible for a borrower to qualify for a PLUS loan with a bad credit score, as long as they don’t have an adverse credit history.

Note: Parents borrowing a PLUS loan for their student will be regarded as parental support on in-state residency petitions for dependent students. Parents may request a deferment on payments until their student has finished with school.

Work-Study

Students offered work-study (https://www.colorado.edu/studentemployment/node/8) are provided an amount of money they can work to earn through approved on- or off-campus agencies. Students don’t get the money up-front, nor is it applied to their tuition and fee bill; they will receive a paycheck for hours worked just like any other hourly job. Students should submit the FAFSA (https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/ffasf) to be considered for work-study, since it’s based on financial need.

Students may apply for a variety of work-study jobs at competitive rates. Jobs can be found online through the CU Boulder Student Job (https://ofa.colorado.edu/studentjobs) database.

Scholarships

Donations from private individuals, corporations, foundations and the University of Colorado are all sources for scholarships (http://www.colorado.edu/scholarships). Incoming students are automatically considered for some scholarships through their admissions application. CU Boulder Scholarship Application

Students may apply for scholarships (http://www.colorado.edu/scholarships/cuboulder-scholarship-app) offered by the Office of Financial Aid each year. For scholarships with a financial need requirement, applicants must have submitted a FAFSA (https://
Benefits of being a Boettcher Scholar include:

- Access to enrichment, research and Top Scholarship (https://www.colorado.edu/topscholarships) advising
- A fifth-year tuition benefit for concurrent degree seekers

High school students apply for the scholarship directly through the Boettcher Foundation (http://boettcherfoundation.org/colorado-scholarships) in the fall of their senior year of high school. Once selected, scholarship recipients have the opportunity to choose which campus they will attend.

Norlin Scholars

The interdisciplinary Norlin Scholars Program is geared toward students interested in a liberal education. Norlin Scholars develop expertise in their chosen fields through research, deep engagement and self-reflection. Upon graduation, they're in a strong position for whatever comes next: the job market, graduate and professional schools or fellowships.

Students can apply as high school seniors for a four-year scholarship or as second-year college students for a two-year scholarship. Norlin applicants must apply to CU first, though they do not need to be admitted to be considered.

Benefits of being a Norlin Scholar include:

- a $6,000 scholarship per academic year
- small, invigorating courses (NRLN 2000 and NRLN 3500)
- research or creative projects with faculty
- individual, group and peer mentoring
- access to top scholarship advising and guidance
- opportunities for professional training and development
- a stimulating, interdisciplinary peer group

The Norlin Scholars program builds community through shared experiences and support. Explore what it means to be a Norlin Scholar and the scholar support system on the Norlin Scholars (https://www.colorado.edu/boettcher-norlin-scholars/norlin-scholars) website.

Visit the Norlin Scholars (https://www.colorado.edu/boettcher-norlin-scholars/norlin-scholars) website for application information.

Professional and Academic Conference Endowment (PACE)

PACE provides funding, support and mentoring to qualified undergraduates to present their work at conferences. Conference presentations may be oral presentations, poster sessions, round-table discussions, or creative or performance pieces. Students from all majors, departments, colleges and schools are welcome to apply for PACE grants.

Aside from receiving funds toward conference expenses, recipients benefit from faculty and peer supported conference preparation and exposure to working professionals and cutting edge scholarship in the field. Additionally, conference presentations:

- Complement classroom learning
- Take undergraduate research to the next level
- Provide a range of professional credentials

To accommodate the year-round schedule of professional conferences, PACE deadlines are rolling. Consult the PACE website (https://www.colorado.edu/pace) for more information.
**Top Scholarships**

Top Scholarships helps you prepare a thoughtful application to some of the most prestigious, nationally competitive scholarships offered, like the Rhodes, Marshall, Truman and Goldwater, among others. This office helps high-achieving students already enrolled at CU, usually in their sophomore, junior or senior years. For help with scholarships for incoming first-year students, or to inquire about scholarships already awarded, please contact the Office of Financial Aid (http://www.colorado.edu/financialaid).

Top Scholarships provides:

- Guidance in selecting a fellowship or scholarship that fits your plans
- Expert advice on scholarship opportunities listed
- Individualized assistance preparing applications, essays, and proposals
- Practice interviews and interview strategies

Please see our Top Scholarships (https://www.colorado.edu/topscholarships) website for more information, including benefits of making an application to Top Scholarships and how to apply.

**Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP)**

CU Boulder has a rich culture for cultivating undergraduates as emerging scholars, artists and practicing researchers. UROP provides consultation services, informational workshops and grants to promote undergraduate research as a high-impact learning practice for student success.

Each year UROP funds hundreds of students who produce new knowledge and creative work in partnership with CU’s world-class faculty. We serve students and faculty whose learning and teaching goals include outside-the-classroom enrichment.

