# Southwest
## Virginia Community College

**Financial Aid**

**Policy and Procedure Manual**

# General Knowledge                    Section 1

## Applying for Federal Aid

Students applying for Federal Student Aid are required to complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).  Students should complete the FAFSA each year.

**Filing the FAFSA**

**FAFSA on the Web**

Students can file the FAFSA on the web at [studentaid.gov](studentaid.gov). If they do not already have one, the student and parent (if dependent) will need to create a FAFSA ID. If parents filed married separately or recently married/remarried both parents will require an FSA account.  This allows the student and/or parents to electronically sign the FAFSA and to consent for IRS data to be retrieved.

- Students are eligible to do the renewal FAFSA.

- Instructions and help links are available for each question.

- This method immediately identifies potential errors.

- This method prompts the student to make corrections when necessary.

- Once submitted, the application goes directly to the U.S. Department of Education's Central Processing System.

- This method normally takes less than 2 weeks for SWCC to receive the results.

**Dependency Status**

To determine dependency status, a student must answer the questions in section 2 of the FAFSA which are listed below.  If *yes* can be answered to any of the questions the student can skip the parental section of the FAFSA.  If he/she answers *no* to all of the questions, the student will need to provide the parents' information.  If a student does not live with his/her

parents or is not being claimed on their taxes, this does not make the student independent.  Again, to be independent, a student must answer *yes* to one of the questions listed below and be prepared to provide documentation if required:

1. Will the student be 24 years of age by December 31 of the year completing the form?

2. Is the student married?

3. Is the student working on a master's or doctorate program (M.A., M.B.A, M.D, J.D., Ph. D., E.D.)?

4. Is the student a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces or currently serving on active duty?

5. Does the student have children who live with them and for which he/she provides more than half of the support?

6. Does the student have dependents (other than children or spouse) that he/she gives more than half of the support to and will continue to do so through June 30 of the award year?

7. At any time since the student turned age 13, were both of the student's parents deceased, was the student in foster care or was the student a ward/dependent of the court?

8. Is/was the student an emancipated minor as determined by a court in your state of legal residence?

9. Is/was the student in legal guardianship as determined by a court in your state of legal residence?

10. At any time on or after July 1, 2008, did the high school or school district homeless liaison determine that the student was an unaccompanied youth who was homeless?

11. At any time on or after July 1, 2008, did the director of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development determine that the student was an unaccompanied youth who was homeless?

12. At any time on or after July 1, 2008, did the director of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program determine that the student was an

unaccompanied youth who was homeless or was self-supporting and at risk of being homeless?

**Eligibility**

To receive any financial aid at SWCC, a student must meet the following criteria:

- Have a high school diploma or GED

- Be enrolled or accepted as a regular student working toward a degree or certificate in an eligible program. *(Note: The program length must be at least 16 credits.)*

- Be a U.S. citizen or an eligible non-citizen (permanent resident)

- Have a Social Security Number

- Meet satisfactory academic progress standards

- Not have earned a Bachelor's Degree

- Not be in default on federal student loans

- Do not owe a federal grant overpayment *(for example: if you withdrew from school and received all W's and did not repay financial aid funds that were not earned)*

- Comply with Selective Service registration (state aid sources only)

**FAFSA Results**

A Student Submission Summary can be viewed in the students' account on studentaid.gov.  Information entered on the FAFSA form as well as their Student Aid Index (SAI) can be viewed as well.  The student's SAI determines if they will be eligible for PELL, assuming he/she meets SWCC's requirements. SWCC also uses the SAI to determine the amount of other federal and state aid a student is eligible for. For more information on this topic, see Section 2 on 'Types of Financial Aid.'

**Financial Need**

To calculate financial need, you first need to determine the student's ***Cost of Attendance (COA)***.  This includes tuition, fees, room and board, books, supplies, transportation, and personal expenses.  You also need the student's ***Student Aid Index (SAI)*** *which is calculated* when the student files the FAFSA.

