SECTION 1: MANUAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the Financial Aid Office

Our Financial Aid Office consists of one staff member who is available to the entire Nicholas School student body for aid counseling. We counsel students on finding external scholarship funding, borrowing responsibly, and living within your means as a student.

♦ Location: Duke University, Nicholas School of the Environment, Levine Science Research Center, Academic and Enrollment Services, Room A116, Durham, NC 27705

♦ Hours of operation: 8:30am – 5:00pm

♦ Telephone: 919-613-8073
  Fax: 919-681-8719

♦ E-mail address: admissions@nicholas.duke.edu

♦ Public website: Nicholas.duke.edu

This manual is to serve as a guide for financial aid review, verifying, awarding, and disbursing federal student aid funds.

1.2 Purpose & Philosophy of the Financial Aid Office

♦ The institution’s mission statement:
  Our expectation is that each and every graduate of the Nicholas School has the knowledge to understand the complexities and pluralities of today’s environmental challenges; the practical skills to devise and implement effective solutions; the real-world acumen to use markets and public-private partnerships, as well as more traditional governmental tools, to achieve desired outcomes; the ability to think critically across disciplines; and the flexibility to work in teams or individually.

♦ Operative financial aid principles:
  "Our Financial Aid Office is dedicated to assisting students who are pursuing a full-time Master’s of Environmental Management degree with the process of obtaining the financial resources to finance their education. It is our mission to provide efficient guidance and counseling in order to make this as seamless as possible."
Since The Nicholas School takes pride in producing leaders of consequence, our Financial Aid Office understands that helping student to find the right financing options helps to alleviate financial concerns and eases the mind. We want students, especially those who are dependent upon financial assistance, to not worry about financing their MBA, but to concentrate on their studies so that they can be the best student and their own leaders of consequence.

1.3 Policies & Procedures Development Responsibilities

Once a month, a Financial Aid committee, which consists of all of the Financial Aid Offices within Duke, meets to discuss policies and procedure updates. Although each school is autonomous, as a University we strive to standardize our policies and procedures to help ensure that all of Duke’s Financial Aid Offices are complying with federal regulations. Professional judgment is extended to each office to help service the uniqueness of each program. The Financial Aid Committee is lead by The Assistant Vice Provost & Director of Financial Aid for Undergraduate programs. All schools meet to discuss counseling scenarios and the best way to review, verify, award and disburse aid.
The committee members consist of all of the Financial Aid Directors and staff within Duke.

1.3.1 Responsible Personnel

Since the Financial Aid committee meets monthly, we all share the responsibility of keeping each other abreast of new policy/procedural changes. However, most of our updates are sent form the Assistant Vice Provost – Director of Undergraduate Financial Aid via e-mail. There is a Financial Aid committee listserv that records announcements for the committee.

SECTION 2: ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION & OFFICE MANAGEMENT

2.1 Institutional & Divisional Structure

The Financial Aid Office is responsible for awarding federal student aid. We only review and award admitted students. Therefore, we highly rely on our Admissions Office to accurately record admitted students. Also, our Admissions Office is responsible for awarding scholarship funding. If scholarship recipient is applying for student aid, we factor the scholarship as a Financial Aid resource to determine aid eligibility. Once an admitted student is matriculated/registered for actual courses, our Registrar Office ensures that students are enrolled as full-time status. There are no half-time or part-time programs at The Nicholas School. Also, the Registrar is responsible for informing
the Financial Aid Office and the University Bursar about a change in a student’s enrollment status. If student withdrawals from the program, then the Registrar will send Attrition Notice so that we may adjust the student’s aid accordingly. Most times, we use the Attrition Notice to determine if a Return of Title IV fund calculation is needed. Our Registrar is also responsible for reporting the enrollment status to the National Student Clearinghouse, so that lenders may know the repayment status of a student (borrower). The University Bursar’s Office keeps track of all transactions on a student’s account. The Bursar’s Office is responsible for issuing refunds and helps us to keep track of any overpayments.

2.2 Financial Aid Office Structure & Position Responsibilities

All of our staff members must attend a Financial Aid training annually. Monthly, we meet with the Director of Financial Aid/Assistant Vice Provost to discuss updated Financial Aid matters and to make certain that we are complying with federal regulations. Our Financial Aid Office consists of one staff member:

SECTION 4: INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO EDUCATION LOANS

4.1 Private Education Loan Disclosures

Policies
While the Student Loan Office does not promote or recommend private loans to students, the office is responsible for having information available to students about private loan options. The information is available to our students on our website. The option for private loans is always recommended as a last resort.

The Duke University Student Loan Office is committed to providing our students and their families with accurate information about the best available rates, benefits and service.

