

Comparing Financial Aid Awards

The **BIG** Idea

- How do I compare financial aid award packages and decide which to accept?

AGENDA

Approx. 45 minutes

- I. Warm Up (5 minutes)
- II. Financial Aid Awards At-A-Glance (10 minutes)
- III. Comparing Financial Aid Awards (20 minutes)
- IV. Wrap Up: Next Steps (10 minutes)

MATERIALS

PORTFOLIO PAGES:

- Portfolio pages 10-13, Financial Aid Comparison Worksheet (two copies)
- Portfolio pages 19-22, Grade 12 Skills Checklist (Finding a Job skills only)

STUDENT HANDBOOK PAGES:

- Student Handbook page 109, Financial Aid Match Up
- Student Handbook pages 110-112, Award Letters
- Student Handbook page 113, Financial Aid Considerations
- Student Handbook page 114, Tips for Calling Financial Aid Office
- Student Handbook pages 115-116, Appealing a Financial Aid Package

FACILITATOR PAGES:

- Facilitator Resource 1, Financial Aid Comparison Worksheet ANSWERS

Laptop and LCD projector

Calculators

OBJECTIVES

During this activity, the student(s) will:

- Use a form to compare financial aid awards for two or more schools.
- Know how to follow up with a college's financial aid office, including appealing an award, accepting an award, or considering other options.

OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students evaluate financial aid award offers they receive. The lesson begins with students solving a financial aid puzzle, matching aid type with dollar amounts. Then, student pairs review two financial aid award letters and identify the pros and cons of each. Next, students conduct a deeper, more detailed analytical review of the two offers using a chart and breaking down the costs, type of aid, and gaps between aid and cost of attendance. The lesson — and unit — concludes with a discussion of next steps, including how to appeal an offer, how to assess whether a gap in aid is manageable, and how to accept an award.

PREPARATION

- List the day's **BIG IDEA** and activities on the board.
- Make the following handouts into overhead transparencies or copy onto chart paper:
 - **Student Handbook pages 110-112, Award Letters**
 - **Student Handbook page 113, Financial Aid Considerations**
 - **Portfolio pages 10-13, Financial Aid Comparison Worksheet**
- For **Activity III**, review the online loan calculator at FinAid's website: <http://www.finaid.org/calculators/loanpayments.phtml> and be prepared to demonstrate its use to your students. (This requires Internet access.)
- Note that some of the grant options in **Facilitator Resources 1, Financial Aid Comparison Worksheet Answers** (and the corresponding **Portfolio pages 10-13,**) are identified as generic "state grants." You should be prepared to instruct your students to list loans particular to your state.
- Make additional copies of **Portfolio pages 10-13, Financial Aid Comparison Worksheet**, to distribute to students who have multiple schools to compare.
- You may wish to substitute a recent financial aid award letter from a local college for one provided in **Student Handbook pages 110-112, Award Letters**. If you choose this option, you'll need to make an overhead transparency and/or student copies of this letter.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

May 1 is known informally as National Decision Day. For many colleges, this is the deadline by which students must accept offers of admission. Because financial aid considerations

are such an important part of this process, this lesson should be presented during the last week of March (or earlier, if recommended by your school counselor), so that students have the tools they need to compare financial aid awards from different schools.

Each year, millions of students receive billions of dollars in financial aid from federal, state, and private sources to pay for college. A student's financial need is determined by figuring the **Total Cost of Attendance** (direct costs — e.g., tuition, room and board, registration fees, plus indirect costs — e.g., travel, books, personal expenses), then subtracting the **Expected Family Contribution**.

Students should not dismiss a college simply because it appears to be out of financial reach. Attending an expensive college may be feasible if a school offers a financial award package that can cover all of a student's financial need.

Since financial aid packages vary among colleges, students need to compare award letters side by side using a worksheet to calculate what their financial responsibility would be at each school. They do this by subtracting all grants and scholarships (known as 'gift aid' since they are not repaid) from the total cost of attendance. Next, they consider how much of the remaining cost can be offset by loans. (For the purposes of this lesson, work-study is not included in this calculation, since it is paid out for work completed during the year and isn't available for direct costs at the beginning of the year.) The amount that is not covered is referred to as the "gap." If the gap can't be covered by work-study, family contributions, and/or part-time work, students need to consider other school choices, or consider appealing to the school for more aid.

