COLUMBIA | COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IRVING MEDICAL CENTER

FINANCIAL AID HANDBOOK

2026-27 MASTER OF SCIENCE IN ORAL SCIENCES PROGRAM

COLUMBIA | COLLEGE OF DENTAL MEDICINE

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FINANCIAL AID HANDBOOK

ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-27

MS IN ORAL SCIENCES

THE OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID & PLANNING administers financial aid for the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, the College of Dental Medicine, the Institute of Human Nutrition, and the Programs in Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Genetic Counseling. We serve as a resource and as a link to your funding sources. Keep in mind that financial aid programs are subject to change due to legislative and regulatory changes.

You will be assigned to a Financial Aid Officer who will determine eligibility, prepare financial aid offers and work closely with you throughout your time in the program.

Check our ***website*** periodically for up-to-date information and helpful links.

WHAT IS FINANCIAL AID? Financial aid is any grant, scholarship, loan, or work-study offered to help you meet educationally related expenses. Such aid is usually provided by or through the school, federal and state agencies, foundations or corporations, etc.

WHAT KIND OF FINANCIAL AID IS AVAILABLE? Students in this program are eligible for external loans(Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan and private alternative loans) as well as Federal Work Study (FWS.)

HOW DO I APPLY? US citizens and permanent residents should **complete the FAFSA**, student sections only, to establish eligibility for Federal Direct Unsubsidized, and/or Federal Work-Study. No parental information is required. If you are **married**, your spouse's financial information is also required. International students do not need to complete a FAFSA. You must also submit the **Aid Type Request Form**.

An **international student** in the United States with an F1 or F2 student visa, with a J1 or J2 exchange visitor visa, or with a G-series or H-series visa **is not eligible for need-based student aid from federal or state sources, and need not complete the FAFSA.** If you acquire permanent resident status prior to graduation, you will become eligible for state and federal assistance (which includes Federal Direct Loan and Federal Work Study. Please note that a "Notice of Approval to Apply for Permanent Residence" (I-171 or I-464) does not make you eligible for federal student aid.

International students are eligible for private alternative loans if you have a credit worthy cosigner, who is a US citizen or permanent resident. You must also submit the **Aid Type Request Form**.

WHEN SHOULD I APPLY? - **All students** should submit the FAFSA by **March 31st** (or within 2 weeks after acceptance, whichever is later if you are an entering student). **We expect to send financial aid offer letters out during June, assuming your application materials are complete.**

It is your responsibility to notify us about any new aid (scholarships, loans, etc.) that becomes available after you file your application. This obligation extends throughout the entire academic year.

Your Financial Aid Officer will review changes in your financial circumstances throughout the year to determine if there is a change in your eligibility for funds.

APPLICATION MATERIALS - Please keep copies of all your application materials!

Once you receive your CU ID, you will be able to log into ***Net Partner*** to check the status of your application materials and to see if any additional documents have been requested.

1. The **Free Application for Federal Student Assistance (FAFSA)** - This is the federal application required for all applicants that are U.S. citizens or permanent residents who wish to establish eligibility for financial aid offered by the United States Department of Education (Title IV), and for any school funds.

   StudentAid.gov the U.S. Department of Education website where you can complete and submit your FAFSA online. T*he application is free.*

   An **FSA ID** is a username and password you need to log in to and sign the FAFSA online. If you do not already have a FSA ID, you can ***create a FSA ID*** online. This is your electronic signature for FAFSA and Renewal FAFSA on the Web. It can also be used to access your Title IV federal student aid history ***online*** *(select "Manage Loans").*

   At this same website, you can complete a ***Renewal FAFSA*** if you applied for federal student aid last year**.** Be sure to keep a copy of your application before you submit it.

   Read the instructions carefully when you complete your FAFSA or Renewal FAFSA. Most mistakes are made because students fail to follow instructions.

   You will be using 2024 tax year information. Your (and your spouse's) consent and approval is needed to retrieve and disclose federal tax information (FTI). With your consent and approval, FAFSA can obtain tax return information automatically from the IRS which will help you complete the form. **If you do not provide consent and approval, you will not be eligible for**

federal student aid, including Federal Direct Loans and Federal Work Study. You must provide consent and approval even if you did not file a U.S. federal tax return or any tax return at all. If you have already sent in your *FAFSA*, and **Columbia University Title IV Code 002707**, was not one of the schools you originally listed; go ***online*** and add us.