In a UROP project, students:

- Explore academic interests beyond the classroom
- Get hands-on experience with research or creative production
- Develop student-faculty relationships for professional references
- Acquire academic and professional skills and credentials
- Demonstrate successful grant-writing skills
- Refine their academic and career goals

From development of a research interest or question to completion of an application takes some time. UROP deadlines precede the academic year in which the research or creative work will be undertaken and students apply in partnership with the learning mentor. Visit the UROP website (https://www.colorado.edu/urop) for more information.

**Policies**

The Office of Financial Aid follows regulations provided by the Department of Education, the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005, the Family Education Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) and in-house policies to administer federal, state and university funding.

**Adjustments to Financial Aid**

There are a variety of circumstances that may require an adjustment to a student’s financial aid (https://www.colorado.edu/financialaid/node/31). Students should understand how dropping and adding courses, receiving other aid, or corrections on their FAFSA will impact their aid.

**Education Abroad (Study Abroad)**

Students must be enrolled in a CU Boulder education abroad (https://www.colorado.edu/financialaid/node/81) program to be eligible for financial aid. Students participating in an education abroad program through another university are not eligible.

**FERPA**

The Family Education Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA (https://www.colorado.edu/financialaid/node/25)) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student educational records (which includes financial aid).

**Repeat Coursework**

Students may only repeat a course (https://www.colorado.edu/financialaid/node/13) once and be eligible to receive financial aid if they previously received a grade of “D-” or better in that course.

**Return to Title IV Funds and Refund Policy**

If a student enrolls at CU Boulder, receives financial aid, then withdraws, his or her financial aid is adjusted according to federal regulations (https://www.colorado.edu/financialaid/node/376). The student may owe a bill to the university after the financial aid is adjusted.

**Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**

Students who apply for financial aid are responsible for knowing and complying with the satisfactory academic progress policy (https://www.colorado.edu/financialaid/node/33). Briefly, the policy outlines the requirements to maintain satisfactory progress (i.e., minimum grade point average [GPA], completion rate, etc.), the consequences of failing to meet the requirements, and the process for appealing if the student loses eligibility.

**Student Loan Code of Conduct**

The Office of Financial Aid has established a set of principles and policies to govern educational lending practices for undergraduate, graduate and professional students. Our staff will follow the Student Loan Code of Conduct (https://www.colorado.edu/financialaid/node/41) to ensure the integrity of the student loan process.

**Students Rights and Responsibilities**

Students who receive any form of financial aid, have certain rights and responsibilities (https://www.colorado.edu/financialaid/node/43). The university is also required to disclose certain information to all students. Also view CU Boulder Consumer Information (http://www.colorado.edu/about/your-right-know).

**Verification**

Students may be asked to provide additional information as part of the verification (https://www.colorado.edu/financialaid/node/298) process. Verification checks the accuracy of answers provided on a student’s FAFSA.

**Drug Conviction**

In accordance with the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005, students who have been convicted under federal or state law for possession or sale of a controlled substance (https://www.colorado.edu/financialaid/node/348) will be suspended from Title IV aid eligibility if the offense occurred while the student was receiving Title IV aid.
A summary of the most pertinent policies are available as financial aid guides on the Office of Financial Aid’s policy webpage (https://www.colorado.edu/financialaid/node/13).

**Student Employment**
Research studies indicate that students who work while attending college are as successful academically as those who do not. Jobs provide students with income, work experience and the opportunity to explore career options. Student Employment, within the Office of Financial Aid, supports students and employers with work-study employment, finding and posting job opportunities and providing guidance on student employment policy.

**Work-Study**
Students offered work-study (https://www.colorado.edu/studentemployment/node/8) are provided an amount of money they can work to earn through approved on and off-campus agencies. Students don’t get the money up-front, nor is it applied to their tuition and fee bill. These students receive a paycheck for hours worked just like any other hourly job. Work-study students should submit the FAFSA (https://studentaid.gov/sa/fafsa) to be considered for work-study, since it’s based on financial need.

Get a quick overview of the program with our work-study video (https://www.colorado.edu/studentemployment/node/66).

**Find a Job**
Student Employment posts part-time on-campus and off-campus jobs (https://www.colorado.edu/studentemployment/node/4) for both work-study and non-work-study students. In addition, an on-call temporary employment service allows students to register for occasional work including one-time child care, yard work and clerical jobs.

**Student Employee Work Hours Policy**
Undergraduate student employees are limited to working a maximum of 25 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters and 40 hours per week during the summer, per the Student Hourly Employee Work Hours Policy (https://www.colorado.edu/studentemployment/node/12). The policy does not affect students working in non-university off-campus jobs, though we encourage students to prioritize their academics first when considering outside work commitments. View more information about this policy and other student employment policies on the Student Employment policy web page (https://www.colorado.edu/studentemployment/node/12).

**Contact Student Employment**
Student Employment is here to help connect students and employers. Visit Student Employment in Regent Administrative Center 205 (http://www.colorado.edu/campusmap/map.html?bldg=RGNT&x=24&y=9), call 303-492-7349 or email studentemployment@colorado.edu for more information.