VOCABULARY

Expected Family Contribution (EFC): An estimate of how much a student and his/her family can afford to pay for college for the next school year, determined by completing the FAFSA.

Financial Awards Letter: A letter from a college to which a student has been accepted that provides the details of his or her financial aid package, including grants, loans, and work study.

Financial Need: The amount of financial aid a student is eligible for, calculated by subtracting Expected Family Contribution from Total Cost of Attendance.

Financial Aid Package: The total amount of financial aid offered to a student to assist in funding his or her higher education. The sources of aid include federal and non-federal grants, loans, and work-study.

Gap: The amount a student is financially responsible for that is not accounted for by financial aid (loan, grant, scholarship).

Total Cost of Attendance: All expenses for college, including tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, personal expenses, and transportation.

IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

You may find that the information presented in this lesson is too much for a single class period, or overwhelming to your students. You may prefer to complete **Activity II, Financial Aid Awards At-A-Glance**, and **Activity III, Comparing Financial Aid Awards**, as a whole class rather than in pairs. Or, for **Activity III, Comparing Financial Aid Awards**, you might opt to complete the “College 1” column for University of Tampa as a whole class. Then have students fill in information for “College 2” in the same pairs as **Activity II**.

If few of your students are considering multiple schools, a line-by-line review of a single award letter may be most appropriate. (Students should be able to calculate Total Cost of Attendance and compare with financial aid offered at a particular school.)

Time considerations and/or student anxiety about debt may make a complete discussion of student loans difficult or inadvisable. If so, you may wish to skip **Activity III, Comparing Financial Aid Awards, steps 5 - 8**. Instead, call students’ attention to the student loan calculator available at <http://www.finaid.org/calculators/loanpayments.phtml> and review the expert recommendation re: loan amounts at the bottom of page 369.

For **Activity IV, Wrap Up**, if time permits, have students read the **Student Handbook page 114, Tips for Calling Financial Aid Office** to themselves. Then select a student to role-play making a call to appeal the financial aid package offered by Tulane.

ACTIVITY STEPS

I. Warm Up (5 minutes)

1. [As students enter the classroom, ask them to complete **Student Handbook page 109, Financial Aid Match Up.**]
2. [Give students a few minutes to complete the handbook page.]
3. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** In the next few weeks, many of you will be receiving letters from colleges letting you know whether or not you've been accepted for admission next fall. If you receive more than one acceptance letter, you'll need to figure out which college you want to attend. You should check your acceptance letters carefully and note the deadline for each school.

One important factor in your decision will be the amount of financial aid the school can offer, and whether you can afford to attend. That's what we'll be discussing today.

But first, let's review the four types of aid, and how you chose to allocate the amounts in the problem posed on **Student Handbook page 109, Financial Aid Match Up.**

4. [Display **Student Handbook page 109, Financial Aid Match Up** using an overhead projector. Ask students to explain their answers, which should include the following ideas:

There are four sources of financial aid. Grants and scholarships are known as "gift aid" because you do not repay them. This is why you want your largest sources of aid to come from grants and scholarships. You should have matched one \$7,500 to grants and the other to scholarships. Since you must repay loans, it's wise to assign \$500 to this category. This leaves you with \$2,500 to allocate to work-study. Under this scenario, you need to repay only a \$500 loan, which leaves you with the lowest debt.]

[As students explain their answers, fill in the correct amounts on the overhead projector.]

II. Financial Aid Awards At-A-Glance (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Once you've been accepted for admission, schools will send you a financial aid award letter that explains the type of aid you're being offered. (If you've applied for financial aid, but have not received an award letter, check with your college financial aid office to make sure your records are complete.)

In the best of all possible worlds, the school you most want to attend will offer you all the financial aid you need. In the real world, however, this may not happen. Instead, you will likely receive offers of varying amounts from the schools to which you applied. How do you decide which of several financial aid offers to accept?

2. [Have students open to **Student Handbook pages 110-112, Award Letters.**]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Take a look at the award information from two schools — one from Tulane University and the other from The University of Tampa. These are actual letters received by a student who applied to both schools. He really, really wanted to attend Tulane, but wasn't sure he'd be able to afford it.