We comply with all Regulation Z requirements, and provide all required disclosures to our institutional loan borrowers.

Procedures
The Student Loan Office is responsible for monitoring and updating disclosure information and changes for our Duke Institutional loans, as well as making that information available to the Financial Aid offices.

We do not govern this information for our private lenders but we do govern this information for our Duke Institutional loans through our loan servicer ECSI. Institutional loan borrowers receive all disclosures and self-certification forms, as required by Regulation Z, from ECSI. Third
party private loan borrowers receive their disclosure statements and self-certification forms directly from their lender.

4.2 Preferred Lender Arrangements

Policies
Preferred lender arrangements are entered into annually, and lenders are chosen objectively by a committee of financial aid professionals.

Neither Duke nor its employees accept financial payments, goods or services of material value from lenders. All employees involved in financial aid and student lending are subject to a rigorous conflict of interest policy.

Procedures
There were three major components to our selection process:

1. A selection committee with representation from Duke’s various financial aid offices,
2. A Request for Information (RFI) with questions broad enough in scope to cover all the criteria necessary to ensure our students receive quality loans, and
3. A method for objectively analyzing the lender responses. With these three components in place, we ensured that our selection process was inclusive and impartial.

The Selection Committee
The selection committee consists of seven members. It includes representatives from the Graduate and Professional schools and the Student Loan Office. Each year the members of the committee rotate through the various graduate programs at the University.

The committee is responsible for developing the questions for the RFI, identifying the lenders to be included in the RFI process, and for analyzing the lenders’ responses.

The Request for Information (RFI):
The selection committee develops a preliminary list of questions which focuses on four areas; financial stability, loan products, processing, and customer service. The committee then solicits input from the larger financial aid community at the monthly G&P Financial Aid meeting. From that meeting, some additional questions may be added to the RFI. The group may also offer suggestions for additional lenders to be included in the process.

To ensure the lender responses can easily and objectively be analyzed, most of our questions are structured in such a way that the answers are either numerical, yes/no, or true/false.
4.2.1 Preferred Lender Lists

Policies
We identify the Preferred Lenders on Duke’s Student Loan website, and provide a comparison tool using a link to a third party website. It provides Borrowers with a way to compare the terms and costs for the different loans offered by our Preferred Lenders.

Procedures
The Student Loan website is updated each year following the Preferred Lender selection process.

Simple Tuition is notified of our Preferred Lender list and their website is updated within a few days.

4.2.2 Preferred Lender Arrangement Disclosures

Policies
It is our policy to disclose all required information regarding our Preferred Lender arrangement on our Student Loan Website.

♦ The maximum Title IV grant and loan aid available
♦ The information identified on the ED-developed model disclosure form for each type of education loan offered pursuant to a preferred lender arrangement

Procedures
Disclosures are made on the Student Loan website. The Student Loan Office is responsible for ensuring the information about Title IV loan and grant maximums is presented in an easy to understand format, monitoring any change in the disclosure requirements, updating the disclosure information as needed, and making the disclosure information available to each institutional office and institution-affiliated organization.

4.2.3 Agreements Related to the Marketing of Private Education Loans

Policies
The institution only allows an organization to use our name, emblem, mascot, logo, and other institutional identifiers if the webpage they are placing it on is being used exclusively by Duke students after they have selected a loan. In other words, the webpage is a landing page for beginning the loan application process. Otherwise, we do not allow co-branding.

The request is made to the Director of Student Lending. Use of our logo is limited to the lender’s website. Whenever Duke’s logo is used by a lender, the Director will carefully
review the lender's website to ensure the lender's name is displayed a way that clearly indicates the lender, not the school, offers or makes the loan.
4.3 Private Education Loan Applicant Self-Certification Form

Policies
The self-certification form is provided by the private lenders as part of the loan application process. The student loan office will provide the self-certification form upon request.

Procedures
The student can complete the form online with all of our Preferred Lenders, and with ECSI. The Financial Aid office is available for assistance if the student needs it.

SECTION 6: APPLICATIONS & FORMS

6.1 Application Process

Policies
Our Financial Aid Office uses the FAFSA as the primary application to review for federal student aid. We use the FAFSA results (i.e. ISIR records) as an indication that a student would like to be reviewed for federal student aid.

- Describe how students learn about your application processes. Students are informed of our application process through our website and school bulletin. As our Admissions Office recruit and admit students, prospective and admitted students are provided with a web-link where they may access information on applying for Financial Aid. Also, our Financial Aid Office conducts a series of information sessions for prospective/admitted students regarding the Financial Aid application process and types of aid assistance.