***COA – SAI = Financial Need***

When awarding a student, SWCC uses the SAI and the SWCC award schedule to determine how much Federal and State aid a student is eligible to receive.  However, for all types of

grants the total aid cannot exceed the amount of Financial Need the student demonstrates.  The total aid package cannot exceed the student's COA.

**What Happens Next**

In order for SWCC to receive the FAFSA results, the student must be admitted to the college and have our school code (007260) on their FAFSA form.  Once the student's FAFSA results are received several responses may occur:

Student will receive a notification on their "to-do" list in SIS and an email informing of missing information needed, if any of the following occur:

   a.  If the student is selected for Verification

   b.  If they need to be placed in a curriculum

   c.  If they need to bring in their taxes

   d.  Proof of Identity

   e.  Proof of prior Bachelor's degree

   f.  Proof of registration with Selective Service

   g.  Proof of Default or Bankruptcy resolution

   h.  And various other documents that need to be provided to the Financial Aid Office because of the way the student completed the FAFSA form

   4.  Once SWCC receives all missing information, the student's information will proceed through the packaging process.  The student will subsequently receive one of the following emails:

   a.  A Financial Aid Award Notification (FAN), stating the award amounts.

Awards in the emails are based on projected full-time enrollment, but some actual awards are prorated based upon enrollment status (full time, ¾ time, ½ time, less than ½ time).

   b.  A Not Eligible Letter which states that the student is not eligible for any grants.

**Important Dates & Deadlines**

Financial Aid dates are the same each year.  Our *priority date* for summer semester, April 15, and for fall, May 1, mean that the students who have submitted their FAFSA and have all information returned to our department by this date will receive the maximum amount of aid they are eligible to receive.

# Types of Financial Aid                    Section 2

Students must complete the FAFSA application in order to be eligible to receive any grants.

## Grants

Grants are a type of financial aid that students do not have to repay.  Students are awarded grants based on their SAI which is calculated by completing a FAFSA form.  All students must also meet our college policies to be awarded any grant.

### College Policy for Grants:

- For all grants, a student must demonstrate financial need

- Grants are not awarded to students with an SAI that exceeds the SWCC award schedule.

- Must meet SWCC Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy (see Section 3)

- Cannot have a bachelor's degree (Federal Policy) with the exception of G3

### Grant Types

### PELL

- Award is determined by student's SAI and enrollment (Full Time, ¾ Time, ½ Time, Less Than ½ Time)

- PELL is projected on Full Time enrollment prior to the end of the add/drop period and is adjusted accordingly based on actual enrollment after the add/drop period has ended

- Can be used for tuition, fees, and books

### SEOG

- Must be PELL eligible

- Can be used for tuition, fees, and books

- Must have 6 credits or more

**COMA**

- Must demonstrate financial need
- Must have 6 credits or more
- The amount awarded cannot exceed tuition and fees
- Must be a Virginia resident (domiciled for 1 year)

**VGAP**

- Must have 12 credits or more
- Must have had a 2.5 cumulative GPA in high school
- Must continue to have a cumulative 2.0 GPA while in college
- Covers tuition, fees, and books
- Must demonstrate financial need
- Must be a Virginia resident (domiciled for 1 year)

**PTAP**

- Enrollment between 1 – 11 credits
- Must demonstrate financial need
- The amount awarded cannot exceed tuition and fees
- Must be a Virginia resident (domiciled for 1 year)

**G3**

- Enrollment in at least 6 credits
- Be enrolled only in a G3 eligible program of study
- Must be a Virginia resident (domiciled for 1 year)
- Total household income of less than or equal to 400% of poverty based on household size
- Must complete the FAFSA and determine eligibility for other federal/state aid programs

**Federal Work Study**

- Must demonstrate financial need & be Pell eligible

- Must usually have at least 6 credits

- Must have a placement form completed

- Must be meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

**Scholarships**

Scholarships are aid sources that do not have to be paid back.  There are several different categories for scholarships such as, merit based, need based, for specific program plans, for student with special needs, and many more.