With a partner, please review the award information for both colleges. In the margins of each letter, list the positives (pros) and the negatives (cons) that you notice, as well as any questions you have. How would you advise this student? You have 10 minutes to decide.

3. [After students have reviewed the letters, list students' considerations — their pros and cons for each school — and why (e.g., "Pro: Tulane offers larger grants.)]
4. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Comparing financial aid awards can be challenging when each school presents its offer in a different form. In the next activity, you'll use a worksheet to compare financial aid awards side by side.

III. Comparing Financial Aid Awards (20 minutes)

1. [Have students turn to **Portfolio pages 10-13, Financial Aid Comparison Worksheet** and project a copy on the overhead. (See **IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS** if you think your students will have difficulty completing this in pairs.)]
2. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Now let's consider the information in the awards letters more systematically. Working in the same pairs, you'll list the information for both colleges side by side. Be sure to write the name of each college in the space at the top.

Cost of Attendance

First, you'll calculate the cost of attendance at each school. Direct costs refer to the amount paid to the school in order to register or stay enrolled. It includes tuition, room and board, and other registration fees.

Indirect costs refer to other items, including books, travel to and from school, and other personal expenses. In this example, we'll ignore the costs of travel to and from school.

This is something you'll need to consider when completing calculations for the schools you wish to attend.

The University of Tampa does not provide costs for books or personal items. Use \$2,000 as an estimate for the total.

When you're doing this for your own school, be careful to include costs for a whole year. If costs are listed by semester, you'll need to multiply by two. If costs are listed by quarter, and you're attending fall, winter, and spring quarters, you'll need to multiply by three.

Cost of attendance is the sum of the direct and indirect costs.

Grants & Scholarships

Next, you'll list each type of free aid offered — both grants and scholarships. If you were using this worksheet for your own financial aid calculations, you would enter the total of any outside/private scholarships under both schools. These may not appear on your award letter, as they're awarded by outside organizations and may be applied wherever you attend. (If your scholarships are restricted to the school you attend, for example, schools in North Dakota only, enter only under the colleges to which they apply.)

Because the student in this example planned to attend schools in another state, he wasn't eligible for North Dakota grants. Your situation may be different.

Work-Study

Next, you'll enter the amount of work-study offered. Note that work-study is considered as a separate category because the full work-study amount is not available at the beginning of the year. Instead, students receive periodic paychecks based on the number of hours worked each week. Work-study aid should be applied to indirect costs, such as travel and other personal expenses, which occur throughout the year.

Loans

Finally, you'll enter each loan.

The Gap

When you've entered all of the financial aid information, calculate your total financial aid from each school by adding lines 4 (total grants & scholarships) and 6 (total loans)

together. (For the reasons described above, don't include work-study in this total.)

Subtract total financial aid from the total cost of attendance to calculate the "gap" – the amount for one year of college that's not covered by financial aid. Stop there. We'll complete the last two sections together.

3. [Give students 10 minutes to complete the chart. Circulate, helping students as needed. Once they've completed calculations through the gap, have students regroup for further instructions.]
4. [When the class has completed their charts, have them open to **Student Handbook page 113, Financial Aid Considerations** and project a copy on the overhead. Discuss students' findings by reading aloud each question and choosing different students or pairs to answer. Items to note:

Is this school a viable choice?

- Financial aid nearly covers the student's expenses at Tampa. In fact, the aid provided by work-study will compensate for the gap. One thing students would still need to consider is the airfare back and forth from Florida several times a year, which is not included in the current calculations.
- With a gap of \$35,970, Tulane is out of the running. (More about this below.)

Is there anything offered by one school that's not offered by the other?

- In the real-life situation on which these letters are based, the student was resigned to going to Tampa, his second choice. But his counselor noticed that there were significant grants and scholarships missing from Tulane's awards (smaller SEOG, and no institutional grant), and wondered if this was a mistake. The student and counselor called the school to appeal, and discovered that the student was entitled to more aid than appeared on his letter. Once the mistake was corrected, he was able to attend Tulane, after all. (More about this in the next activity.)