Procedures
Our school reviews students for federal and institutional aid. We consider students for federal student loans (i.e. subsidized/unsubsidized loans, Graduate PLUS, federal Perkins Loan, federal Work-Study), merit and need-based institutional aid. For federal aid, once our Financial Aid Office receives the FAFSA results (ISIR), we run queries that pull C-flags and verification. Any student with a C-flag/verification is notified via e-mail about the steps that they need to take to correct the concern so that they may receive federal aid. Students without hindrances will be packaged in our PeopleSoft Database and e-mailed an award notice the following day. Our institutional merit based scholarship funds are reviewed by an Admissions Scholarship Committee (based from our Admissions Office). This committee reviews a student’s admissions file as they are admitted to see if they qualify for a merit scholarship. If a student is awarded the merit scholarship, the Admissions Office notifies them in writing. The Financial Aid Office reviews students for need-based scholarship, and
determine need based on the expected family contribution from the NeedAcces need-analysis application. Recipients are notified via e-mail about the scholarship offer. Also, if a merit/need-based scholarship recipient is also applying for federal aid, then they will be reminded of their scholarship offer in the e-mailed award notice. Our Financial Aid Office consists of one staff member. This staff member is responsible for processing aid applications.

If an application is incomplete (e.g. due to a missing signature), then we will notify the student via e-mail.

The Director of Financial aid is responsible for reviewing applications. Paper SARs or SAR acknowledgments confirm that a SAR is available. If we are unable to find an electronic SAR (ISIR) in our database, then we will request an upload through FAA Access to CPS online.

If there is no school code, we notify the student (providing our school code) requesting that they add the school code to the SAR. We also request that the student informs us of when they have added the school code so that we would know when to expect the updated ISIR. The Director of Financial Aid is responsible for reviewing ISIRs. ISIRs are uploaded daily from the Department of Educations’ EdConnect system into our PeopleSoft database.
6.2 Deadlines

Policies
Since The Nicholas School is a Professional school, we do not offer any federal scholarship or state based aid. Therefore, students may apply for federal aid at anytime during the academic year.

Procedures
Financial Aid due dates are posted on our website and announce via e-mail each semester.
6.2 Document Assignment, Collection & Tracking

Policies
Our Financial Aid Office retrieves FAFSA information (SAR) electronically. We upload the electronic SARs (ISIR) from the Department of Educations' EdConnect software into our PeopleSoft database. PeopleSoft stores the ISIR information.

Procedures
♦ Students are notified of our documents via as they peruse the web or online.

♦ FAFSA information is tracked electronically through a semi-automated process.

♦ If we need additional information for a student, we will notify them via e-mail. There is no automated system in place for this type of e-mail communication.

♦ The Director of Financial Aid is responsible for reviewing FAFSA information.
6.3 Document Assignment, Collection & Tracking

Policies
Our Financial Aid Office retrieves FAFSA information (SAR) electronically. We upload the electronic SARs (ISIR) from the Department of Education's EdConnect software into our PeopleSoft database. PeopleSoft stores the ISIR information.

 Procedures
♦ Students are notified of our documents via as they peruse the web or online.

♦ FAFSA information is tracked electronically through a semi-automated process.

♦ If we need additional information for a student, we will notify them via e-mail. There is no automated system in place for this type of e-mail communication.

♦ The Director of Financial Aid is responsible for reviewing FAFSA information.

Section 7: File Review

Our Financial Aid Office reviews files for admitted students. The steps are built into our database. First the student must have the correct aid year activation and the correct financial aid term table. The database does not allow a student to be awarded/packaged if he/she has a 'C' flag. All 'C' flags are reviewed on an individual basis. If additional documentation is needed or need to be verified, the student is notified in writing. Once the 'C' flag is satisfied, the Financial Aid administrator would set an override flag in a packaging table so that we may proceed with awarding.
7.1 Verification

7.1.1 Selection of Applicants to be Verified

*Policies*
All applicants that are selected for verification are reviewed. The verification must be satisfied before the student is awarded.

*Procedures*
Our Financial Aid Office generates a query that selects all applicants that were selected for federal verification. The query extracts information from the ISIR that is housed in our PeopleSoft database. All applicants who are selected for verification are notified in writing about the required documents needed to complete the verification process. Once an applicant satisfies the verification requirement, they are sent a follow-up notice informing them that we can proceed with the federal student aid review and to expect an award notice shortly.

7.1.2 Acceptable Documentation & Forms

*Policies*
Selected students are required to submit a federal verification worksheet, federal tax forms (including W-2s). Tax documents may be a signed copy of their 1040 forms or a tax transcript.

*Database Matches, Reject Codes, & C-Codes Clearance*

Social Security Administration (SSA)
The student is required to submit a copy of the social security card, confirming the name and social security number, or to correct the FAFSA if errors were made during the initial FAFSA filing.

