

# FINANCIAL AID

Whitlock Building 210  
Phone: (859) 622-2361  
[http://www.eku.edu/bigecentral/](http://www.eku.edu/bigecentral)

## Big E Central

Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
Walk-In Availability: Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Phone Hours: Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
Email: [bigecentral@eku.edu](mailto:bigecentral@eku.edu) – Please include EKU Student ID number.  
Request a Virtual (Zoom) Appointment (<https://success.eku.edu/register/becapptrequest/>)  
Phone: 859-622-2361  
Federal School Code: 001963  
Address: 521 Lancaster Ave | Whitlock Room 210 CPO 63 | Richmond, KY 40475

- Check your EKU email account and myEKU (<https://it.eku.edu/myEKU/>) for regular messages regarding your financial aid and awards.
- FAFSA confirmation will be sent to students' EKU email account.
- Scholarship award notifications are mailed to new students' permanent addresses and available in myEKU (<https://it.eku.edu/myEKU/>).
- Many questions can be answered by visiting the Self-Service Portal (<https://success.eku.edu/portal/BigEcentral/?tab=home>)

Financial assistance is available to help students offset the cost of their college education. There are five types of financial aid: grants, loans, employment, entitlements, and scholarships. The grants, loans, and federal work study programs are need-based. To determine how much money and for which programs the student qualifies, he/she must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid each year.

Entitlements include but are not limited to resources from the Veterans Administration and Vocational Rehabilitation. Scholarships are awarded from the University as well as outside sources. For information regarding entitlements or scholarships, students should contact Big E Central at (859) 622-2361. This office can guide the student to the proper source depending on the type of entitlement or scholarship the student is interested in pursuing.

## Financial Aid Requirements

All applicants for financial aid are required to:

1. Apply for admission and be accepted to the University;
2. Be a degree seeking student enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an eligible degree or certificate program. Student auditors, dually enrolled high school students and special non-degree students are not eligible for federal financial aid; and
3. Complete, electronically sign, and submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) with the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Every student, and parent as applicable, must have a Federal Student Aid ID (FSA ID) to start and sign the FAFSA. Students are urged to apply early for optimum financial aid benefits. Students should complete the FAFSA at (FAFSA® Application | Federal Student Aid) and add EKU on the school selection page, so we receive the student's FAFSA record. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use

the I.R.S. Data Retrieval Tool to transfer the requested tax information onto the FAFSA to ensure information on the FAFSA is accurate and to save time when completing the FAFSA. If unavailable, the applicant's I.R.S. Tax Return or Tax Return Transcript can be used to manually input the requested income information. If needed, a copy of the Tax Return Transcript can be obtained by going to the I.R.S.'s website at [Get Transcript | Internal Revenue Service](http://www.irs.gov) and selecting "Get a Tax Transcript" under Tools.

- The FAFSA is available at student [www.studentaid.gov](http://www.studentaid.gov) (<http://www.studentaid.gov>).
- For new students entering in the Spring semester, the EKU institutional deadline date to file the FAFSA is by October 1.
  - Fall Semester - As soon after October 1 as possible
  - Spring Semester - October 25
  - Summer Term - March 20
  - Complete FAFSA verification or any other aid reviews when required.

Once the completed FAFSA is received by the Department of Education, information provided by the student on the FAFSA is used to generate a Student Aid Report (SAR). The SAR indicates the amount of money the student and/or the student's family is expected to contribute towards the student's education. This is called the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and is used to determine the student's financial need.

The student's financial 'need' is the difference between the Cost of Attendance and the EFC. The Cost of Attendance, regardless of the student's dependency status, includes the educational expenses of:

- Tuition and Fees;
- Living Expenses (food and housing for students living on and off campus);
- Loan Fees;
- Transportation; and
- Personal/Miscellaneous expenses.

The amounts for these five educational expenses are the student's estimated Cost of Attendance at Eastern Kentucky University, and they become the student's budget for financial aid purposes. Only the actual tuition, fees, and food and housing (for resident students living in campus housing) costs are charged on the student's University bill.

Financial aid recipients are selected based on demonstrated financial need, academic success, and other merits. Most EKU financial aid awards are based on full time enrollment in aid eligible courses, which is a minimum of 9 credit hours for a graduate student per semester. Federal student loans and federal grants usually require a minimum of half-time enrollment.

