

Undergraduate Financial Aid Handbook for 2024-2025

CWRU Financial Aid Philosophy

A Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) education is an investment in you—and your future. CWRU provides a variety of merit scholarships and need-based aid, and based on the success of our alumni, we are confident a CWRU education pays off.

Since the fall semester of 2017, CWRU has been committed to meeting students' financial needs as determined by their submitted financial aid forms. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is utilized primarily for federal funding, while the CSS Profile serves as the primary tool for CWRU-based funding. Financial need is addressed through a combination of all eligible aid sources, including scholarships, grants, loans, student employment, and external resources.

We trust that the information provided in this handbook will be valuable as you prepare for your journey at CWRU. While accurate as of its publication, this handbook may not encompass every financial aid policy at CWRU. Should you have any inquiries about your family's eligibility for financial assistance or any policies outlined in this publication, please don't hesitate to reach out to the Office of University Financial Aid at financialaid@case.edu or 216-368-4530.

Cost of Attendance (COA)

The Cost of Attendance (COA) consists of the sum of educational costs payable to the school (also referred to as direct or billable costs) and costs paid to others (also referred to as indirect, non-billable, or discretionary costs). According to federal regulations, the COA sets the maximum amount of financial aid a student can receive within an academic year, irrespective of the aid's source. COA figures vary depending on the academic level, with certain majors, like Nursing, potentially having adjusted figures due to additional mandatory program costs. A typical undergraduate student's COA breakdown is available on our [Cost of Attendance](#) website, and additional components can be considered upon request.

The Costs Payable to the School refer to items that will typically appear on a student's university bill including tuition, on-campus housing, meal plan, and fees. However, there may be charges present on the bill that will not be included in the COA. Some of these charges may be eligible for a waiver, such as the University medical plan.

The Costs Paid to Others refer to items that will not typically appear on a student's university bill including books, supplies, personal expenses, off-campus housing, and transportation. The figures included in the COA do not represent the exact amount a student is expected to pay for these items. Rather, these figures are estimates of what a student may spend. Including these figures in the COA increases the amount of aid a student may qualify for, allowing them to potentially receive additional funding to help cover part of these costs.

Student Medical Plan

All students at CWRU who are enrolled in one or more credit hours are required to have a medical plan. Upon registration, students are automatically enrolled in CWRU's [Student Medical Plan](#) and are charged a fee for it. However, students who already possess a medical plan that is comparable to the

university's can choose to [waive this fee](#). The deadline for waiving the medical plan coincides with the [billing due date](#). If the waiver is completed by this deadline, it will remain effective for the remainder of the academic year, but it must be **resubmitted** each subsequent academic year.

Students who are unable to waive the medical plan and cannot afford the cost should reach out to the Office of Financial Aid. Upon request, the cost of the medical plan can be added to the Cost of Attendance (COA), and additional loan funding can be provided to assist in covering this cost.

CWRU Merit Scholarships

All first-year applicants are considered for merit scholarships as part of the admission process. Students are evaluated based on multiple criteria including (but not limited to) academic achievement, performance on standardized tests (if submitted), leadership, artistic talent, and other personal qualities that distinguish them in the applicant pool. In addition, students are invited to apply for other [scholarship competitions](#). These competitions require additional information and are only available to incoming first-year fall students.

CWRU merit scholarships are provided for up to eight semesters or until the completion of a bachelor's degree, whichever occurs first, and are only available for full-time undergraduate enrollment in the fall and spring semesters. They are terminated upon a student's transfer to another institution or upon permanent academic separation from the university.

Typically, merit scholarships are not restricted to tuition coverage and may extend to other educational expenses as documented in the student's Cost of Attendance (COA). However, if a student's external funding covers their entire tuition, CWRU merit scholarships are limited to the student's annual room and meal plan allowance based on their year in school and housing type (on-campus, Greek residence, off-campus, commuter).

Students who will be less than full-time in their final semester before graduation should inform the Office of University Financial Aid after finalizing their course schedule. Upon confirmation of their ability to graduate with a reduced course load from the Undergraduate Advising Support Office, these students may be eligible for a prorated scholarship amount.

Students taking a leave of absence for one semester must submit a request to defer the merit scholarship before the start of the semester of leave to the [Undergraduate Advising Support Office](#). Requests for leaves of absence greater than one semester must be submitted to the Academic Standing Board and will be reviewed on an individual basis.