Note: *There may be private companies who charge to help you complete this form.* ***There is no charge for filing a FAFSA****, so be sure to go to the* ***correct website****.*

2. Complete the **Aid Type Request Form on NetPartner**. This form asks you to indicate the type of financial aid for which you would like to be considered. The type of financial aid you indicate on this form will determine which documents you need to complete for the financial aid application process.

3. **Permanent Resident Card** - If you are selected for federal Verification and you do not hold U.S. citizenship but have been accorded "permanent resident" status, you must submit a copy of both sides of your Permanent Resident Card (I-151, I-551, or I-551C) to our office in person. If you have an Arrival-Departure Record (I-94 or I94A), you may be eligible for federal financial aid. Please check with us. If you have a Notice of Approval to Apply for Permanent Residence (I-171 or I-464), you are not eligible for federal student aid.

4. **Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan and Federal Direct Graduate PLUS (GradPLUS) Loans-** Congress passed the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) in July 2025, which introduced several changes to federal student loans beginning July 1, 2026. The information below is intended to help you understand how these changes may apply to you.

   New students for the 2026-27 academic year who are US Citizens or Permanent Residents will have access only to the Direct Unsubsidized loan and will not be eligible to borrow under the Direct GradPLUS Loan program.

   a) All new students should complete a Master Promissory Note (MPN) for the Direct Unsubsidized Loan. Please note that Entrance Counseling is required and can be completed at StudentAid.gov along with the MPN. Entrance counseling is done once.

   Please note that there is no place on the MPN to request loan amounts.

   b) Your Financial Aid Offer Letter will include the maximum amount you are eligible to borrow from the Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan.

   After you review your Financial Aid Offer Letter, complete the **Financial Aid Acceptance Form** within two weeks after receipt of the letter. Should you wish to borrow an amount that is different from what you are eligible for, you must indicate your requested loan amounts on the **Financial Aid Acceptance form**. You can work with your Financial Aid Officer to make the necessary adjustments if you need help determining the proper amounts, including private loans.

   We cannot originate either Direct Unsubsidized Loans or Private loans until you have accepted them on the Financial Aid Acceptance Form. You have the right to cancel these loan amounts or to subsequently change them. However, please be advised that changes may cause a delay with disbursement.

5. **Verification Worksheet** - To confirm the accuracy of data reported by financial aid applicants and their families, the federal government has a regulatory process called **Verification**. Verification applies to applicants for the Direct Unsubsidized Loan and Federal Work-Study programs.

If you are selected for Verification, our office will contact you with the appropriate Verification Worksheet. It must be returned to our office no later than **three weeks** from the date you are notified that you must complete the form (see below for late penalties). The completed Worksheet plus all required documentation must be reviewed by your Financial Aid Officer before Direct Unsubsidized Loans and Federal Work-Study can be awarded.

Please note also that if you or your spouse receives untaxed benefits, the Verification process requires documentation from the appropriate agency.

If you submit subsequent applications for additional federally-regulated aid after you have filled out a Verification Worksheet, federal regulations require that you "update" your household size, and number of household members in a postsecondary school.

Important Note on Penalties: If the required information has not been submitted by the stated deadline then:

- Our office will consider your application for aid **withdrawn**. You may reactivate it by supplying the information.
- Our office will then certify Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan.
- In any case, if you miss the deadline and your financial aid is delayed because of this, you will be responsible for all late charges assessed on your school account.

6. **Private Loans** – Given the limits on federal financial aid, students may need to access loans from private lenders to meet their Cost of Attendance budgets. Please review the Student Financial Services website for important information and application steps for these loans.

How Do We Determine Financial Need?

Financial "need" is defined as the difference between anticipated expenses and financial resources which include any scholarship, grant or loan awarded to the student by sources outside of our office. Every application is individually reviewed by a Financial Aid Officer. Students with special family circumstances are encouraged to discuss their situation with a Financial Aid Officer.

Determination of Academic Year Expenses – Student budgets are divided into three areas: **Tuition and Fees** (charges paid directly to the university), **Educational Expenses** (books & supplies), and **Living Expenses** (food, housing, and personal expenses). The budgets are used to calculate eligibility for all types of financial aid. You can see the full cost of attendance budget on our **website**.

