

Undergraduate Students

Hood College's Office of Financial Aid staff is committed to helping you with plans to finance your Hood education. Please contact us if you need assistance.

**401 Rosemont Ave.
Frederick, MD 21701-8575
301-696-3411 or 800-922-1599**

The Conditions of Award brochure has been prepared to help you understand your financial award package from Hood College. You are responsible for knowing the procedures described in this guide. You may need to refer to this guide in the future if you have questions regarding **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY**, enrollment changes or other issues.

Student Tuition Accounts

Bill Payment

Annual charges—tuition, fees, room and board (if living on campus)—are divided into two semester billings: the first half is due August 15 and the second half January 15. Electronic billing statements are accessible through the Self Service portal. The family responsibility is the total of the tuition, fees, room and board (if living on campus) less the total of scholarships, grants and loans.

Book Reimbursement

The College does not issue book vouchers for students who have a credit on their account. Students will need to purchase books before a refund, due to a credit on the account, can be processed.

Disbursement of Awards

Financial awards are applied directly to student accounts after files are complete and enrollment requirements are met, or 10 days before the first day of classes, whichever is later.

Federal regulations require that all federal aid must be disbursed in equal payments). One-half of each scholarship, grant and loan is credited to the student's account each semester.

Any federal loan funding that exceeds the charges are refunded within 14 days of disbursement or 14 days after the first day of the term, whichever is later.

If Federal Work-Study, Campus Employment or Dyer Work is included in the student award, the dollar amount represents the maximum amount students may earn from the programs for the academic year. Students are paid bi-weekly. The number of hours the student has worked and the hourly rate of pay determine the amount of each check.

These funds may not be used as a credit against your student account. Certain awards—Outside Scholarships, Outside Loans, Tuition Benefits, Veterans Benefits, Vocational Rehabilitation and Tuition Reimbursement—are not administered through the Office of Financial Aid; therefore, they are not a direct credit through the Office of Financial Aid to the student's account. The student is responsible for ensuring the College receives these funds.

Alternative Financing Options

Parent PLUS Loan

The Federal Parent PLUS Loan is a low-interest, government-sponsored loan available to parents of dependent students.

Parents may borrow up to the cost of attendance minus other financial awards for which the student is eligible. Parents may apply for a Parent Plus loan at www.studentloans.gov. Loan approval is based on credit history, not income. A parent will be considered credit worthy unless they have experienced account balances more than 90 days past due, default on any type of loan, foreclosure or repossession, or have outstanding tax liens and unpaid judgments.

The PLUS loan has a fixed interest rate of 6.8 percent.

Loan funds are sent to the College in two disbursements, half for the fall semester and half for the spring semester.

Repayment begins within 60 days after the loan is fully disbursed. There is no penalty for early payment and outstanding loans can be consolidated into one monthly payment.

This is an annual application process. To apply, log on to www.studentloans.gov no sooner than April 15th.

Alternative Student Loans

In addition to the Federal Direct Loan program, several banks offer private student and/or parent loans. These loans may be used to supplement family resources available for educational expenses. Students/Parents may borrow up to the student's yearly projected cost of attendance minus any other financial awards the student is receiving. Outside lenders will review the borrower's credit history and most will require a credit worthy cosigner. Hood College participates with ELMSelect to provide a truly neutral lender and product comparison tool you can trust. For more information visit the site at www.elmselect.com. Once you've applied, the bank will contact our office for certification of the loan.

Tuition Payment Plan

The College offers families the opportunity to pay tuition bills over a 5 or 4 month period covering one semester. The Monthly Payment Plan (MPP) is administered by NelNet Business Solutions. There is a minimal processing fee. For more information, contact the Accounting Office at (301) 696-3607.

General Information

Your Award

When applications are evaluated, the student is considered for all types of assistance, including scholarships, grants, loans and student employment. The Office of Financial Aid determines eligibility for each award and assigns a combination of funds in accordance with eligibility. The specific components of the student award package is dependent upon the availability of funds and demonstrated financial need. **Hood College reserves the right to review, modify or cancel financial awards at any time on the basis of information affecting eligibility.** This may include, but is not limited to, changes in your financial or academic status or changes in the availability of federal, state or institutional funds.

The total amount of assistance from all sources may not exceed the cost of attendance. The Office of Financial Aid will determine the cost of attendance.