**Foundation Scholarships**

Foundation scholarships are funded by the generous gifts of donors and do not have to be repaid.  Students must fill out an application via the online scholarship portal which will be evaluated by the Foundation Office and scholarship committee by using the specific guidelines for each scholarship.

Students will be notified via email if they are awarded a scholarship and requirements to remain eligible for the scholarship.

**Tobacco Scholarship**

The Virginia Tobacco Commission Program assists students who meet the eligibility requirements with the full cost of tuition up to 16 credit hours, to attend credit classes at SWCC. Tobacco Scholarship is last dollar, therefore, all other financial aid and scholarships must be exhausted prior to the awarding of any Tobacco Scholarship funds. Students receiving Tobacco Scholarships to attend credit classes must meet the requirements of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).

**Virginia resident** is defined as a person who has lived in Virginia for the last 12 months and has no ties with any other state including driver's license, tax returns, voter registration, or auto registration.

**To Qualify:**

1. Applicants must apply for the scholarship and be in an eligible program specified by the Tobacco Commission guidelines.

2. Applicants must apply for Financial Aid on-line at [studentaid.gov](studentaid.gov)

3. Must be a Virginia resident

4. Income must not exceed 500% of poverty

# Satisfactory Academic Progress                Section 3

Federal regulations require that a student receiving federal financial aid make satisfactory academic progress in accordance with the standards set by the College and the federal government. These limitations include all terms of enrollment, whether or not aid was awarded or received. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) standards also apply to state aid. Students who do not meet SAP *may* be considered for institutional and/or foundational funds on an individual basis. Progress is measured throughout the academic program by the student's cumulative grade point average (Qualitative) and by credits earned as a percentage of those attempted (Quantitative or Pace of Completion). In addition, students must complete their programs of study before attempting 150% of the credits required to complete the program. The College Financial Aid Office will evaluate satisfactory academic progress before aid is awarded and after grades are posted for every term, starting with their first term of enrollment. Some career studies certificate programs (i.e., shorter than 16 credits in total length) are ineligible for student financial aid, but those credits will be counted toward all SAP requirements (GPA, Completion Rate, Maximum Timeframe, and Developmental Maximum) if the student later enrolls in an eligible program.

## I. STUDENT FINANCIAL AID STATUS

A. Financial Aid Good Standing (GS) – Students who are meeting all aspects of the satisfactory academic progress policy or successfully following a designated academic progress plan.

B. Financial Aid Warning Status (WS) – Students who fail to meet satisfactory academic progress for the first time (excluding students who have already attempted 150% of the credits required for their programs of study) will be automatically placed in a Warning Status for one(1) term and are expected to meet SAP requirements by the end of that term. Students who fail to meet satisfactory academic progress requirements at the end of the warning status term will be placed on financial aid suspension. However, with a successful SAP appeal, those students will be placed on financial aid probation and will retain financial aid eligibility.

C. Financial Aid Probation Status (PS) – Students who have successfully appealed financial aid suspension are placed in Probation Status (PS). Students in Probation Status (PS) are eligible to receive financial aid for one (1) semester, after which they MUST be in Good Standing (GS) or meeting the requirements of an academic progress plan that was pre-approved by the College Financial Aid Office. (See "IV. Appeals" for additional information.)

D. Financial Aid Suspension Status (SS) – Students who do not meet the credit progression schedule and/or the cumulative grade point average standard, or who fail to meet the requirements of their pre-approved academic progress plan, will be placed in Suspension Status (SS). Students in Suspension Status (SS) are not eligible to receive financial aid.

E. Academic Suspension (AS) – Academic requirements for avoiding warning status and staying in school differ from financial aid requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress. Academic status will be noted on registration records; financial aid status will be noted on financial aid pages in SIS. Any student suspended from the College for academic or behavioral reasons is automatically ineligible for financial aid.