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
If the Department of Homeland Security could not verify the student's citizenship, the student must submit additional information. US Citizen or permanent residents must submit a copy of a US passport, birth certificate, or naturalization certificate confirming citizenship status. The checklist item is completed and a copy of the documentation is stored in the student file or electronically on the shared drive.

Eligible noncitizens whose A number did not pass secondary confirmation by Homeland Security must bring unexpired immigration status verification documentation in person to the Nicholas School Financial Aid Office, at which time form G-845 will be completed and copies made of the front and back of student documentation. This form is sent to the Department of Homeland Security for review. No financial aid is awarded until confirming documentation is received from the Department of Homeland Security regarding student's eligibility for federal financial aid or until 30 days after the documentation was sent, whichever occurs first.

Selective Service System
Males aged 18-25 are required to complete selective service registration.
Nicholas School Financial Aid Office will verify registration status at http://www.sss.gov. If the registration is not complete, the student is instructed to go to the website to complete registration. If the student is female, the FAFSA information is corrected and the checklist for additional documentation is waived.

Male students are exempt from selective service registration if any of the following are true:
- Current active duty military
- Not yet 18 years as of the date the FAFSA is completed
- Born before 1960

Noncitizens who first entered the US after age 26 or who entered the US as a lawful nonimmigrant’s on a valid visa and remained in the US on that visa until after they turned 26.

If the Nicholas School Financial Aid Office has adequate information to determine that the student is not required to register, Nicholas School Financial Aid Office would note this in PeopleSoft and/or in the student's file and proceed accordingly. Otherwise, the student will be asked to register or provide appropriate documentation regarding the selective service registration exemption.

If a student has not registered and cannot provide documentation of an exemption, he must contact the Selective Service to get a status information letter addressing his failure to register. This letter will be used to determine if the student is exempt from registration or if he knowingly and willfully failed to register. If the student knowingly and willfully failed to register, he is not eligible for federal student aid.

National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS)

If the student’s FAFSA indicates that she/he is at or near the federal aggregate loan limit or may be in default or owes an overpayment, the Nicholas School Financial Aid Office pulls the student’s NSLDS record and retains this in the student’s file. If the student is at or near a federal aggregate limit, the financial award is completed accordingly, to either omit any funding from the pertinent federal program or with a reduction from the standard award amount. If the student is in default or owes an overpayment, the Nicholas School Financial Aid Office contacts the student to request additional information before completing the financial aid award. Questions regarding the student’s eligibility for federal loans are reviewed by the Student Loan office.

Drug Conviction

If a student has a federal or state drug conviction during a period of enrollment for which the student was receiving federal aid, the student is disqualified from federal financial aid funding. Students self-report this information on the FAFSA. However, in situations of conflicting information, the School is required to confirm this information. The student regains eligibility based on the timeline in the chart below (Please note - if the student is convicted for both possession and sale, the longer period applies):

1st offense
- Possession of illegal drugs:
  - 1 year from date of conviction
- Sale of illegal drugs:
  - 2 years from date of conviction

2nd offense
Possession of illegal drugs: 2 years from date of conviction
Sale of illegal drugs: indefinite period
3rd offense
Possession of illegal drugs: indefinite period
Sale of illegal drugs: indefinite period
Students regain eligibility one day after the period of ineligibility ends or after successfully completing a qualified drug rehabilitation program or passing two unannounced drug tests given by such a program. It is the student's responsibility to provide this documentation.
Qualified drug rehabilitation programs must include at least two unannounced drug tests and satisfy at least one of the following:
Be qualified to receive funds directly or indirectly from a federal, state, or local government program
Be qualified to receive payment directly or indirectly from a federally or state licensed insurance company
Be administered or recognized by a federal, state, or local government agency or court
Be administered or recognized by a federally or state licensed hospital, health clinic, or medical doctor.

Students identified as ineligible due to a drug conviction (either through the FAFSA information or through confirmation of conflicting information) will be notified in writing of the loss of eligibility, as well as additional information regarding when and how to regain eligibility.

Selective Service System
Males aged 18-25 are required to complete selective service registration. Nicholas School Financial Aid Office will verify registration status at http://www.sss.gov. If the registration is not complete, the student is instructed to go to the website to complete registration. If the student is female, the FAFSA information is corrected and the checklist for additional documentation is waived.
Male students are exempt from selective service registration if any of the following are true:
Current active duty military
Not yet 18 years as of the date the FAFSA is completed
Born before 1960
Noncitizens who first entered the US after age 26 or who entered the US as a lawful nonimmigrant's on a valid visa and remained in the US on that visa until after they turned 26
If the Nicholas School Financial Aid Office has adequate information to determine that the student is not required to register, Nicholas School Financial Aid Office would note this in PeopleSoft and/or in the students file and proceed accordingly. Otherwise, the student will be asked to register or provide appropriate documentation regarding the selective service registration exemption.
If a student has not registered and cannot provide documentation of an exemption, he must contact the Selective Service to get a status information letter addressing his failure to register. This letter will be used to determine if the student is exempt from registration or if he knowingly and willfully failed to
register. If the student knowingly and willfully failed to register, he is not eligible for federal student aid.