Enrollment

Awards are based upon the enrollment status and residency specified on the award letter. **A reduction in credit hours or change of residency may result in an award adjustment.** Our office verifies enrollment at the end of Hood College's drop/add period and again at the end of the College's refund period. Eligibility for financial awards requires enrollment of at least a half-time (6 credit hours) basis. Financial awards cannot be used to pay for audited courses.

Verification

The Office of Financial Aid will notify students if their file is chosen for verification. Students will need to submit a federal income tax return transcript and any other requested documents. Changes to the information reported on the FAFSA as a result of the verification process may require an adjustment in the student's financial award package.

Failure to submit the requested documents within the appropriate time frame may result in a reduction in financial aid. An official award letter will be sent upon completion of verification.

Scholarships/Grants

Hood grants and scholarships are available for use in the first eight (8) regular semesters of full-time enrollment at Hood College (excludes summer semesters and off-campus study). Students completing only 24 credit hours per academic year may need additional semesters of undergraduate study in order to graduate and will not be eligible for Hood scholarships and grants beyond eight (8) semesters.

Hood grants and scholarships cannot exceed tuition and fees (as well as room & board for residential students).

Students who wish to study at other institutions are ineligible for financial aid from Hood funds. In some instances, federal and state funds may be used for study at other institutions. Contact the Office of Financial Aid for more information.

Authorization

The student's signature on the award letter (or Financial Aid Application) signifies authorization to apply federal funds to the account to pay for charges (such as library fines, parking tickets, room damages) **other** than tuition, fees, room and board billed by Hood College.

Students have the right to refuse to authorize any individual item or rescind the entire authorization at any time by notifying the Office of Financial Aid in writing.

Student's Rights and Responsibilities

Renewal of need-based aid is not automatic. Students are required to reapply each year by filing a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and a Hood Application for Assistance and submitting all supporting materials. The application priority date is February 15. The Hood College Financial Aid Application is also required for merit-based aid.

The Office of Financial Aid coordinates awards that you may be receiving from all sources. Therefore, if you receive funds from your state or a private source, you are required to notify the Office of Financial Aid. Receipt of additional financial aid may result in an adjustment of the financial award offered by Hood College.

Students are expected to apply for all sources of financial aid for which they may be eligible. Hood College will not replace any amount that you fail to receive from an outside source because of a missed application deadline or failure to submit the necessary paperwork.

Students are required to notify the Office of Financial Aid of any change in name, address, enrollment status, anticipated graduation date, housing status or other changes related to his or her attendance at Hood College.

You have the right to privacy. All records and data submitted with your application for financial awards are treated as confidential information.

It is the responsibility of the student to provide additional documentation, tax transcripts, W-2s and any additional information requested by the Office of Financial Aid. It is your responsibility to read, understand and be accountable for all forms and agreements you sign. We recommend you keep copies for your records.

Program-Specific Requirements

Federal Aid Programs

For information regarding federal aid programs, please refer to "The Student Guide for Financial Aid" published by the U.S. Department of Education. This booklet is available from the Office of Financial Aid or online at www.studentaid.ed.gov.

Federal Direct Loans

Students who have been offered a Federal Direct Subsidized and/or Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan as part of the award have the option of increasing, reducing or rejecting the loan altogether by indicating so on the award letter. If you are increasing, rejecting or reducing the amount of the loan, please provide your initials next to the change. If no changes are indicated, loans will be processed based on the amount offered.

A subsidized loan is awarded on the basis of need. Interest will not be charged before repayment begins or during an authorized period of deferment. The federal government "subsidizes" or pays the interest during these periods.

An unsubsidized loan is not awarded on the basis of need. Interest will be charged from the time that loan is disbursed until it is paid in full. Interest allowed to accumulate will be capitalized; that is, the interest will be added to the principal amount of the loan and additional interest will be based upon the higher amount.

Annual Loan Limits

	Dependent Students	Independent Students
Freshman (0-24 credits)	\$5,500	\$9,500
Sophomore (25-55 credits)	\$6,500	\$10,500
Junior (56-86 credits)	\$7,500	\$12,500
Senior (87+ credits)	\$7,500	\$12,500

The maximum aggregate loan limits for dependent students is \$31,000. The maximum aggregate loan limits for independent undergraduate students is \$57,500.

If Hood College does not prepare award package with the maximum loan eligibility established by the Department of Education, you may request the additional loan funds to be added to your award as long as the amount requested does not exceed your cost of attendance.