5. [Ask students to return to **Student Handbook page 113, Financial Aid Considerations**, before answering the questions about student loans.]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE:

- What is the total amount in loans over the course of four years? To answer that question about loans, let's take a look at the last two sections on **Portfolio page 11 (or 13), Financial Aid Comparison Worksheet**. Question 9 asks you to calculate your financial responsibility for one year by subtracting grants and scholarships

from total cost of attendance. The remainder is the amount to be covered in loans and any other money you and your family are able to set aside for school.

[Allow students to calculate this amount.]

6. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** As you can see, this student will need to contribute a significant amount of money — now or later, as loans that have to be paid off — to go to either of these schools. For the moment, we’re going to consider all of this as money to be borrowed, since we have no idea what kind of money he’s able to contribute during the school year. We’ll multiply his total financial responsibility times four, the number of years he’ll spend in school.

[Allow students to calculate this amount.]

Now let’s see how long it might take to pay off each loan, and what the monthly payments might be.

[Model how to calculate monthly loan payments as follows. Use your laptop and LCD to access and display the online loan calculator at FinAid’s web site: <http://www.finaid.org/calculators/loanpayments.phtml>.]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: In the “Loan Balance” field, we’ll type in the amount on line 10 for Tampa, \$51,392. Although interest rates vary according to the type of loan, we’ll use the default setting of 6.8%. We’ll leave the loan term as 10 years.

[Click “Calculate,” and point out the monthly loan payment in bold to the class: \$591.42. Explain that this is the amount they will pay on this specific loan each month for 10 years. Note that this would be a heavy burden for someone working at an entry-level job, and re-calculate using a term of 25 years, which results in a monthly payment of \$356.70.]

7. [Repeat steps above for Tulane’s loan, which should yield the following numbers.
Total Financial Responsibility for four years: \$173,880.
Monthly loan payment at 6.8% for 10 years: \$2,001.02.
Monthly loan payment at 6.8% for 25 years: \$1,206.85.]

8. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:**

- Is this a financial burden you or your family is willing to bear? Note that without the additional aid offered, Tulane would have been out of the question. And even the more reasonably-priced Tampa leaves the student in a lot of debt.

Experts recommend that your total education debt should be less than your starting salary. If you borrow more than twice your expected starting salary, you will find it extremely difficult to pay the debt.

9. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** You can use **Portfolio pages 10-13, Financial Aid Comparison Worksheet** to compare the financial aid packages offered by schools you hope to attend. [Point out the lines devoted to state grants and remind students of the grants they may be eligible for in your state.]

To compare financial aid awards accurately, you'll need all the information and numbers as listed on the worksheet you just completed. Make sure you know whether each award from your college is a one-time offer, or is renewable each year. If any information is missing, unclear, or inaccurate, call the college's financial aid office. In fact, it's a great idea to call the financial aid office before you have questions or problems. Identify yourself, and ask if there is a particular counselor you should talk to when you have questions. Write down the name of your contact, and keep it so you can ask specifically for that person when questions arise. Before making a call, review **Student Handbook page 114, Tips for Calling Financial Aid Office**.

IV. Wrap Up: Next Steps (10 minutes)

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: After comparing your financial aid awards, there are different steps you might take, depending on what you discovered. [Pose the following situations, and ask students for suggestions on what to do next. Recommended actions follow each scenario.]

- **SITUATION:** The college you most want to attend offers significantly less financial aid than others (e.g, omitting a grant for which you are eligible, or not offering institutional aid).
ACTION: Appeal to the college for more aid by contacting the financial aid officer assigned to your case. For details on how to appeal, read **Student Handbook pages 115-116, Appealing a Financial Aid Package**. [Review this material if time permits. See **IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS** for details.]
- **SITUATION:** The “gap” (your financial responsibility) is too big to be met by reasonable loans, family contributions, and the work-study offered.
ACTION: If work-study isn't part of your financial aid package, consider taking a part-time job to close the gap enough to make the school affordable. If the gap between your financial need and the available financial aid is too wide, consider less expensive options, for example, beginning at a community college and transferring after two years.

- SITUATION:** The financial aid awards will cover your cost of attendance. You can afford to attend the college!