Determining Financial Need

Students whose families are concerned about affording the annual costs of a CWRU education can apply for need-based financial aid. Financial need is met using a combination of all eligible aid including scholarships, grants, loans, student employment, and other external resources. CWRU Need-based aid is available for a maximum of 10 semesters. Determination of a student's financial

need initially requires the submission of the Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA), used primarily for federal funding, and the CSS Profile, used primarily for CWRU-based funding. Incoming students must apply for need-based aid before their admission to the university if they wish to be eligible for CWRU aid in any subsequent year. Returning students must apply for need-based aid each year they wish to be considered for those funds. Official deadlines for both incoming and continuing students are posted annually.

Note: Students only utilizing merit scholarships in future semesters are not required to submit additional documentation and should email financialaid@case.edu with their decision.

CWRU expects that the financing of a student's education remains the responsibility of the student and both parents, regardless of their marital status. In cases where biological parents are no longer together and may have remarried, we work to ensure information for only two (2) parents is used. The following is used to help determine the financial need:

- Parents' income and assets
- Noncustodial parent's income and assets when the custodial parent is separated, divorced, remarried, or never married to the student's other parent
- Student's income and assets

As the primary beneficiary of this education, CWRU expects all students to contribute to their education costs and uses a minimum student contribution based on their year in school. It is also expected that students will meet this contribution using some combination of earnings (especially from summer employment or experiences), outside scholarships, or savings.

Eligibility for Financial Aid

Federal financial aid is only provided to U.S. citizens or permanent residents who meet all of the following criteria:

- Possesses a high school diploma, GED certificate, or have completed a high school education in a homeschool setting approved under state law
- Are admitted to and enrolled in an eligible degree program
- Have a valid social security number
- Are not in default on a federal student loan
- Do not owe a refund on a federal grant
- Enroll on at least a half-time basis, a minimum of six (6) credit hours, excluding the Federal Pell Grant
- Will use federal student aid for educational purposes only
- Meet the requirements of [Satisfactory Academic Progress](#)

Institutional CWRU financial aid is provided to students who meet the same criteria for federal aid and enroll on a full-time basis, at least 12 credit hours. Select international students may also qualify for institutional CWRU financial aid if determined eligible at the time of admission.



Financial Aid Offer

Financial aid offers presented to students are only valid for the academic year for which offered. Students are provided with the opportunity to accept, decline, or reduce their aid and this must be completed before aid can be released to pay to their university accounts. However, CWRU is unable to replace declined or reduced aid with additional institutional funding without a change in circumstances that has been documented, reviewed, and approved by the Office of University Financial Aid's committee.

Additionally, students are often sent revised aid offers due to changes in the funding a student receives from university and external sources, as well as changes to the original information used to determine the financial need. If there are questions about the current status of aid, please contact the Office of Financial Aid directly.

Other Types of Financial Aid managed by CWRU

Grants are based on a student's financial need and do not have to be repaid. They generally come in the following forms:

- Federal Pell Grants are provided to students by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) based on the information received on the FAFSA
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG) are provided to students by the ED. The determination of who receives these funds is made by CWRU based on who receives the Federal Pell Grant and has remaining unmet financial need
- CWRU Grants are provided by the university and are only available for the fall and spring semesters
- Endowment Funds (sometimes referred to as grants or scholarships) are provided to students by the generous contribution of CWRU alumni and friends. Since there are often additional restrictions to these funds, they are provided during the academic year. Recipients of these funds should expect to see previously received funding renamed to recognize the donors of these funds. They are only available for the fall and spring semesters

Note: Recipients of endowment funds should also expect to be contacted by the Office of Donor Relations and University Events with instructions and assistance on a letter-writing campaign. A thank you is expected so that these generous donors can see the direct impact of their philanthropic contributions to students.

Student employment allows students to work on-campus, and in some instances at neighboring non-profits, to contribute to the cost of their education. CWRU's employment program helps students obtain positions as research assistants, tour guides, library aids, tutors, and more. There are 2 forms of employment:

- Federal Work-Study is partially subsidized by the ED and allows CWRU to hire more students while providing the same pay rate as other students. Approximately one-third of our student workers are receiving Federal Work-Study funding.
- Campus employment is funded entirely by the department hiring the student. Approximately two-thirds of our student workers are employed through this program.