## II. EVALUATING PROGRESS

A. Quantitative Standards or Pace of Completion

**Completion Rate (67% Rule):** Students must, at a minimum, receive satisfactory grades in 67% of cumulative credits attempted. This calculation is performed by dividing the cumulative total number of successfully completed credits by the cumulative total number of credits attempted. All credits attempted at the College (except audits, which must be entered as such by the class census date) are included. All credits accepted in transfer count as both attempted and successfully completed credits. This evaluation will be made prior to aid being awarded and after grades are posted at the end of each semester a student is enrolled at the College. Credits with satisfactory grades at the College are those for which a grade of A, B, C, D, P, R or S is earned.

**Maximum Hours (150% Rule):** In order to continue receiving financial aid, a student must complete his/her program of study before attempting 150% of the credits required for that program. Developmental and ESL course work are excluded in this calculation. Attempted credits from all enrollment periods at the College plus all accepted transfer credits are counted; whether or not the student received financial aid for those terms is of no consequence.

**Transfer Students:** Transfer credits officially accepted by the College will be counted in determining the maximum number of allowable credit hours for financial aid eligibility. The College has the option on an individual student basis to put a transfer student in Financial Aid Warning Status immediately upon evaluation for financial aid if academic history at previous colleges indicates a pattern of unsuccessful academic work.

**ESL and Developmental Studies:** Students may receive financial aid for a maximum of 30 semester hours of Developmental Studies courses as long as the courses are required as a result of placement testing, the student is in an eligible program of study, and SAP requirements continue to be met. ESL credits are unlimited in number as long as they are taken as part of an eligible program and SAP requirements continue to be met. Additional Considerations for Quantitative or Pace of Completion Standards.

• Withdrawals (W grades) that are recorded on the student's permanent academic transcript will be included as credits attempted and will have an adverse effect on the student's ability to meet the requirements of the completion rate for financial aid.

• Incomplete Grades: Courses that are assigned an incomplete grade are included in cumulative credits attempted. These cannot be used as credits earned in the progress standard until a successful grade is assigned.

• Repeated courses enable the student to achieve a higher cumulative grade point average. Students can repeat courses with financial aid until successfully completed but repeating courses adversely affects the student's ability to meet completion rate requirements. Financial aid can be considered for successfully completed classes that are repeated to achieve a higher grade but for only one additional attempt. Only the latest attempt will count toward the cumulative grade point average.

B. Qualitative Standards

**Cumulative GPA Requirements (GPA Rule):** In order to remain eligible for financial aid consideration, students must meet minimum cumulative grade point average requirements based on a progressive scale. Only non-remedial courses with grades of A, B, C, D, and F are included in this calculation. Transfer credits are excluded. ***In order to graduate, a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 is required.***

| Total Number of Credits Attempted | GPA Requirement |
| --- | --- |
| 1-15 | 1.5 |
| 16-30 | 1.75 |
| 31+ | 2.0 |

## III. REGAINING ELIGIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL AID

Students who do not meet the credit progression requirements (Quantitative or Pace of Completion) and/or cumulative grade point average requirements (Qualitative) will be immediately ineligible for financial aid. Removal from financial aid does not prevent students from enrolling without financial aid if they are otherwise eligible to continue their enrollment. Unless extenuating circumstances exist, and an appeal is granted (see "IV. Appeals" for additional information), a student in financial aid suspension should expect to continue classes at his or her own expense until satisfactory academic progress requirements are again met. Students who fail to meet these Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards and who choose to enroll without benefit of student financial aid may request a review of their academic records after any term in which they are enrolled without the receipt of financial aid to determine whether they have again met satisfactory academic progress standards. If the standards are met, eligibility is regained for subsequent terms of enrollment in the academic year. Students should consult their campus financial aid advisors for assistance in appealing any element of this policy or to determine how to regain eligibility for financial aid.