As a Direct Loan borrower you will be charged an origination fee or other loan fees. Your financial award will indicate

the gross amount of your loan(s). However, your billing statement will reflect the reduced net amount of the loan(s).

The Office of Financial Aid will certify loans for students up to their maximum loan eligibility.

Students borrowing from the Direct Loan program for the first time are required to complete a Master Promissory Note (MPN) and an entrance loan counseling session.

The entrance loan counseling session will inform you of your rights and responsibilities as a Federal Direct Loan borrower.

We encourage students to complete both the entrance loan counseling and sign the Master Promissory Note electronically upon receipt of the financial award letter.

Federal Perkins Loan

A Federal Perkins Loan is a low-interest, fixed rate loan for students with exceptional need.

Hood College awards Federal Perkins Loans primarily from funds generated by former students repaying these loans. As a Perkins Loan borrower, you are not charged an origination fee or other loan fees. In addition, interest does not begin to accrue until the repayment billing process begins.

The U.S. Department of Education requires all first-time Federal Perkins loan borrowers to complete and Entrance Counseling and sign a Master Promissory Note (MPN) prior to receiving their first disbursement. Students may complete this requirement in the Office of Financial Aid.

Federal Work-Study/Campus Employment

Students must have been awarded Federal or Campus Work-Study as part of their financial award package in order to apply for a work-study job. Being awarded work-study is not a guarantee of a job, rather, an opportunity to work on campus.

Students who did not receive a work-study award as part of their financial award package may add their name to a work-study wait list by sending in a written request. If work-study funds become available, students on the wait list will be considered for an award based on their eligibility. Being placed on the wait list in no way assures you that you will receive a work-study award.

If a student cancels work-study for the fall semester, the award will be canceled for the entire year. Students interested in working in the spring semester only must submit a request to be added to the wait list for work-study. Being placed on the wait list in no way assures you that you will be re-awarded work-study. Students who have been placed on financial aid probation may be in jeopardy of not being allowed to continue in the work-study program.

Students who have been placed on financial aid probation may be in jeopardy of not being allowed to continue in the work-study program.

Conditions of Award Undergraduate Students

Work-study awards are not credited to your student account. Students are paid bi-weekly for the actual hours worked. Students may not earn more than the work-study award and should plan accordingly. In conjunction with the work-study supervisor, it is the student's responsibility to monitor his or her earnings.

Students receiving a Campus Employment or Federal Work-Study award are paid on an hourly basis for work performed.

Founders' Scholarship, Leader Scholarship, Trailblazer Scholarship and Recognition Scholarship

The above noted scholarships that have been offered to new students are renewable through the student's undergraduate career and may be received for a maximum of eight (8) semesters. Students must maintain the designated semester grade point average, maintain satisfactory academic progress toward their degree, and must be enrolled full-time. Students whose grade point average drops below the required level will receive warning good for one (1) semester. Two (2) consecutive semesters below the required grade point average will result in a reduction of the scholarship to the next level or elimination of the award altogether. Students with reduced or eliminated scholarships may recover the original award amount by achieving the required semester grade point average.

<u>GPA Requirement:</u>	<u>Semesters 1 & 2</u>	<u>Semesters 3 - 8</u>
Founders'/Leader Scholarship	2.75	3.00
Trailblazer Scholarship	2.50	2.75
Recognition Award	2.25	2.50

The Grade Point Average (GPA) will be reviewed at the end of each semester for Hood College course work only. This is a semester, not a cumulative, grade point average. The minimum grade point average increases after the first two (2) semesters.

Chair of the Board Scholarship or Hodson Beneficial Finance Scholarship

Students who have been awarded the Chair of the Board Scholarship or the Hodson Beneficial Finance Scholarship must maintain a GPA of 3.5 or greater in order to continue to receive the scholarship. The scholarship is awarded for a total of 8 semesters.

Outside Scholarships

Students who receive noncollege scholarships must inform the Office of Financial Aid as soon as possible. Outside scholarships may reduce the amount of a student's subsidized loan or work commitment. It can also reduce a

portion of a student's Hood Grant, Housing Grant or FSEOG Grant.

Grants

Need-based grants offered in award packages do not have to be repaid. Some grants offered by the Maryland State Scholarship Administration, however, can become loans if all of the conditions of the award are not satisfied.

Please visit Maryland Higher Education Commission Web site at www.mhec.state.md.us for more information.

