

## **Financial Assistance**

LFCC is committed to using all available funds to help students gain access to a college education. Financial aid is usually awarded based on financial need, but can be awarded based on merit or a combination of factors. Assistance is available through a variety of federal, state and institutional programs. Lord Fairfax Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, political affiliation or disability in its programs or activities. For a complete list of financial aid currently available, check online at <http://www.lfcc.edu>.

## **How to Apply for Federal and State Financial Assistance**

Students applying for aid must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). There are two ways this form can be submitted. This form can be mailed and takes four to six weeks to process. Electronically submitted, the application takes one to three weeks to process.

The Web address for electronic filing is <http://www.fafsa.gov>. Electronic processing is expedited by requesting a Personal Identification Number (PIN) at <http://www.pin.ed.gov>. The PIN number will serve as the electronic signature and should be requested by both the student and when applicable, the parent. The school code for LFCC is 008659. The student and the student's listed colleges receive a student aid report (SAR) from the Central Processing Service. No determination of eligibility can be made until the College receives a valid SAR and all requested documentation. Applicants may be required to provide additional information. Applications should be submitted as soon as possible after Jan. 1 of each year. The priority application deadline is June 15. Applications and information concerning financial assistance at LFCC are available in the Financial Aid Office or on the College's Web site at <http://www.lfcc.edu/finaid>.

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid Recipients**

Students are required to maintain satisfactory academic progress to continue receiving aid. The U.S. Department of Education has established a series of standards that define satisfactory academic progress, SAP. Requirements to maintain SAP:

1. Students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) to qualify for federal and state financial aid programs. Students are reviewed after attempting 12 credits for GPA. The minimum GPA requirements are: 13-29 credits, a 1.5 GPA, 30-45 credits, a 1.75 GPA, 46 or more credits, a 2.0 GPA. Some scholarships have stricter GPA requirements. If placed on academic suspension or dismissal, students will be ineligible to receive financial aid.
2. Dropped classes will not appear on students' academic record. If students decide that they do not want to take a class after the add/drop period, their action is considered a withdrawal. The withdrawal stays on students' record and that can affect their financial aid status.
3. Students must complete 67 percent of the total credits attempted, on both a term and cumulative basis. During their academic career at LFCC, students may consider withdrawing from a class. Students should consider all options before withdrawing because it may have serious implications for their financial aid eligibility. Students are reviewed for this requirement after attempting 23 credits. Federal law requires LFCC to return part of students' financial aid if students withdraw from all classes and they will have to pay the amount deemed "unearned" by the Department of Education. If they don't repay that amount, students will not be eligible for future financial assistance until the debt is paid in full.
4. To receive financial aid, students must attend the classes for which they enroll. If students decide that they do not want to take a class, they must drop it during the add/drop period by completing the appropriate paperwork or online.
5. Students have a maximum of 150 percent of their program length to complete their associate degree/certificate program. Once they have exceeded 150 percent of course work for their degree/certificate program, their eligibility for aid at LFCC will be exhausted. Changes in curriculums do not constitute extended time limits for eligibility. Transferred credits will also be included in the calculation.

6. Students who register for developmental courses are limited to a maximum of 30 semester hours. The Financial Aid Office cannot provide assistance for classes that have been attempted more than twice or for a developmental course attempted more than three times.
7. LFCC requires a minimum 2.0 GPA to graduate from and Career Studies Certificate (CSC), Certificate, or Associate Degree. This overrides any GPA requirement for financial aid. For example, if your CSC requires 23 credits to graduate, you need a minimum 2.0 GPA, even through financial aid requires a minimum 1.5 GPA.

## **SAP Alert and Appeals**

The Financial Aid Office evaluates students for SAP after grades are posted at the end of each semester at the attempted credits noted above. To be eligible to receive financial aid or scholarships at LFCC, students are required to make satisfactory progress towards successful completion of the program of study to which they have been admitted.

If students do not meet the SAP requirements and lose their financial aid eligibility, they may appeal the decision. Appeals need to be made, in writing or e-mail, to the Financial Aid Office within 10 business days from the date the denial was e-mailed. Only appeals that document mitigating circumstances will be considered. If SAP is not met because 150% status, contact the Financial Aid Office for more information.