Adjustments to student budgets may be made for special circumstances, including the following items, where applicable:

- ✓ If you **opt in** to the "Medical Insurance Plan" your budget will be increased by the premium and your financial aid package will be adjusted accordingly.
- ✓ Student Health Service and/or Medical Insurance for students with dependent children.
- ✓ Medical/dental expenses in excess of the benefits provided by the CUIMC Student Health Service Program that exceed $200 per year will be considered, if documentation is provided.
- ✓ International Student Fee - $175 (subject to change) assessed each semester by the International Students and Scholars Office-CUIMC.
- ✓ Students with dependents should complete the **Budget Adjustment & Loan Change Request Form** and **Expected Year Income Form** and contact their financial aid officer to discuss any budgeting considerations.
- ✓ **Students with expenses greater than the published budget** should submit itemized budgets to our office for review. Rents that exceed our average budgets may be approved for extra borrowing BUT only to a maximum of **$1,675 a month**. The "**Budget Adjustment & Loan Change Request Form**" and a copy of your lease will be required before any adjustments to your budget are made. Check with your Financial Aid Officer before committing to additional housing expenses that you cannot cover with personal funds.
- ✓ Monthly subway/bus expense if living outside of Washington Heights.

Please contact your Financial Aid Officer if you have another special circumstance that you would like considered for a budget adjustment.

PLEASE NOTE!

Other expenses will be considered if they are necessary and related to attendance in this Program, **BUT**, you should not incur expenses that exceed the standard budget unless: a) you can cover them with assistance from family or friends, or b) if you will need financial aid to cover them, you have **first** cleared the expenditure(s) with your Financial Aid Officer. Be prepared with itemized documentation of any additional charges. If you do not get Columbia owned housing, we may be able to approve higher rent, BUT only to a predetermined maximum. Potentially refundable deposits cannot be covered. most cases you will have to pay for additional expenses by accessing higher cost alternative loans, so it is to your advantage to **"think frugally"**.

THE FINANCIAL AID PACKAGE AND AWARDING POLICIES - Once your demonstrated financial need is determined, a Financial Aid Officer will construct a package, or list of funds you can use to supplement the "expected family contribution" in order to pay for school. The relative amount of each component of the package is determined by the availability of funds and eligibility guidelines within each program.

To meet demonstrated need, a financial aid package is developed using federal and private loans prioritized in the following order:

1. Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan
2. Supplemental Loan Sources (private/alternative loans)
3. Federal College Work-Study (optional)

LOANS - After reviewing your application, your Financial Aid Officer will notify you about your eligibility for specific loans. For a full description of Federal Direct Loan, and private alternative loans ***click here.***

SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

EXTERNAL SCHOLARSHIPS - In addition to federal and institutional aid, there are many external scholarships available to qualified candidates. Additional resources can be found at **www.finaid.org** and at **Foundation Grants to Individuals by Candid** . Please note that Foundation Grants to Individuals by Candid charges approximately $20 for 1 month access. It is not a scholarship search engine, but a publication from the Foundation Center, New York Public Library. We expect that **all** eligible students will apply for grants that are administered by their states of legal residence. You should investigate the availability of scholarship programs in their home state.

REDUCTION OF LOANS BY EXTERNAL SCHOLARSHIPS - If you receive externally-awarded scholarships or loans, you **must** notify your Financial Aid Officer. You will be granted a dollar for dollar substitution of the financial aid in the standard package in an amount equal to the "external" award in the following order: Private alternative loans with higher interest rates than federal loan will be reduced first; Unsubsidized Federal Direct Stafford will be reduced next.

RULES FOR REFUND AND RETURN OF FINANCIAL AID FUNDS

REFUND POLICY - If you withdraw, take a leave of absence, leave the University without formal notification, or if you are requested to leave, you may be eligible for a refund of all or a portion of your tuition, fees, and university housing charges based on the earlier of the date of formal withdrawal or the documented date of last attendance. The tuition adjustment schedule is published on the ***University Registrar's rewebsite***. All students are charged a withdrawal fee of $75.

Withdrawal is defined as dropping the entire academic program in a given term, not a portion of the program. The Associate Dean for Graduate Education determines the formal withdrawal or date of last attendance to be one of the following:

- The date the student began the school's withdrawal process or officially notified the institution of intent to withdraw.
- The date of last documented academic activity.
- The midpoint of the semester for those students who do not formally withdraw.

The Associate Dean for Graduate Education determines both the official withdrawal date and the formal start and end date for a **leave of absence**. If you are approved for a leave of absence, you will be subject to the *Refund and Return of Aid Calculation*s listed below.