## IV. APPEALS

Under certain circumstances, students who fail to meet SAP standards and lose eligibility for financial aid can appeal the financial aid suspension. Students must clearly state what

caused the suspension and must also clearly indicate what has changed that will now allow the student to succeed. Appeals are encouraged if:

• Extenuating circumstances exist (i.e., student's serious illness or accident; death, accident or serious illness in the immediate family; other mitigating circumstances), or

• The student has successfully completed one degree and is attempting another, or

• The student on suspension for other than Maximum Hours (150%), who has not yet met SAP requirements, has during suspension enrolled in and successfully completed at least 6 semester credits at the College with a minimum GPA of 2.0.


Students appealing a suspension must:

• Complete the College's SAP Appeal Form in its entirety,

• Attach documentation in support of the appeal, including an Academic Progress Plan from an Academic Counselor for the remaining courses required to complete your program of study for 150% appeals, and

• Submit all items to the College Financial Aid Office.

Only complete appeal submissions, with documentation, will be evaluated by the Financial Aid Office. The decision is final. Depending on the circumstances, the student could be required to complete additional requirements (i.e., see a career counselor or another type of counselor, meet with an advisor to develop an academic progress plan for completion, limit enrollment, etc.) before an appeal is granted. The goal is to help the student get back on track for graduation. The reasonableness of the student's ability for improvement to again meet SAP standards and complete the student's program of study will be carefully considered. Appeals will be approved or denied. Students who have appeals approved will be in probationary status for the coming term. ***During probationary status, the student must meet the conditions of the appeal as communicated to him or her by the Financial Aid Office, or the student will return to suspension.*** If an academic progress plan has been pre-approved by financial aid, continuing to meet the requirements of that plan will put the student back into good standing.

**Section 4**

# Awarding, Payment, Disbursement, & Refunds

**Awarding**

Initial awards for the fall, and spring semesters are processed after the FAFSA is completed, all checklist items are completed, verification is complete if applicable.  Summer awards are processed after the student enrolls for classes.  Students should keep in mind that *audited classes do not count toward enrollment status and are not covered by financial aid*.

**Fall and Spring Awarding**

Awards that are made prior to the end of the add/drop period for each semester are based on projected full-time enrollment.  After that time, student award amounts will vary based on the number of enrolled credits and will be reduced accordingly if they are not a full-time student.

If a student is not meeting satisfactory academic progress (SAP) requirements after spring grades are posted, financial aid awards will be canceled. If a student is not meeting satisfactory academic progress (SAP) requirements after fall grades are posted, his/her financial aid awards will be canceled. Students will receive notification that they do not meet SAP requirements and will be given the opportunity to appeal.  Awards will be re-entered for students whose SAP appeals are approved.  Student enrollment status levels are shown below. Pell awards are based on SAI and specific number of financial aid eligible credits. Any enrollment of 12 credit hours or more is awarded the full-time award based on specific student eligibility.

| Status | Full Time | ¾ Time | Half Time | Less than ½ Time |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Enrolled Hours | 12 or more credits | 9 – 11 credits | 6 – 8 credits | 1 – 5 credits |

**Year-Round Pell**

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017 allows a student to receive Pell Grant funds up to 150% of the student's Scheduled Award for an award year • 1st 100% is initial scheduled Pell award • Final 50% is considered the additional Pell award (YRP)

- Student must be otherwise eligible to receive Pell Grant funds for the payment period

- Additional Pell Grant will be included in the student's 600% maximum Pell Lifetime Eligibility Used (LEU)

**Payments**

SWCC's payment policy requires the student to pay all tuition and fees by the first day of class. If a student is using Financial Aid to pay for classes, he/she will received notification of the financial aid award from the Financial Aid Office in the message center.  These students will need to ensure that they have enough aid to cover their total charges.  If their financial aid award does not cover the total charges, they will be responsible for the remaining balance which is due by the first day of class.  Students with financial aid processed after they register and pay, will be reimbursed for any tuition and fees covered by their award once their aid has been disbursed to the student account. This usually occurs approximately three weeks after the last day to drop courses with a refund.