Student Loans are offered with the understanding that they will be repaid at a future date per the specific terms of the loan. They can be subsidized (the interest is covered by someone other than the borrower for a certain time) or unsubsidized (the interest is covered by the borrower). They generally come in the following forms:

- Federal Direct Subsidized Loans are offered and subsidized by the ED. That subsidy lasts until repayment of the loan begins which is either six months after graduation or six months after the student is no longer enrolled at least half-time.
- Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans are offered by the ED. Interest accrues after the loan has been disbursed, but repayment begins at the same time as the Federal Direct Subsidized Loan. Before repayment begins students can choose to make payments on the interest or have the interest capitalized.
- Federal Direct Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS) are offered by the ED and are only available to the biological or adoptive parents of the student. It is credit-based and those with [adverse credit](#) may still be eligible if a credit-worthy endorser is used. This loan is unsubsidized and provides parents with the option to start payments immediately after disbursement, after graduation or the student is no longer enrolled at least half-time, or six months after graduation or the student is no longer enrolled at least half-time (putting the repayment on the same time frame as the student).
- Private student loans are an alternative to federal loans offered by companies other than the federal government. They can be credit-based and unsubsidized. Repayment will vary based on the lender. Additional information on loans including rates, a sample repayment chart, required documents, and a link to a preferred lender list for private loans can be found on the University Financial Aid's [Loans](#) website.

Other Educational Resources

The Office of University Financial Aid encourages students to seek support from as many sources as possible and is required to coordinate all funds that a student receives. This coordination ensures that students do not exceed need-based aid greater than their documented need as well as total aid greater than the COA. The type and amount of other resources a student receives will determine what adjustments, if any, to their already received financial aid are required. Students wishing to keep any loan and employment eligibility should indicate that in writing to the Office of University Financial Aid once they are aware that other resources will be received.

The following adjustments will be followed for any funding that is received after the initial aid determination:

1. Student loan and employment expectations will be replaced according to the following schedule
 - 1st-year students will have \$8,500 replaced
 - 2nd-year students will have \$10,000 replaced
 - 3rd-year (and older) students will have \$10,750 replaced
2. Once loan and work expectations have been replaced any remaining additional funding will replace CWRU-based grants on a dollar-for-dollar basis.



3. Once CWRU-based have been fully replaced any remaining additional funds will be added to the financial aid offer up to the student's cost of attendance.
4. If additional funds remain after reaching the cost of attendance, any CWRU-based scholarships will be reduced on a dollar-for-dollar basis to ensure the cost of attendance is not exceeded.

Note: Unless restricted by the outside organization, CWRU reserves the right to reduce merit scholarships to ensure that students do not exceed the COA and that students can utilize as much of their outside resources as possible. When reduced, CWRU merit scholarships are reinstated to the original amount for the next academic year that the student is eligible for funding. Students whose scholarship has not been reinstated should contact the Office of University Financial Aid, starting in early August, so that the adjustment can be performed.

In some instances, outside resources will come with other stipulations or agreements for the university to follow. Below is an incomplete listing of some of the most common of these resources.

- **[Army and Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps \(ROTC\)](#)** students who are awarded the full, four-year ROTC scholarship will also be awarded a CWRU Scholarship that covers the standard room and board rate. For those who earn a partial scholarship, the standard room and board rate will be covered by a CWRU Scholarship, and they may also be eligible for additional scholarships and need-based financial aid. Any previously received CWRU merit scholarship will be replaced with one specific to ROTC to cover the standard housing and meal plan.
- **Tuition Benefits from institutions not CWRU:** Most funding is restricted to tuition (and possibly fees) only. Amounts for these benefits should be listed on the CSS Profile or the CWRU Financial Aid Form if known. Once the Office of Financial Aid is made aware that this funding has arrived adjustments will be made to a student's aid in the below order. Since funding arrives and is processed in a variety of methods and timing, adjustments to aid may occur after the original aid has been paid.
 - Student loan and employment expectations will be replaced
 - Any leftover amount will then replace the CWRU Grant
- **[Tuition Exchange](#)** is a consortium of more than 600 private and not-for-profit colleges and universities, representing 47 states, the District of Columbia, and several other countries that provide tuition assistance to dependents of individuals who work at participating schools. Scholarships offered through this consortium will be for \$42,000 annually for students entering fall 2024. Receiving a Tuition Exchange Scholarship supersedes any other scholarship offer.
- **[Veterans Educational Benefits and Yellow Ribbon Program](#)** recipients receive funding based on the type of benefit they receive. For some, such as Yellow Ribbon, CWRU provides matching funds for those who are 100% eligible. Students interested in using VA benefits should contact the University Registrar's Office which serves as the point of contact for veterans and their dependents. They can be reached at vabenefits@case.edu or 216.368.4310.
- **529 plans** are reported on the FAFSA and CSS Profile and are used in the determination of a student's financial need. Therefore, if your family uses a 529 plan distribution to pay charges

on your university account, you will only see it reflected as a payment on your university account. The distribution will not cause additional adjustments to your financial aid for the current academic year.