All of the above conditions must be met each semester. The first time any of the above conditions is not met, financial aid will be discontinued until the student has completed enough credits to overcome the deficiency without the benefit of financial aid.

## **Refund and Repayment Policy**

The Financial Aid Office at LFCC is required by federal and state regulations to have a written policy for the refund and repayment of federal and state aid received by students who withdraw, drop out, are dismissed, or take a leave of absence prior to completing 60 percent of a payment period or term for which payment has been received. These policies are effective only if the student completely terminates enrollment or stops attending all their classes before completing more than 60 percent of the enrollment period. The Title IV financial aid and/or state award programs must be recalculated in these situations.

## **Disbursement Policy**

The amount of a refund of fees for students who withdraw will be calculated as follows:

All students receiving Title IV (federal) and/or state financial aid may be required to repay all or part of any aid received to the appropriate federal and/or state program(s) if they withdraw from all classes.

The amount that the student may be required to return to the federal and/or state program(s) will be determined by the amount disbursed, the amount which could have been disbursed, and the percentage of the enrollment period the student has completed.

If a student withdraws on or before the 60 percent point time of the period of enrollment, calculated using calendar days, a portion of the total of federal and/or state funds awarded a student (excluding federal work-study) must be returned according to the provisions of the

Higher Education Amendments of 1998 and the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia. The calculation of the return of these funds may result in the student owing a balance to the College and/or the federal or state government.

## **Repayment Policy**

The amount of aid that a student must repay is determined via the Federal Formula for Return of Title IV funds as specified in Section 484B of the Higher Education Act. This law also specifies the order of return of the Title IV funds to the programs from which they were awarded.

A repayment may be required when a refund has been disbursed to a student from financial aid funds in excess of the amount of aid the student earned during the term. The amount of aid earned is determined by multiplying the total aid, other than Federal Work Study, for which the student qualified by the percentage of time during the term that the student was enrolled.

If a student leaves the institution prior to completing 60 percent of a payment period or term, the Financial Aid Office recalculates eligibility for Title IV and/or state funds. Recalculation is based on the percentage of earned aid using the following Federal Return of Title IV funds formula:

Percentage of payment period or term completed = the number of days completed up to the withdrawal date divided by the total days in the payment period or term. (Any break of five days or more is not counted as part of the days in the term.) This percentage is also the percentage of earned aid.

Funds are returned to the appropriate federal and/or state program based on the percentage of unearned aid using the following formula:

Aid to be returned = (100 percent of the aid that could be disbursed minus the percentage of earned aid) multiplied by the total amount of aid that could have been disbursed during the payment period or term.

If a student earned less aid than was disbursed, the College would be required to return a portion of the funds and the student would be required to return a portion of the funds. Keep in mind that when Title IV and/or state funds are returned, the student may owe a debt to the College.

If a student earned more aid than was disbursed to him/her, the College would owe the student a post-withdrawal disbursement which must be paid within 120 days of the student's withdrawal.

The College must return the amount of Title IV and/or state funds for which it is responsible no later than thirty (30) days after the date of the determination of the date of the student's withdrawal.

The responsibility for returning unearned aid is allocated between the College and the student according to the portion of disbursed aid that could have been used to cover College charges and the portion that could have been disbursed directly to the student once the College charges were covered. LFCC will distribute the unearned aid back to the Title IV and/or state programs as specified by law. The student will be billed for the amount the student owes to the Title IV and/or state programs and any amount due to the College resulting from the return of Title IV and/or state funds used to cover College charges.

Disbursements are allocated in the following order:

Federal Pell Grants for which a return of funds is required

Federal Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) for which a return of funds is required

Federal Supplemental Opportunity Grants (SEOG) for which a return of funds is required

Other assistance under this Title for which a return of funds is required (e.g., LEAP)

Commonwealth Grant (COMA) for which a return of funds is required

Virginia Guaranteed Assistance Program (VGAP) for which a return of funds is required

Students will be notified within 30 days via their student e-mail account of their overpayment and will be instructed to contact the LFCC Business Office to arrange a suitable repayment agreement.