Each financial aid recipient is issued an official Financial Aid Offer, which is the University's official estimate of a student's financial aid and costs to attend for the academic year. Financial Aid Offers are emailed to the student's EKU email account. It is the student's responsibility to review the Financial Aid Offer and notify Big E Central of any additional aid being received and of any desired reduction or cancellation of the aid offered.

To continue to receive institutional or federal student aid, an EKU student must maintain Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).

## Academic Eligibility and Financial Aid

In the event Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is not maintained, financial aid may be withheld. Eastern Kentucky University's SAP policy can be reviewed at: [www.eku.edu/bigecentral/sap/](http://www.eku.edu/bigecentral/sap/) (<https://www.eku.edu/bigecentral/sap/>).

## Grants and Loans

### Direct Unsubsidized Loans

Graduate students may be eligible to borrow Direct Unsubsidized Loans; however, they are not eligible to borrow Direct Subsidized Loans. There is no requirement to demonstrate financial need, and the student's institution will determine the amount the student can borrow based on the student's cost of attendance and other financial aid he or she receives.

The student is responsible for paying the interest on a Direct Unsubsidized Loan during all periods. If the student chooses not to pay the interest while in school and during grace, deferment, or forbearance periods, then interest will accrue and be added to the principal amount of the loan.

- Graduate students must be enrolled in a minimum of 4.5 credit hours to borrow a Direct Unsubsidized Loan.
- Generally, graduate students can borrow up to \$20,500 per academic year in Direct Unsubsidized Loans.
- Students cannot borrow over the aggregate limit of \$138,500 in Direct Unsubsidized Loans.
- The current interest rates for Direct Unsubsidized Loans can be found on <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans/interest-rates> (<https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans/interest-rates/>).

### Graduate PLUS loan

If students need to borrow more than what they have been offered in Direct Unsubsidized Loans, they may apply for a Graduate PLUS loan at [www.StudentAid.gov](http://www.StudentAid.gov) (<https://studentaid.gov/>)

- Graduate PLUS loans are subject to credit approval, and an additional Master Promissory Note (MPN) must be signed for that PLUS loan.
- PLUS loans can generally be awarded up to the student's cost of attendance, if approved for that much.

## Student Employment

**Graduate Assistantships:** Graduate assistantships are positions given to the most outstanding students. Duties may include laboratory supervision, teaching, and research related tasks. Stipends are competitive and assistantships supported through the Graduate School include a partial tuition waiver of six graduate hours per semester for a full-time appointment. Additional assistantships are available through the Office of Student Housing and other academic and administrative units and many of these also provide a partial tuition waiver.

Graduate Assistants (GAs) are appointed by the individual departments of each college and subject to the approval of the Graduate School. Questions regarding application for appointment should be directed to the graduate coordinators of that department.

- Graduate Assistants must be enrolled in a graduate degree program and must be enrolled in a minimum of 9 hours of graduate coursework applicable to their degree.

- Students in their final semester of graduate study who have applied for graduation may hold an assistantship with less than full-time enrollment.
- Students admitted to the Graduate School on Probationary Admission are typically not eligible for Graduate Assistantships.
- Graduate assistants on part-time appointments are permitted to work up to 10 hours per week in other on-campus employment subject to approval by the Graduate School.
- Appointments are limited to no more than four academic terms (summers excluded).
  - Exceptions to this may be considered for students enrolled in graduate program that exceed 36 hours.

**Institutional Work Study:** Eastern Kentucky University offers an institutional work program to employ students on a part-time basis, and students are paid every two weeks for the hours they have worked. Their job schedule is built around their class schedule. A variety of jobs are available including typing, filing, farm work, food service, resident hall assistants, tutorial work, as well as community service jobs. Student employment opportunities can be reviewed using the EKU human resources job search engine (<https://careers.eku.edu/jobs/search/>). Student employment processes and procedures can be reviewed here: <https://hr.eku.edu/student-employment-services> (<https://hr.eku.edu/student-employment-services/>)