National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS)
If the student’s FAFSA indicates that she/he is at or near the federal aggregate loan limit or may be in default or owes an overpayment, the Nicholas School Financial Aid Office pulls the student’s NSLDS record and retains this in the student’s file. If the student is at or near a federal aggregate limit, the financial award is completed accordingly, to either omit any funding from the pertinent federal program or with a reduction from the standard award amount. If the student is in default or owes an overpayment, the Nicholas School Financial Aid Office contacts the student to request additional information before completing the financial aid award. Questions regarding the student’s eligibility for federal loans are reviewed by the Student Loan office.

Drug Conviction
If a student has a federal or state drug conviction during a period of enrollment for which the student was receiving federal aid, the student is disqualified from federal financial aid funding. Students self-report this information on the FAFSA. However, in situations of conflicting information, the School is required to confirm this information. The student regains eligibility based on the timeline in the chart below (Please note -if the student is convicted for both possession and sale, the longer period applies):

1st offense
Possession of illegal drugs:
1 year from date of conviction
Sale of illegal drugs:
2 years from date of conviction

2nd offense
Possession of illegal drugs: 2 years from date of conviction
Sale of illegal drugs: indefinite period

3rd offense
Possession of illegal drugs: indefinite period
Sale of illegal drugs: indefinite period

Students regain eligibility one day after the period of ineligibility ends or after successfully completing a qualified drug rehabilitation program or passing two unannounced drug tests given by such a program. It is the student’s responsibility to provide this documentation.

Qualified drug rehabilitation programs must include at least two unannounced drug tests and satisfy at least one of the following:
Be qualified to receive funds directly or indirectly from a federal, state, or local government program
Be qualified to receive payment directly or indirectly from a federally or state licensed insurance company
Be administered or recognized by a federal, state, or local government agency or court
Be administered or recognized by a federally or state licensed hospital, health clinic, or medical doctor

Students identified as ineligible due to a drug conviction (either through the FAFSA information or through confirmation of conflicting information) will be notified in writing of the loss of eligibility, as well as additional information regarding when and how to regain eligibility.
SECTION 9: AWARDING & PACKAGING FINANCIAL AID

9.1 Packaging Philosophies

Policies
At the Nicholas School, our students finance their education primarily with student loans. There are limited merit scholarship funds available, so those funds are used to help support student with high academic profiles. Our approach to packaging students is to simply educate them about the terms of student loan programs and repayment options, so that they may make educated decisions on the best loans to borrow and the amount.

Our Admissions Office and Financial Aid office awards and administers the institutional merit scholarship funds. They counsel students on loan funding, and assure them that loan funding is available and that a good percentage of our student use student loans to finance their education.

The strategy in awarding financial aid to students is to first assure them that there are enough available funds for them to be able to attend our program. This is done through need based and merit based aid. Need based aid is based on the FAFSA form and would include Unsubsidized Federal Stafford loans, Grad Plus loans and Perkins loans along with Work-Study funds if a student is found to qualify. Perkins loans are based on an amount that is dictated by the university to be our share for each particular year. This also the case for Work-Study. Perkins is awarded on a first come first served neediest students based on the FAFSA. Current students that received Perkins in their first year of attendance will receive the same amount in their second year if no major changes in their EFC has occurred. Incoming students are offered Perkins Loan awards after the amount that will be awarded to those first year students is subtracted from the overall available amount. Then those incoming students are evaluated on a first come first served neediest students.

Work-Study is automatically awarded to students that qualify based on their FAFSA form. They are informed on their Financial Aid Award Notice that if they have been awarded Work-Study and decide that they do not plan on working that they can choose to convert those awards into additional loans.

Merit based awards are based on a scale ranking system used through the admissions process. GPA, GRE scores, school ranking, experience, letters of recommendation and extra-curricular experience such as Peace Corps and Americorps are used to come up with a scholarship amount being awarded to the student. Application readers can recommend a n applicant be considered for additional scholarship funds based on these criteria.
The strategy in awarding financial aid to students is to first assure them that there are enough available funds for them to be able to attend our program. This is done through need based and merit based aid. Need based aid is based on the FAFSA form and would include Unsubsidized Federal Stafford loans, Grad Plus loans and Perkins loans along with Work-Study funds if a student is found to qualify. Perkins loans are based on an amount that is dictated by the university to be our share for each particular year. This also the case for Work-Study. Perkins is awarded on a first come first served neediest students based on the FAFSA. Current students that received Perkins in their first year of attendance will receive the same amount in their second year if no major changes in their EFC has occurred. Incoming students are offered Perkins Loan awards after the amount that will be awarded to those first year students is subtracted from the overall available amount. Then those incoming students are evaluated on a first come first served neediest students.