Once the student has been awarded, the Business Office can immediately view their financial aid eligibility and will defer the charges that their aid covers.  Please note that students will be responsible for any tuition costs that exceed their financial aid award(s) which is due by the first day of class.  If they do not satisfy the additional cost, at that time they will be dropped from their classes.

Partial payments (for example, paying for one class out of several classes or only paying a fractional amount of one class) are not sufficient to hold all classes. Those who fail to pay by the deadline will be dropped after the close of business. Payment can be submitted to the Business Office via check, cash, or credit card in person or by credit card on-line. Students can establish payment plans via their student SIS account through Nelnet.

**Refund Checks & Disbursements**

Any aid remaining after tuition, fees, and books are deducted, will be refunded to the students in the form of a check mailed to the address on the online student account or direct deposit if student has designated a method via their student account.  Disbursement of federal and state grant funds to student accounts will occur approximately three weeks following the last day to add a class for the semester.  Unfortunately, SWCC cannot provide an exact date when financial aid disbursements will be made nor when refund checks will be made available to students. This is due to the fact that there are several parties involved in this process (The Department of Education, the lending institutions, the Financial Aid Office, the Business Office, the State Treasury, the third part payor, and the U.S. Postal Service). The process will unfold as follows. After the last day to drop classes with a refund, the Financial Aid Office will begin revising aid for students who are not full-time since original aid packages were based on projected full-time enrollment. Once all aid has been revised, disbursements will be requested from the Department of Education (for federal grants). After funds are received, the Financial Aid Office will disburse aid to the Business Office, where they will deduct tuition, fees, and bookstore purchases before making the funding request from the State Treasury. After funding is received, student refunds are generated by the third-party payor and checks will be mailed to the address listed on the PeopleSoft Student Information System (SIS) or directly deposited if student has designated a direct deposit method in SIS.

A notification of the disbursement date will be posted on the SWCC website. In about two weeks after this date, students may expect to receive any refund they are entitled to after tuition, and approved charges are deducted. Checks will be mailed to the address of the student listed in the People Soft Student Information System (SIS) or direct deposits will be made if student selects that option in SIS prior to disbursement of funds.

 After Financial Aid has been disbursed to the Business Office, Financial Aid has 15 days to report disbursements to COD. This is typically completed the same day in order for the Business Office to process disbursements and generate refunds to students. The Business Office must post disbursement batches the same day as the Financial Aid Office sends them in order to ensure agreement of disbursement dates. Once the Business Office receives funds they must apply them to student accounts within 3 days. Once a credit balance is produced on the student account, the Business Office has 14 days to generate the refund to the student.

Reconciliation for Pell is completed monthly in coordination with the Business Office.

# Withdrawing and Dropping Classes  Section 5

**Dropping vs. Withdrawing**

Dropped classes never show up on a student's record, payment is not required, and SWCC does not count them toward student enrollment status.  Withdrawals stay on the student record, SWCC does count withdraws toward student enrollment status, and students may owe funds back to the federal government and/or the College if they withdraw from all courses or receive unearned F's on all enrollment.

**Dropping a Class**

Students may drop classes with a refund through the first 15 percent of the class session.  This time frame is called the Add/Drop period, and the final date is listed as "the last day to drop with a refund."  To drop classes, the student must submit Add/Drop forms to Admissions and Records or complete the drop themselves online on the MySWCC portal. Dropped classes never show up on a student's record, payment is not required, and SWCC does not count them toward enrollment status. Please note, a student's financial aid may be reduced when dropping from a class if the enrollment status changes (full time, ¾ time, ½ time, less than ½ time).

When a student drops a class and wants to return books, he/she must return the books to the bookstore *before* the last date to return books date.

**Withdrawing**

**From a Class**

Students may withdraw from classes without academic penalty through the first 60 percent of the class session.  The final date to do this is listed as "the last day to drop without academic penalty." To withdraw from classes, the student must submit Add/Drop forms to Admissions and Records.  Withdrawals stay on student record and count toward the

enrollment status.  Students may owe funds back to the federal government and/or the College if they withdraw from **all** courses or receive unearned F's.  Students who withdraw frequently run the risk of losing their eligibility in the future.