ACTION: Most financial aid awards include instructions at the end of the letter. Some schools will include a Data Change Form to select or decline individual awards within the total package. (For example, you may prefer not to accept the loans offered.) Other schools may simply ask that you draw a line through the awards you are declining and return a copy of the letter within a certain number of days. Still other schools may assume that you fully accept the awards unless you submit changes immediately. Be sure to read each letter carefully to find out what procedures to follow. Always keep a copy of the letter and other forms for your files.

This concludes our lesson on financial aid. You're in the home stretch of the college selection process. You'll be making your college decisions over the next few weeks, and will want to discuss your options with your parents and other trusted adults. If you have unanswered questions, please don't hesitate to ask me for help.

Next week, we'll return to [name the unit already in progress].

SKILLS CHECKLIST

Direct students' attention to **Portfolio pages 19-22, Grade 12 Skills Checklist**. Have students complete the skills checklist questions for financial aid skills.

FINANCIAL AID

I can ...

Rate the merits and drawbacks of different kinds of financial aid.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
Find and apply for scholarships suited to my needs.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
Use an online tool to calculate the monthly payments on a student loan.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
Understand the consequences of defaulting on a student loan.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
Complete the FAFSA.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well
Compare financial aid awards from two or more schools.	<input type="checkbox"/> not at all	<input type="checkbox"/> somewhat	<input type="checkbox"/> very well

Financial Aid Comparison Worksheet Answers

College 1: _____ College 2: _____

Total Cost Of Attendance	College 1	College 2
Tuition	19,700	36,610
Room and board	7,616	8,690
Fees	982	included in Tuition
Other costs: _____		
1. Direct Costs Subtotal: add above three lines. This is the amount you owe the school in order to register/stay enrolled.	28,298	45,300
Books		900
Travel	variable	variable
Personal expenses & miscellaneous		930
2. Indirect Costs Subtotal: add above three lines	2,000 estimated	1,830
3. Total Costs Add #1 and #2	30,298	47,130

Grants and Scholarships	College 1	College 2
Pell Grant (federal)	3,000	3,160
SEOG: Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (federal)	1,600	500
State grant:		
State grant:		
Institutional Grants (from college; add all together)	12,850	
Outside/private scholarships (add together)		
4. Total Grants/Scholarships: Add all amounts, above six lines	17,450	3,660

Work-Study*	College 1	College 2
5.	2,000	2,500

* **Note:** Work-study funds are earned throughout the year. Make sure the number of work-study hours are reasonable for a full-time student, and don't count on these funds for anything other than personal expenses, since they won't be available at the beginning of the year.

Loans	College 1	College 2
Perkins	1,100	4,000
Subsidized Stafford	3,500	3,500
Unsubsidized Stafford		
PLUS	7,100	
Other _____		
6. Total Loans: Add all loan amounts, above five lines	11,700	7,500

College 1: _____ College 2: _____

The Gap	College 1	College 2
7. Total Financial Aid Awards, not including work-study (Add lines 4 and 6)	29,150	11,160
8. The Gap: Cost of Attendance – Financial Aid Awards, not including work-study (Line 3 – Line 7)	1,148	35,970

Your Financial Responsibility**	College 1	College 2
9. Your Financial Responsibility: Total cost – grants/scholarships (subtract line 4 from line 3)	12,848	43,470

**This does not include eventual interest you will pay on any loans you may take.

Projected Cost -- All College Years***	College 1	College 2
10. Your Total Financial Responsibility: Financial Responsibility x Number of Years in College (Line 5 x 4)	51,392	173,880
11. Your Monthly Financial Responsibility: Using a loan calculator, which can be found at http://www.finaid.org/calculators/loanpayments.phtml , determine what #10 (your total financial responsibility) would equal in monthly payments.	<i>Varies with terms of the loan. At 6.8 interest, monthly payment is 591 over 10 years, or 357 over 25 years.</i>	<i>Varies with terms of the loan. At 6.8 interest, monthly payment is 2,001 over 10 years, or 1,207 over 25 years.</i>

***This is an estimate, as the cost of attendance will increase each school year.

According to www.finaid.org:

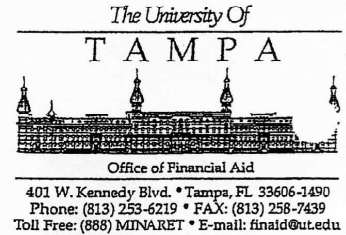
Your total education debt should be less than your starting salary. If you borrow more than twice your expected starting salary, you will find it extremely difficult to pay the debt. Live like a student while you are in school, so you don't have to live like a student after you graduate.