Work-Study is automatically awarded to students that qualify based on their FAFSA form. They are informed on their Financial Aid Award Notice that if they have been awarded Work-Study and decide that they do not plan on working that they can choose to convert those awards into additional loans.

Merit based awards are based on a scale ranking system used through the admissions process. GPA, GRE scores, school ranking, experience, letters of recommendation and extra-curricular experience such as Peace Corps and Americorps are used to come up with a scholarship amount being awarded to the student. Application readers can recommend an applicant be considered for additional scholarship funds based on these criteria.

**Procedures** Each year changes are considered and discussed by the Associate Director and Assistant Dean and gain approval from the Dean of the Nicholas School.

* Operative financial aid principles:
  
  "Our Financial Aid Office is dedicated to assisting students who are pursuing a full-time Master of Environmental Management degree with the process of obtaining the financial resources to finance their education. It is our mission to provide efficient guidance and counseling in order to make this as seamless as possible."

Based on these mission statements our Financial Aid Office review aid requests on a continuous basis. Our students are allowed to apply for federal student aid at any time during the academic year. Also, as we may receive or discover new information regarding external scholarship programs, we immediately inform our student body through school announcement boards and e-mail. We are aware that an MEM program is very expensive and many of our students are seeking that best financial support to relieve the burden.
Available Funds & Number of Eligible Students

Policies
Stafford Unsub loans are based on the FAFSA (ISIR) received on how much a student qualifies for and will receive for the year. Awards are allocated and the awarding system adjusts any awards based on the EFC amount.

Grad Plus loans are awarded based on covering any amount left over not covered toward Cost of attendance after all other awards are awarded.

Work-Study is awarded to those deemed eligible based on the students’ EFC on the ISIR. A specific all around amount is given to the Nicholas School by the University and awarded to the neediest first come first served students.

Perkins loans are awarded to those current students that received a Perkins Loan in the previous year of their studies based on the EFC on the ISIR and if no major change in their income increase has occurred from the previous year. The remaining funds form the allotted amount given to the Nicholas School by the University is awarded to first year students deemed eligible and on a first come first served basis based on the EFC on their ISIR.

Scholarships – Overall amount to be awarded in any given year is discussed each year between the Associate Director, the Dean of the School and the Associate Dean of the Nicholas School. A percentage is of overall tuition revenue is agreed upon. The overall amount offered is approximately tripled since the overall amount of students that will be accepted into the program will far more than the amount that will decide to attend. The overall dollar amount offered throughout the admission season is closely monitored. Award amounts offered are based on merit of each student that consists of materials in the admission packet. A tier system is agreed upon prior to admissions season as far as how much scholarship money each applicant will be offered based on a ranking system. All applicants and matriculants receive awards ranging from $3,000 to $25,000 per year.

Assistantships – These are awarded to applicants based on merit and the tier system discussed under scholarships. Approximately 50% of applicants and matriculants receive an assistantship. Assistantships are $2,900 per year and the student is required to work within one of the Nicholas School departments and contributing 8 hours per week. They are put on the monthly payroll and the funds are paid directly to the student. In the second year of their studies this amount coverts to scholarship money and is added to the scholarship they received in addition to the assistantship which is applied to their bursar account.
Scholarship amounts are agreed upon each year as described above by the Associate Director, the Dean of the Nicholas School and the Associate Dean.
Overall Perkins Loan money and Work-Study amounts are dictated by the University and the Associate Vice Provost/Director of Financial Aid for the University.

Scholarships – Overall amount to be awarded in any given year is discussed each year between the Associate Director, the Dean of the School and the Associate Dean of the Nicholas School. A percentage is of overall tuition revenue is agreed upon. The overall amount offered is approximately tripled since the overall amount of students that will be accepted into the program will far more than the amount that will decide to attend. The overall dollar amount offered throughout the admission season is closely monitored. Award amounts offered are based on merit of each student that consists of materials in the admission packet. A tier system is agreed upon prior to admissions season as far as how much scholarship money each applicant will be offered based on a ranking system. All applicants and matriculants receive awards ranging from $3,000 to $25,000 per year.