How and when will you receive your financial aid?

Each student at CWRU has a university account where billing and payment information will be located and the Office of Student Financial Services manages this account. Financial aid is paid to this account. Students can access their account through the [Student Information System](#) and instructions on accessing that system can be found in the Student Financial Service's [SIS Financial Guide](#).

Aid is first paid to a student's university account on either the first day of classes or for the summer semester on July 1 and will cover the charges for the semester for which it is paid. Any excess funding that remains on a student's account after the charges have been covered will be refunded to the student. All refunds are done by [direct deposit](#) or mailed by physical check to the student's address as listed in the Student Information System. In the case of excess funding caused by an undergraduate parent loan, the funds will be refunded to the parent on the loan. Please allow up to 2 weeks for these refunds to occur.

The Office of Financial Aid does not expect earnings from student employment to be used to cover a student's university bill. It is expected that these funds will cover costs not associated with the bill such as dues or association fees from groups a student may join or books and other supplies needed throughout the academic year.

Note: CWRU is only able to have aid paid to a student's university account for aid it has received and controls. For example, outside scholarships cannot be paid until the funds have been received from the scholarship organization.

Special Programs and how they are handled

The Office of University Financial Aid encourages students to take advantage of the opportunities the university offers. Below is an incomplete list of some of the most popular opportunities and how aid is handled for students in those programs.

- **Combined Undergraduate/Graduate Programs:** Students in a combined program will receive aid in the following different methods, dependent on the source of their funding and school of enrollment, to meet federal funding requirements.
 - ***Integrated Graduate Studies (IGS) and Senior Year in Professional Studies*** students will receive CWRU funding at the undergraduate level through the end of their 4th year. Graduate-level CWRU funding (available only through the academic department) may be available for the 5th year. Students will receive federally-based graduate funding for both the 4th and 5th year.
 - ***BS/MS and Master of Accountancy (MAcc)*** students will receive CWRU and Federal funding at the undergraduate level for both the 4th and 5th years.
- **Cooperative Education and Practicum:** Students are required to complete the proper registration (including a fee) before participating in these programs. They are not eligible for

financial aid during this program, but, those who properly register will be considered full-time students at CWRU without receiving course credit. Any CWRU-managed funding will be put on hold while the student is engaged in their program and will be reinstated upon the student's return to CWRU. Federal loans will also remain in an in-school status, preventing the grace period and payments from starting.

- **Cross-registration (aka Collaborative Programs, Consortium Agreement, and Transient Enrollment):** With preapproval from the Undergraduate Advising Support Office, CWRU students may be eligible to take courses at other institutions and have those credits transferred back to CWRU. To qualify for aid, a consortium agreement (a contract between two institutions that recognizes the student's registration for financial aid purposes) must be created and approved by both CWRU and the other institution. This agreement clarifies which school (CWRU for CWRU students) will administer federal financial aid. Aid will be released using the same timing as students taking courses at CWRU. Students will be refunded the excess credit on their account and the student is responsible for using those funds to help pay any program fees to the other institution. Students should make plans to cover any required balance for the other institution by that institution's deadline. Students receiving financial aid at CWRU to cover courses taken at another institution are required to submit an official transcript to maintain future aid eligibility.

To begin the aid eligibility process, the following must be provided to the Office of University Financial Aid:

- A completed and signed [Cross-registration form](#) from the Undergraduate Advising Support Office
- Documented cost of tuition for the course(s) to be taken
- Name and address of the Financial Aid Office of the school to be attended

The Office of University Financial Aid reserves the right to refuse to prepare a consortium agreement if the student has past-due charges or other restrictions on their university account which will prevent registration.

- **Study Abroad:** Students studying abroad will lose access to student employment while they are away. Aid eligibility will be determined with the same process and timing as students staying at CWRU. Students requiring additional support should submit a Study Abroad Cost Sheet, [found in our forms library](#), along with supporting documentation for the additional support to be evaluated. Once the student's university account has been covered, excess funds will be sent to the student. Students should [enroll in direct deposit](#) to shorten the process of receiving funds.
- **Summer Enrollment:** While the summer term is the start of the academic year, tuition is generally 50% of the preceding spring semester's cost. Actual figures can be found on Student Financial Service's [Undergraduate Tuition & Fees](#) site. Only federal funding (grants, loans, and employment) is available for students taking summer courses.