SOURCE: College Access Professional Development Institute, OPTIONS Center for Education and Career Choice, Goddard Riverside Community Center, www.goddard.org

Financial Aid Match Up

1. Imagine that a school has offered you aid in the following amounts: \$7,500 for one kind of aid; \$7,500 for another kind of aid; \$2,500 for the third kind; and \$500 for the fourth. In the second column, list one of these amounts next to each type of aid. Make the choices that will provide the best financial advantages.
2. In the third column, explain your choices.

Aid Type	Aid Amount	Explain Your Choice
Grant		
Scholarship		
Work-study		
Loan		



Dear _____
Based on the information you provided, The University of Tampa is pleased to offer this award package for the 2007-2008 academic year.

FINANCIAL AID AWARD LETTER
2007- 2008

Type of Aid	FA2007	SP2008	Total
Academic Comp. Grant YR1	375.00	375.00	750.00
Fed. Work Study Program	1,000.00	1,000.00	2,000.00
PLUS-Parent loan elig.	3,550.00	3,550.00	7,100.00
Sub Federal Student Loan	1,750.00	1,750.00	3,500.00
Federal Pell Grant	1,500.00	1,500.00	3,000.00
Federal Perkins Loan	550.00	550.00	1,100.00
UT Presidential Scholar	4,250.00	4,250.00	8,500.00
Federal SEOG Grant	800.00	800.00	1,600.00
UT Need Based Grant	1,800.00	1,800.00	3,600.00
Total Awarded Funds	15,575.00	15,575.00	31,150.00

It is important that you read the detailed information provided about each of the aid programs listed above. *PLUS-- Parent loan eligibility * This loan, and all loans listed are optional. **The PLUS loan MUST be applied for and is credit based.** Please review the information provided regarding this loan.

If the information you provided is not accurate, this package may change upon receipt of correct information. We are required by law to include all educational resources in your package, including those funds not administered directly by The University of Tampa.

2007- 2008 AVERAGE DIRECT COSTS

Budget Item	FA2007	SP2008	Total
Standard Fees	491.00	491.00	982.00
Meal Expense Average	1,770.00	1,770.00	3,540.00
Room - Average	2,038.00	2,038.00	4,076.00
Tuition	9,850.00	9,850.00	19,700.00
Total Budgeted Funds	14,149.00	14,149.00	28,298.00

The above costs are an average. **This is NOT an invoice.** Your actual billing statement will be sent to you by the Bursar's Office, beginning mid July 2007 for the fall semester. **Further action is required on your part to secure the above noted funds. Secured funds will be reflected on the billing statement.**

To receive the funding from the above sources, you must submit the following documents. Funds can not be disbursed to your account if your financial aid file is incomplete. ****NOTE: Not all documents may be included at this time.**

- Perkins Loan Paperwork Bursar Office
- Loan Entrance Counseling & Student Refund Authorization Form
- Student Loan Questionnaire to initiate Sub Unsub
- Parent & Student Federal IRS 1040 Tax Return year 2006
- FAFSA Worksheet A,B,C & Verification Worksheet - Dependent

To reserve these funds, sign and return a copy of this letter within 21 days of receipt. If you wish to decline any individual award(s) please indicate this by drawing a line through the award(s). If you will be enrolling at The University of Tampa for the **first time** during the Fall 07 term, and have not already paid an admissions deposit of \$200, please submit the deposit with your award acceptance.

This award was based on your housing plans as reported on the FAFSA, or on assumptions we made based on your dependency status and state of residency. Please confirm your housing plans by circling the appropriate description listed below. If your housing plans have changed or our assumptions are inaccurate your award may be adjusted to reflect the change in your anticipated direct costs.