Work Study – Amount awarded is based on the amount a student may be eligible for based on their ISIR. Most awards are $3,000 based on historical data and based on 28 weeks of study, a student working an average of 10 hours per week and average jobs paying $10-$11 dollars per hour.
9.6 Overawards & Overpayments

Policies
A financial aid over award is defined as federal financial aid awarded to a student that exceeds the cost of attendance. Aid such as scholarships, grants, loans, awards and fellowships must be included as estimated financial assistance in a student’s total aid package. The Nicholas School’s Financial Aid Office expects all graduate students to report all sources of estimated financial assistance when applying for federal financial aid, including but not limited to institutional scholarships/fellowships/assistantships, external awards and third party assistance. Reporting this information as soon as possible will assist in preventing changes in eligibility that can result in reductions to financial aid.
When the Nicholas School financial aid office identifies an overaward, adjustments will be made to the student’s aid package to ensure compliance with the established guidelines. When possible, self-help aid, such as loans and workstudy awards, will be adjusted before grant or scholarship aid is affected. If an overaward occurs after aid has been disbursed, the student may be required to repay all or a portion of his/her financial aid to Duke University.

Procedure

Changes to enrollment status during a term may impact the aid package and will be processed by The Nicholas School Financial Aid office. Students will be notified electronically once the changes are available for review and acceptance/rejection on ACES.

Students identified as having an overaward for a particular semester will be notified by Nicholas School Financial Aid office. It is expected that the student confirm receipt by responding to the electronic notification or contacting the Nicholas School Financial Aid office. Adjustments to the financial aid package and appropriate next steps will be reviewed with the student.
Students are encouraged to notify the Nicholas School Financial Aid office if/when their semester enrollment drops below part-time status to determine if financial aid will be impacted.

Additional factors warranting consideration towards the student’s financial aid package (special or unusual student circumstances which impact financial aid eligibility) must be communicated to Nicholas School Financial Aid office within the specified timeframe provided in the overaward notification. All reviews are subject to the professional judgment of Nicholas School Financial Aid office and will require supporting documentation.
SECTION 11: DISBURSEMENTS

11.1 Definition of Disbursements and Disbursement Methods

Policies

All disbursements are made directly to the student’s Bursar account. If a credit balance is created, the funds are refunded to the student either via paper check or by direct bank deposit.

To comply with the separation of duties requirement, the awarding and the disbursing functions are split between the student loan office and the financial aid offices. The Graduate and Professional financial aid offices are responsible for awarding loans, and the Student Loan office is responsible for disbursing the funds.

On the student’s bursar statement, we will show all aid that has not yet disbursed as “anticipated aid” and subtract it from the posted balance, requiring the student to only pay the lesser amount.

With all Title VI loans, the student will not be penalized for late disbursement of a loan, as long as the loan is showing as pending aid on the student’s Bursar account.

Procedures

The payment periods defined at Duke University are based on the date classes begin and end. Earliest date for disbursements is 10 days before classes begin. If the day falls on weekend or holiday, the disbursement date is moved to the following business day.

All loans have multiple disbursements unless one of the following conditions is true:
- Students enrolled for only one semester in the academic year.
- Students who have multiple disbursements, but because of database constraints, the financial aid office will award a single disbursement plan for one semester, and another plan with multiple disbursements. In this situation, the total disbursements will occur per term in the same relationship as the budget allocations.

Late disbursements vs post-withdrawal disbursements:

Late disbursements are defined as posting the funds after the semester has ended, but the certification was sent before the loan period ended.

Post withdrawal disbursements are allowed if the loan has been certified before withdrawal and the student is eligible. The financial aid office will perform any adjustments to the amount based on the Title IV refund policy.

The financial aid office is responsible for establishing disbursement schedules for Direct Loans, the student loan office is responsible for setting them up in the system.
11.4 Student and Parent Notifications

Policies
Notifications are mailed by the Department of Education for all Direct loans, and by ECSI, Duke’s servicer for Perkins loans.

Cancellation requests are submitted to the Financial aid office, and the adjustment is made by the financial aid counselor. The Student Loan Office is responsible for sending the funds back to the lender.

11.4.1 Amounts of Expected Title IV Funds and Disbursement Information

Policies
Disclosure statements are mailed to students from the Department of Education for Federal Direct Loans and ECSI for Federal Perkins and Institutional loans that provide specific information about their loan, including loan amount, expected disbursement dates, and right to cancel.

11.4.2 Crediting Title IV Loan Proceeds and the Borrower’s Cancellation Right

Policies
Department of Education for Federal Direct Loans and ECSI for Federal Perkins and Institutional loans that provide specific information about their loan, including loan amount, expected disbursement dates, and right to cancel.
and the borrower’s right to cancel the loan or disbursement.
11.5 Undeliverable Title IV Funds

Policies
Duke Student Loan Office returns Federal loan funds no later than 3 business days after the Financial Aid Office determines the student is ineligible for the funds. The Student Loan Office will not process refunds after the last day of a semester or 120 days, whichever is greater.