Educational Assistance Grant

The Educational Assistance Grant is awarded by the Maryland Higher Education Commission and not Hood College. Hood College, however, will estimate Educational Assistance Grants for new incoming students. If the State does not fund the Educational Assistance Grant, the award will convert to a Hood Grant for the first year only.

Hood Grant

The amount of Hood Grant may vary from year to year. Eligibility is based on financial need as determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and the availability of funds.

Withdrawing from Hood

Students who stop attending classes at Hood College should officially withdraw through the Registrar's Office to get a grade of "W." Students who stop attending classes and receive a grade of "F" in all classes will be considered to have unofficially withdrawn.

The Office of Financial Aid is required to recalculate federal financial award eligibility for students who withdraw, drop out, are dismissed or take a leave of absence prior to completing the semester. Until 60 percent of the semester has elapsed, a pro rata schedule is used to determine how much federal aid the student has earned at the time of withdrawal. The portion of unearned funding must be returned to the federal programs. When unearned funds are returned, a student may owe the College additional funds. See the Hood College catalog for information on the institutional refund policy.

Leave of Absence

Students who start attending classes then take an official leave of absence within the semester are required to be considered withdrawn for purposes of returning unearned funds to the federal government. (Please refer to *Withdrawing from Hood*).

Students on an official leave of absence will be reported to their lenders as not enrolled.

Satisfactory Academic Progress Requirements for Financial Aid (SAP)

Students are expected to maintain a record of academic achievement that will enable them to graduate in a reasonable time period. Undergraduate students receiving financial aid at Hood College of any type (federal, state, institutional and/or outside scholarships/grants) must demonstrate both qualitatively and quantitatively the ability to do satisfactory academic work and to progress measurably toward a degree. This is in addition to any renewal criteria required for specific state, institutional or other outside awards.

Federal regulations require the Financial Aid office to monitor students' (undergraduate and graduate) academic progress at the end of each academic year. This is to ensure that students receiving funds are successfully progressing through their program of study. At the end of the spring semester of each academic year, the Financial Aid Office evaluates the academic progress of each student receiving financial aid according to the standards set forth below by the College. This evaluation determines a student's eligibility to receive financial assistance in the next academic year. In addition, at the end of both the fall and spring semesters, the registrar reviews the qualitative academic progress of all degree-seeking students to determine the eligibility for continued enrollment at Hood College.

Qualitative Standards (Grade-based)

Qualitative standards measure a student's quality of performance in terms of GPA, including basic skills courses (reading, writing, mathematics).

Each semester a student must meet the following cumulative GPA standard:

Total Hours Attempted	Minimum GPA Requirement
1-25	1.50 GPA
26-38	1.60 GPA
39-50	1.70 GPA
51-63	1.90 GPA
64-124	2.00 GPA

In order to graduate, a student must have a minimum GPA of 2.0. If a student fails to meet the above GPA requirements, he/she will be suspended from financial aid but will have the opportunity to submit an appeal.

Quantitative Standards (time-based also referred to as PACE)

In order to maintain financial aid eligibility, the U.S. Department of Education requires a student to successfully complete 67% of the credits for which he/she attempted as shown in the example below:

Hood College Office of Financial Aid calculates the pace at which you are progressing in your SAP academic plan by dividing the cumulative number of credits you have successfully completed by the cumulative number of credits you have

attempted. All periods of enrollment count when assessing quantitative standards, even periods in which the student did not receive financial aid.

Pace =
$$\frac{\text{Cumulative number of credits that you have successfully completed}}{\text{Cumulative number of credits that you have attempted}}$$

Unsatisfactory grades of F, INC, F, S and U do not count as completed courses but will count as attempted credits. In addition, repeated coursework is counted as attempted hours for financial aid eligibility. Students can only receive financial aid for a passed course one additional time. If the student registers for a previously passed course the third time, the course is ineligible for financial aid. Students are eligible up to 30 attempted hours for basic skills courses (reading, writing, mathematics) which are not counted in the quantitative standards. If a student exceeds 30 attempted hours without successful completion, the student becomes ineligible for financial aid and must pay for those courses prior to continuing at Hood College.

Transfer credits that count toward the student's current program count as attempted and completed for financial aid eligibility.