## Other Assistance Programs

**SAFE Award:** The Student Assistance Fund for Eastern (SAFE) provides short-term financial assistance to Eastern Kentucky University students who are unable to meet immediate, essential expenses due to an unexpected emergency or crisis situation. More information can be found here: <https://retentiongraduation.eku.edu/student-assistance-fund-eastern> (<https://retentiongraduation.eku.edu/student-assistance-fund-eastern/>)

**Veterans Affairs:** The Veterans Program at Eastern Kentucky University is approved by the Kentucky Approving Agency for Veterans Education for the education of veterans and their eligible dependents. Students concerned with veterans training should have, at the time of registration, a certificate of eligibility. This is secured from the regional office of the Veterans Administration. The University is responsible for the completion of certain Veterans Administration forms and the other necessary information about students who receive this aid.

- Educational benefits for eligible students including Montgomery GI Bill, Chapter 30 (active duty), Chapter 33 (Post 9/11), Chapter 1606 (reserve/national guard), Chapter 35 (Dependents Educational Assistance Program), and Chapter 31 (Veteran Readiness and Employment VR&E).
- If you have completed courses while in the armed forces, ask the Office of Military and Veterans Affairs about the possibility of receiving credit for such courses.

**Veterans Administration Benefits:** War orphans, widows, children and wives of deceased and disabled veterans should contact the Veterans Administration, 600 Federal Place, Louisville, Kentucky (phone: 1-800-827-1000). Application forms are available in the EKU Office of Veterans Affairs. For information concerning tutorial assistance or refresher courses, contact the Office of Veterans Affairs at Eastern Kentucky University in the Whitlock Building, Room 442. The telephone number is (859) 622-7838.

**Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR):** ECU supports the efforts of OVR to serve eligible individuals with disabilities. The Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation provides vocational rehabilitation services to eligible individuals with disabilities. Individuals receiving OVR services may also contact the ECU Center For Student Accessibility for academic accommodation. For more information about eligibility criteria call the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation toll free at 1-800-372-7172 or (502) 564-7172, or visit the website at <https://kcc.ky.gov/>.

**O'Donnell Scholars:** The O'Donnell Scholarship provides an opportunity for persons aged 65 and older to become students at Eastern Kentucky University by enrolling in any courses listed available via myEKU. O'Donnell Scholars are responsible for the cost of any required materials, parking permits and applicable income taxes. Tuition and fees are paid through funds authorized by the Commonwealth of Kentucky. For further information, please visit <https://www.eku.edu/scholarships/current-students/>

Students can contact Big E Central to learn more about other forms of financial assistance.

## Personal Financial Liability - Withdrawing or all failing grades

Students who withdraw from ECU before attending over 60 percent of the semester or who stop attending and therefore receive all failing grades may be financially liable to repay the student aid received. Persons desiring to withdraw from ECU must do so according to the university's withdrawal policy which can be found on the school's website (<https://registrar.eku.edu/reg-withdrawal-information> (<https://registrar.eku.edu/reg-withdrawal-information/>))

Return to Title IV policy- <https://www.eku.edu/bigecentral/return-title-iv-funds/>

## Payments of Awards

Financial aid awards are normally made on an academic year basis conditional with fulfilling academic and registration requirements. Financial aid is disbursed after the Last day to ADD or DROP a class (receiving a 100% refund for that course) for each semester and is applied directly to tuition and fees, housing, meal plans and any other applicable charges. Awarded amounts in excess of institutional charges are refunded electronically or by paper check sent by USPS to the student's primary mailing address. Student employment wages are distributed every two weeks.. Disbursement is different from refunds.

All first-time Stafford Loan recipients are required to complete an entrance counseling session and Master Promissory Note (MPN) prior to their loan funds being disbursed and an exit counseling session prior to graduation or withdrawing from the University. This can be done online at <http://studentaid.gov> (<http://studentaid.gov/>); under Complete Aid Process.

## Renewal Procedures

Financial aid awards are calculated on current financial information. Therefore, a new FAFSA must be filed each year. Students may apply online at <http://studentaid.gov> (<http://studentaid.gov/>); under Apply For Aid. Students will need an FSA ID in order to sign their FAFSA electronically. Apply for a FSA ID at <https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch> (<https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch/>).