RETURN OF FINANCIAL AID FUNDS - If you have received financial aid, the Office of Student Financial Aid & Planning must recalculate eligibility for financial aid, and determine if any financial aid funds must be returned or cancelled.

You will be able to view the revised financial aid based on the new period of attendance on NetPartner, and must attend an exit interview with the Office of Student Financial Aid & Planning if you have borrowed any educational loans while you were enrolled. We must process all award changes to Title IV, private loans and Columbia-administered funds, and determine if a return of financial aid funds is due, within 30 days from the date the school has determined you withdrew.

Title IV Funds Calculation - Students who received Title IV aid are subject to a recalculation of their eligibility according to the federal "Return of Title IV Funds" formula.

- Title IV funds are the federal financial aid programs authorized under the Higher Education Act of 1965 (as amended) and include the following programs: Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan.
- Allowable charges include tuition and all "billable" fees (excluding the withdrawal fee) paid directly to Registration & Student Financial Services, as well as rent paid for Columbia owned housing.
- The percentage of Title IV aid returned is determined by dividing the number of days of attendance in a semester by the total number of days in that semester. Scheduled breaks of five (5) consecutive days or more are excluded.
- The federal formula is applicable up to the 60% point of the semester. After the 60% point, the student is eligible for 100% of Title IV aid disbursed or scheduled to be disbursed for that semester.
- Students will be requested to approve any post withdrawal disbursements after the Return of Title IV Funds Calculation is completed. The Office of Student Financial Aid & Planning will contact the student one time via email. If there is no response within 14 days a late disbursement of funds will not be authorized.

School Funds and Private Loans Calculation - If there is a change in policy and school funds become available (grants/scholarships and loans), then eligibility for school funds and private loan funds will be prorated based on actual costs incurred for the enrolled period.

Columbia University's Responsibility

Perform Return of Title IV Funds calculation. Funds will be returned in the following order:

- Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan
- State aid funds will be returned according to state guidelines.
- External scholarships will be returned according to external granting institution guidelines.
- Private Loans

Student's Responsibility

- Repay loans according to the terms of the loan program(s).
- Repay any grant funds required by the calculation.
- Repay any funds released to the student because of a credit balance that now have to be returned by the school as part of the Return of Title IV aid formula.
- You must notify our office in writing if you wish to have more loan money returned to the lender than is prescribed by the formula.
- Complete required on-line Exit Counseling.

POLICY ON FRAUD AND ABUSE IN FINANCIAL AID - The Office of Student Financial Aid & Planning for the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, the College of Dental Medicine, the Institute of Human Nutrition, and the Programs in Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Genetic Counseling is responsible for overseeing the disbursement of educational funds provided by a number of state and federal programs as well as loans and scholarships from Columbia University. These total over $97 million dollars during the 2025-26 academic year.

This stewardship includes validating submitted information, awarding aid, monitoring students' and their families' changing financial circumstances, and dealing effectively and fairly with instances of suspected fraud and abuse.

Information submitted by students and families must be accurate. Changes in personal and family financial circumstances which may change a student's eligibility must be reported, documented, and financial aid packages reexamined, to give the student all potential benefits and to fairly distribute funds.

Discrepancies in reported information and IRS 1040 forms or other income and asset verification materials must be clarified. The Office of Student Financial Aid & Planning must, under the law, award funds only to students who prove their eligibility.

We may declare student's ineligible for financial aid if there are significant unexplained discrepancies, if students' applications are delayed beyond the filing deadlines published in the Office of Student Financial Aid & Planning Handbook, or if there is intentional misrepresentation on the part of the student and his or her family.
Acts of fraud and abuse will result in loss of financial aid eligibility and may result in termination of matriculation and/or referral to the responsible agency of the federal or state governments for investigation and potential prosecution.

The information in this Handbook is compiled to help students understand the financial aid process at Columbia University's Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, College of Dental Medicine, the Institute of Human Nutrition, the Programs in Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Genetic Counseling. It is as accurate and complete as we can make it at the time of printing. We cannot be responsible for subsequent changes to information or programs over which our office has no control, or for inadvertent omission, misinformation, or typographical errors.

The Office of Student Financial Aid & Planning is located in154 Haven Avenue, Suite 405.

We are open from 9 am to 5 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Wednesdays we are open from 12pm to 5pm.

COLUMBIA | VAGELOS COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS

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