During 2007-2008 I plan to live (circle one): On-campus With Parent Other(specify)

Student signature _____

Date _____

TULANE University

Award information for Academic Year 2007-2008

Award Offers - Awaiting your reply

Award Type	Fall 2007	Spring 2008	Total
FEDERAL WORK STUDY AWARD	1250.00	1250.00	2500.00
<u>Additional Information for Award Shown Above</u>			
STAFFORD LOAN SUB/UNSUB ELIGIBILITY	1750.00	1750.00	3500.00
<u>Additional Information for Award Shown Above</u>			
SUPPLEMENTAL EDUC OPP GRANT	250.00	250.00	500.00
<u>Additional Information for Award Shown Above</u>			
PERKINS LOAN	2000.00	2000.00	4000.00
<u>Additional Information for Award Shown Above</u>			
ESTIMATED PELL GRANT	1580.00	1580.00	3160.00
<u>Additional Information for Award Shown Above</u>			
Total Awards Offered	6,830.00	6,830.00	13,660.00

Tulane Cost of Attendance

Full-Time Undergraduate Students

The following is the 2007-2008 cost of attendance for undergraduate students enrolled full-time in one of the full-time divisions (Newcomb-Tulane College , School of Architecture , A.B. Freeman School of Business, School of Science and Engineering and School of Liberal Arts):

	Freshman Resident
Tuition and Fees	\$36,610
Room	\$5,140
Board	\$3,550
Books	\$900
Transportation	Variable
Miscellaneous	\$930
TOTAL	\$47,130 + transportation

SOURCE: <http://www.tulane.edu/~finaid/idxcoa0708.htm>

Financial Aid Considerations

- 1) What's the gap between aid and cost of attendance? Is this school a viable choice? Why or why not?

- 2) How does the aid offered by each school compare?

- Is anything offered by one school that's not offered by the other? (possibility of appeal)

- What's the total amount in loans over the course of four years? (What will the monthly payments be? Use the loan calculator at FinAid website: <http://www.finaid.org/calculators/loanpayments.phtml>)

- Is this a financial burden you or your family is willing to take on?

- What portion of the aid is in work-study? Since money is paid in exchange for the student's work, it will not be available for direct expenses (such as tuition and room & board) at the beginning of the year, and is best reserved for monthly, or indirect expenses. Is this do-able?

- 3) How do other considerations, like the strength of the academic program or the school's location, factor in?

Tips for Calling a Financial Aid Office

- Always find out the name of the person you are talking to and write it down.
- Keep a log of every phone conversation, including what the person told you.
- Make sure you understand what the person is telling you. If you do not understand, ask for clarification.
- If you have had previous conversations with someone in the financial aid office, or if you know the financial aid officer assigned to your file, ask for that person. Building a relationship with one financial aid officer can help you avoid misunderstandings and get the most accurate information.
- When asking questions about a specific document, have a copy of that document in front of you.
- Have your Social Security number handy. Most colleges identify applicants by their Social Security number.
- Confirm that the financial aid officer you are speaking with has your actual file in front of him or her, so that the information they provide is not hypothetical, but referring directly to your case.

SOURCE: College Access Professional Development Institute, OPTIONS Center for Education and Career Choice, Goddard Riverside Community Center, www.goddard.org

Appealing a Financial Aid Package

Students and families often want to know if they can appeal to a college for more financial aid. Our answer is that it is probably worth a try. With college costs increasing at a faster rate than grant aid, the question of whether and how to appeal is becoming increasingly complex and sensitive. If you are not sure whether you should try to appeal, here are some basic guidelines. You should consider appealing if:

- Your financial or family circumstances have changed since you filled out your financial aid applications or are soon going to change. (ex. *death, divorce, disability, job loss, large medical expenses, or natural disasters*);
- There are financial or family circumstances that affect your family's ability to pay for college that were not clear on your financial aid applications. (ex. *day care expenses, excessive debt due to a business failure*);
- You are eligible for all types of aid, but were not packaged for particular types at a college;
- You have unusual expenses, which will make it more costly for you than for other students to attend a college (ex. *extraordinary transportation costs*); or
- You received a better package at a comparable college.

Whom to Appeal to

Your first step should be to work with the financial aid officer assigned to work with you. If you are getting nowhere and you really believe you have a case, contact the director of financial aid. It's important to be courteous if you ask to speak to the director of financial aid. (You're asking to speak to the financial aid officer's boss, and getting angry or hostile won't help.) You could also try the staff in charge of special interests — for example, if you are EOP eligible, your EOP director may be able to help you.