Quantitative Standards (maximum timeframe)

You must be making progress toward a degree. To quantify academic progress, Hood College must set a maximum timeframe in which you are expected to finish a program. A student must complete his/her program of study within 150% of the length of the program. If a student needs additional time to complete the degree, the student may submit an appeal for financial aid. Students at Hood College are expected to complete 124 credit hours to earn an undergraduate degree. Students are eligible to receive financial aid up to 186 attempted hours at Hood College (not including 30 credit hours for basic skills courses). If additional time is needed, students can submit an appeal to the Director of Financial Aid.

Transfer Credits

Transfer credits and/or credits for prior learning given at the time of enrollment will be counted in the total number of credits attempted. During the course of enrollment, a student may transfer credits earned at outside institutions, however, the credits will apply only for meeting the maximum timeframe standard.

Treatment of W, INC, AU, F, S and U Grades and Repeated Coursework

- Course withdrawals (W) after the drop/add period are not included in the G.P.A. calculation, but are considered a noncompletion of attempted coursework.
- Incomplete (INC) grades are not included in the G.P.A. calculation but are considered a noncompletion of attempted coursework until the incomplete grade is replaced with a permanent grade and academic progress can be reevaluated.

- An audit (AU) grade is not considered attempted coursework. It is not included in the G.P.A. calculation or completion rate determination.
- A satisfactory (S) grade is treated as attempted credits earned, but it is not included in the G.P.A. calculation.
- An unsatisfactory (U) grade is treated as attempted credits that are not earned, but it is not included in the G.P.A. calculation.
- A failing grade (F) is treated as attempted credits not earned; it will be included in the calculation of the G.P.A. and the minimum completion rate.
- All grades earned for a repeated course will be included in the calculation of the G.P.A. and every repeated attempt will be included in the completion rate determination.

Financial Aid Suspension

Students are placed on financial aid suspension if they do not meet one or both of the SAP standards. Students that are failing to make satisfactory academic progress and who successfully appeal will be placed on financial aid probation. Students placed in the probation status may continue to receive financial aid for one semester only, but are expected to improve their academic standing (CGPA) and/or maximum timeframe progress so that the standards of SAP are met by the end of the following semester.

Financial Aid Probation

If at the end of the probationary period the student still does not meet the standards set forth in this policy, eligibility to receive financial aid of any type will be suspended. Students who fail to meet the maximum timeframe toward completion of their degree within 186 attempted credits will have their financial aid canceled.

Reinstatement of Aid after Probation

Appeal is Approved

Reinstatement of financial aid after a student is placed on suspension is achieved as follows:

The student submits a written letter of appeal in accordance with the appeals process and the Financial Aid Appeals Committee grants the appeal. The student is placed on financial aid probation for one semester and is allowed to maintain their aid eligibility. SAP will be reviewed at the end of that semester;

OR

The student attends Hood College during the suspension semester, pays for tuition and fees without the help of student aid and does well enough in the coursework to satisfy all the satisfactory academic progress standards. The student must notify the Office of Financial Aid if they are planning to attend Hood College without the assistance of financial aid;

OR

The student may attend summer school to eliminate the deficiency in credits or G.P.A. The student must notify the Office of Financial Aid if they are planning to take classes during the summer to eliminate the deficiency. Students cannot take classes at another institution to resolve a G.P.A deficiency. Classes must be taken at Hood College.

A student whose eligibility has been suspended may regain eligibility at the end of any term after which they meet the above criteria.

Students who have been placed on suspension cannot skip a semester and regain eligibility. No financial aid will be disbursed during subsequent semesters for students on suspension.

Appeals Process

Appeals of financial aid suspension must be made in writing to the director of financial aid by the date specified in the suspension notification letter.

The appeal letter must address the extenuating circumstance(s) why satisfactory academic progress was not made, why the extenuating circumstance(s) has changed, as well as an outlined plan of corrective action for future academic success. The appeal must explain why the student failed to meet satisfactory academic progress, what has changed in the situation that will allow him or her to make satisfactory progress at the next evaluation. Extenuating circumstances can include, but is not limited to, illness or injury; death of a family member; family difficulties; interpersonal problems with friends, roommate, significant others; difficulty balancing work, athletics, family responsibility; or financial difficulties.

As part of the appeal, you may be required to meet with the Center for Academic Achievement and Retention (CARR) to establish an academic plan.

The director of financial aid will review the appeal and notify the student in writing within 10 working days whether the appeal has been accepted or denied. If the appeal has been accepted, the letter to the student will detail the academic plan of corrective action as well as require the approval of the student's academic adviser. All decisions made by the director of financial aid are final and will not be subject to further review.