

UNDERSTANDING YOUR FINANCIAL AID AWARD OFFER

using Financial Aid Self Service

Continuing Students: When your award offer is ready for viewing through your Student Center, you will receive an email notification from our office.

New Students: You can view your award information through your Student Center once you are registered for classes.

Step 1: Download, Print, and Read These Important Guides

1. **Go to the** [Downloadables page](#) on the SSU Financial Aid Office homepage at www.sonoma.edu/finaid.
2. **Download, print, and read** these important guides:
 - [2008-09 Financial Aid Survival Guide](#) from the **Other Items** page. (*Please note: For continuing students, you will confirm the assumptions we made when we constructed your award offer using the information available in Self Service. You will come to those instructions in Step 2 and 3 below. Award Messages are listed in Step 3.*)
 - [Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards](#) from the **Satisfactory Academic Progress** page.
 - [\(PLUS\) Parent Loan Information and Application](#) from the **PLUS Loan Application and Instructions** page (this is only required *if* your parent will take out a PLUS loan for the new academic year—this application is required *even if* your parent borrowed a PLUS loan in a previous year)

Step 2: View Your Financial Aid Awards

Log into Sonoma Online using your Seawolf User ID and Password. From your Student Center, click the View Financial Aid link.

1. **Select Aid Year** [2009](#) to view your awards on the Award Summary page.
 - The top section of the page shows your *academic year* award amounts.
 - If an award has an amount under the **Offered** column but no amount under the **Accepted** column, click on the [More on offered and accepted](#) link near the bottom of the page. This link will take you to a webpage that explains whether you need to take action or just wait for further processing to occur.
 - As we proceed with processing your awards, you may see additional links:
 - Click the [Loan Details](#) link for additional information on the processing status of your loan awards. This link first appears when we submit your loan request to the Direct Loan processor (beginning in July.)
 - Click the [View Declined Awards](#) and/or [View Canceled Awards](#) link to list cancelled or declined awards.
 - The middle section of the page shows your awards broken down by **Terms**.
 - Click the [View Scheduled Disbursement Dates](#) links for loan fee and scheduled disbursement date information.

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- **Please note:** The scheduled disbursement date listed will be the earliest date scheduled for the term. Your actual disbursement date may be later than the earliest date. Processing of financial aid disbursements and production and mailing of financial aid refund checks take time—at the earliest, students generally receive their refund checks near the first day of school each semester.
 - If an award has no amount under the **Accepted** column, click the [Return to Award Summary](#) link to return to the previous page. Click on the [More on offered and accepted](#) link near the bottom of the page to find out whether you need to take action or just wait for further processing to occur.
2. **Review the assumption** we made about your housing plans when we constructed your award offer by viewing the information available under the [Financial Aid Summary 2008-09](#) link. You must go back to the **Award Summary** page before proceeding with **Step 3**.

Step 3: View Your Financial Aid Summary for 2008-09

1. Click on the [Financial Aid Summary 2008-09](#) link that appears under the Aid Year box or toward the bottom of the **Award Summary** page in Self Service.
 - The Estimated Financial Aid Budget is based on the housing plans you reported when you filed the FAFSA form. If your plans have changed, you must notify us using the **Change Notification Form** downloadable from our website.
 - You can tell whether your current award offer is based on the assumption that you will live Off Campus, On Campus, or With Parents by clicking on the dollar amount of the Estimated Financial Aid Budget and referring to the chart below.

If your Room and Board amount is:	We assume you will live:
5,736	Off Campus
5,015	On Campus (Fall 2008)
5,100	On Campus (Spring 2009)
2,025	With Parents

2. If you have questions about the Estimated Financial Aid Budget, Expected Family Contribution, Estimated Need, or Total Aid, see the **Financial Aid Helpbook** on our website at www.sonoma.edu/finaid.
3. Check your California Residency for fee purposes. (*Note: This does not apply to Extended Education students.*)

You can tell whether or not your Award Offer is based on the cost of fees for a California resident by reviewing the dollar amount listed for **Fees** in your Cost of Attendance. If you believe you are a California resident for fee purposes but your **Fees** amount per semester doesn't match the chart below, please contact the Financial Aid Office.

Undergraduate: \$2,136	First Teacher Credential: \$2,381	Post-baccalaureate: \$2,490
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4. Check your Grade Level for student loan purposes. Your Direct Loan eligibility (subsidized and/or unsubsidized) is based in part on your Grade Level. Your Grade Level is based on the number of completed units that have been posted to the Student Records system in Peoplesoft at the time we create your Award Offer. If your loan eligibility is different that what you expect based on the chart below, please contact the Financial Aid Office.

Total Subsidized and Unsubsidized Direct Loan Eligibility per Academic Year

	Undergraduate		2 nd BA, Credential, or Other Post- Baccalaureate (PBAC)		Master's or post-Master's
	Dependent	Independent	Dependent	Independent	
Freshman (0-29 units)	\$3,500	\$7,500			
Sophomore (30-59 units)	\$4,500	\$8,500			
Junior/Senior (60+ units)	\$5,500	\$10,500			
Junior/Senior (60+ units)	\$5,500	\$10,500			
2 nd BA			\$5,500	\$10,500	
Credential, Other PBAC			\$5,500	\$12,500	
Master's					\$20,500

5. Review the following Award Messages if your Award Offer includes one of these awards:
- **Federal Work Study:** You must obtain a Work Study Student Assistant job in order to receive these funds. See the Types of Aid > Federal Work Study page on our website. As you work, you will receive a monthly paycheck for the amount you earn.
 - **Perkins Loan:** Requires additional forms that will be mailed to you by the Financial Services Office.
 - **Parent PLUS Loan:** Requires your parent to complete the PLUS loan application (downloadable from our website) each academic year. Requires at least half-time attendance (6.0 units) each semester.
 - **IP Budget Offset:** This amount reflects a reduction in your Financial Aid eligibility and is based on the difference between the 2008-09 Standard SSU Cost of Attendance and the standard IP Budget for your program.
 - **Voc Rehab:** This amount is based on our estimate of the benefits Vocational Rehabilitation will provide to you. If you believe this estimate is incorrect, contact our office.

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Step 4: Read the *Financial Aid Helpbook*

As a financial aid recipient, you will be held accountable for understanding the information presented in the *Financial Aid Helpbook* on our website at www.sonoma.edu/finaid. Also, if you didn't read the *Financial Aid Survival Guide* as instructed in Step 1 above, please read it immediately because you will also be held accountable for understanding all the information presented there.

Step 5: Keep on top of your Student Account.

Once you have registered for classes, you can use the Account Inquiry link in your Student Center to check your student account.