How to Appeal

Take the time to learn what will help (or hurt) your case. The phrase “you can attract more flies with honey than vinegar” sums up the best approach to appealing your financial aid packages. It will help your case to approach the financial aid officers in a calm and respectful manner.

If you truly feel some part of your award should be changed, then contact your financial aid officer and do so with sound reason and documentation. In most cases, financial aid officers say that a telephone call is the best initial way to discuss financial aid packages. After a phone call, letters may be necessary to document your situation or to provide further explanation.

If you try to appeal your financial aid package, you will likely be asked to document your claims. So, be ready with any letters or forms requested by the college.

Tips for Letter writing

- Always put your name, Social Security number, addresses, and telephone number on your correspondence;
- Try to be brief and to the point;
- Keep copies of anything you send;
- If you fax a letter, you may also need to send the original in the mail; and
- Call to make sure the office received your letter and that it was placed in your file.

SOURCE: College Access Professional Development Institute, OPTIONS Center for Education and Career Choice, Goddard Riverside Community Center, www.goddard.org

Financial Aid Comparison Worksheet: Year 1

College 1: _____ College 2: _____

Total Cost Of Attendance	College 1	College 2
Tuition		
Room and board		
Fees		
Other costs: _____		
1. Direct Costs Subtotal: add above three lines. This is the amount you owe the school in order to register/stay enrolled.		
Books		
Travel		
Personal expenses & miscellaneous		
2. Indirect Costs Subtotal: add above three lines		
3. Total Costs Add #1 and #2		

Grants and Scholarships	College 1	College 2
Pell Grant (federal)		
SEOG: Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant SEOG (federal)		
State grant:		
State grant:		
Institutional Grants (from college; add all together)		
Outside/private scholarships (add together)		
4. Total Grants/Scholarships: Add all amounts, above six lines		

Work/Study*	College 1	College 2
5.		

* **Note:** Work/study funds are earned throughout the year. Make sure the number of work/study hours are reasonable for a full-time student, and don't count on these funds for anything other than personal expenses, since they won't be available at the beginning of the year.

Loans	College 1	College 2
Perkins		
Subsidized Stafford		
Unsubsidized Stafford		
PLUS		
Other _____		
6. Total Loans: Add all loan amounts, above five lines		

College 1: _____ College 2: _____

The Gap	College 1	College 2
7. Total Financial Aid Awards, not including work/study (Add lines 4 and 6)		
8. The Gap: Cost of Attendance – Financial Aid Awards, not including work/study (Line 3 – Line 7)		

Your Financial Responsibility**	College 1	College 2
9. Your Financial Responsibility: Total cost – grants/scholarships (subtract line 4 from line 3)		

**This does not include eventual interest you will pay on any loans you may take.

Projected Cost -- All College Years***	College 1	College 2
10. Your Total Financial Responsibility: Financial Responsibility x Number of Years in College (Line 5 x 4)		
11. Your Monthly Financial Responsibility: Using a loan calculator, which can be found at www.finaid.org/calculators/loanpayments.phtml , determine what #10 (your total financial responsibility) would equal in monthly payments.		

***This is an estimate, as the cost of attendance will increase each school year.

According to www.finaid.org:

Your total education debt should be less than your starting salary. If you borrow more than twice your expected starting salary, you will find it extremely difficult to pay the debt. Live like a student while you are in school, so you don't have to live like a student after you graduate.

SOURCE: College Access Professional Development Institute, OPTIONS Center for Education and Career Choice, Goddard Riverside Community Center, www.goddard.org

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Loans	College 1	College 2
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Subsidized Stafford		
Unsubsidized Stafford		
PLUS		
Other _____		
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College 1: _____ College 2: _____

Grade 12, Financial Aid 6: Comparing Financial Aid Awards
Portfolio, Financial Aid Comparison Worksheet

The Gap	College 1	College 2
7. Total Financial Aid Awards, not including work/study (Add lines 4 and 6)		
8. The Gap: Cost of Attendance – Financial Aid Awards, not including work/study (Line 3 – Line 7)		

Your Financial Responsibility**	College 1	College 2
9. Your Financial Responsibility: Total cost – grants/scholarships (subtract line 4 from line 3)		

**This does not include eventual interest you will pay on any loans you may take.

Projected Cost -- All College Years***	College 1	College 2
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