Procedures
If a student becomes ineligible for a portion or all of his or her FFEL loan, Duke SLO will complete an AP check request. This request is sent to Duke Accounting for processing. The checks are then mailed to ELM or to the students servicer to be applied to their account. This process is done within 30 days.

If a student becomes ineligible for a portion or all of his or her Direct Loan, Duke SLO returns those funds to the Direct Loan Program. Duke Student Loan Office adjusts the actual disbursement that initiates a return of funds.

If Duke SLO is returning Direct loan funds at the borrower’s request within 120 days of disbursement because the borrower has decided that all or a portion of the funds aren’t needed, Duke SLO makes the appropriate adjustment to the loan and returns the funds. The borrower is not charged loan fees or interest on the portion of the loan that was returned. If the fund’s being returned at the borrower’s request is more than 120 days after disbursement, then Duke SLO will send a check to the Direct Loan payment center to be credited to the borrower’s account. In this case, the borrower will be charged loan fees and interest on the entire loan amount.

Section 12: Satisfactory Academic Progress

12.1 Process Overview & Responsibilities
To clarify the definition of a satisfactory academic progress of enrolled graduate students within a given Graduate School program. To provide consistent standards for all students and ensure fair practices pertaining to the management of academic based financial aid award decision making.

Process Overview & Responsibilities
Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is the term used to denote a student’s successful completion of coursework toward a certificate or degree. Federal regulations mandate minimum standards of "satisfactory progress" for students receiving financial assistance. These requirements apply to the student’s entire academic history, whether financial aid was received or not, and to all types of aid: grants, loans, and work study. The standards for determining progress for Duke graduate students are composed of the
following measurements: qualitative measurement of grade point average (GPA) and/or academic standing, quantitative measurement of the pace of completion and maximum hours allowed for a degree level. All students must be enrolled in a degree or certificate program. Newly enrolled graduate students must be admitted "in good standing." For the purposes of graduate student funding, this definition is expanded to the following evaluation criteria:

Students academically dismissed from their academic program are automatically recognized as failing to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress standards. The minimum cumulative GPA standard for any given term is 3.0 (B). Courses with grades of "W" (withdrawn), "I" (incomplete), and/or "F" (failed) are counted as courses attempted but not earned and count toward the maximum time frame. Transfer credit hours (accepted for the student's academic program or degree) are counted as credit hours attempted when measuring the maximum time frame to complete the degree or certificate program, but do not impact the grade point average reviewed.

Satisfactory Academic Progress status includes repeated, remedial, and ESL coursework, unless determined otherwise by the Nicholas School. Audited courses count as unearned credit hours in the evaluation of academic progress.

Master's degree candidates who are in residence for consecutive academic years should complete all requirements for the degree within two calendar years from the date of their first registration in the Nicholas School. Candidates must complete all requirements within five calendar years of their first registration.

Procedures for monitor and enforcing the SAP Policy

Students who fail to meet one or more of the requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress will be notified through their major department. A probationary period may be provided to the student, and the terms and conditions for removing such probation must be forwarded to the Assistant Dean of the Nicholas School's Office of Academic and Enrollment Services, who will issue the formal probationary terms to the student.

Students who fail to meet one or more of the requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) at the conclusion of their probationary period are considered to be in a SAP suspension, during which federal student aid eligibility is unavailable. Students denied federal aid because of failure to meet SAP standards after the probationary period has concluded may appeal this determination by contacting the Financial Aid Officer within the Nicholas School's office of Academic and Enrollment Services. An appeal must be based on significant circumstances that seriously impacted academic performance (e.g., serious illness or injury of the student, death of a relative, etc.). As part of the SAP Appeal process, students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of what SAP measures were failed and areas that have changed to allow students to meet SAP at the next
evaluation. Students may also be asked to submit supporting documentation to substantiate their case. Please note that filing a SAP appeal does not guarantee continued eligibility for federal aid, as an appeal may be denied.

If an appeal for a financial aid probationary semester is denied, the student will be notified and the decision is final for the semester in which the suspension was applied. The student may reestablish eligibility to be considered for federal aid for a subsequent semester by taking action that brings him or her into compliance with the qualitative and quantitative components of the Nicholas School SAP standards.

If an appeal is approved, the student will be notified and given a financial aid probationary semester. For the financial aid probationary semester, the student will be considered academically eligible for federal aid for which the student has applied.

Once the financial aid probationary semester has ended, the student may reestablish eligibility to be considered for federal aid for their next semester of enrollment by either taking action that brings him or her into compliance with the qualitative and quantitative components of Nicholas School SAP standards.