Students who receive grants will not see a change in their financial aid if they still have one or more remaining classes.

**Total Withdrawal and Return of Federal Funds (R2T4) Financial Aid Policy**

*Title IV* funds are awarded to a student under the assumption that the student will attend school for the entire period for which the funds were awarded. When a student completely withdraws, they may no longer be eligible for the full amount of *Title IV* funds that they were originally scheduled to receive. If a student withdraws from ALL classes after the end of the add/drop period but before the last day to drop without academic penalty and they are receiving any type of federal aid, such as PELL or SEOG or State aid such as Coma, VGAP, or G3, a portion of their eligibility, considered unearned, is required to be returned.  The later the date of withdrawal, the more aid the student is considered to have earned.

Federal regulations, specifically the Higher Education Amendments of 1998 requires us to return part of the student's financial aid if they withdraw from ALL classes after the end of the add/drop period but before the last day to drop without an academic penalty. This is called Return of Title IV Funds (R2T4).  Students will have to repay part of their financial aid that is deemed "unearned" by the U.S. Department of Education. A school is required to determine the earned and unearned portions of *Title IV* aid as of the date the student ceased attendance. The students withdrawal date is the date determined, by the institution that the student began the withdrawal process, the date that the student otherwise provided official notification of intent to withdraw, the date the student ceases attendance without providing official notification of withdrawal, the date determined by the institution the student unofficially withdrew but was unable to provide official notification due to special circumstances beyond the students control, or  the date a student began a leave of absence if student does not return from an unapproved leave of absence. The specified percentage of funds that students are financially liable to return is based on their official/unofficial withdrawal date for the semester involved.  This percentage is applied to the aid disbursed or that could have been disbursed to determine the amount of aid earned by the student.

If the amount disbursed to the student is less than the amount earned, SWCC would owe the student a post-withdrawal disbursement which must be paid within 120 days of the student's withdrawal. SWCC will disburse that amount within 15 days of the calculation. If the amount disbursed to the student is greater than the amount earned, unearned funds must be reported to COD and returned to the appropriate federal program no later than 45 days after the date of the determination of the date of the student's withdrawal.

Overpayment must be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education. If a student does not repay the portion of financial aid funds for which he/she is responsible then that student will be reported to the federal government, thus becoming ineligible for future financial assistance at any college or university in the United States.  If it is determined that the student has a share to return, the student will be notified by SWCC Financial Aid Office and the overpayment is reported to the National Student Loan DATA System (NSLDS). The student must pay the Department of Education to resolve the grant overpayment.

Any student with financial aid should discuss their plan to withdraw with a financial aid representative BEFORE they withdraw.  It is important to remember that every case is different because each student's situation is based on several factors (i.e. the type and amount of federal aid received, the last date of attendance, tuition, fees, and/or book charges).  This applies to  students who receive any Federal or State aid (i.e., Pell Grant, SEOG, COMA, VGAP, and who withdraw from or stop attending **all** classes.

**Administrative Withdrawal – Dropped Classes**

SWCC faculty is required to administratively drop students who do not attend class beyond the "last day for a refund."  The financial aid officer reviews all Administrative Drop forms to determine if the student receives financial aid and if an enrollment status change has occurred.  If an enrollment status change occurs for financial aid students who are administratively dropped, the financial aid officer reduces the award and disburses the reduction to the business office.  The business office restores funds to the appropriate federal or state account.  The financial aid office mails a letter to the student requesting payment to SWCC for the amount of the reduction.  The business office gets a copy of this letter and if payment is not received from the student, the business office will flag the student's account on the PeopleSoft SIS.

**Affects Withdraws/Dropping have on Future Financial Aid**

Dropped classes will never affect a student's financial aid since those classes will not show up on the student's records.  However, all types of withdrawals can damage their pursuit of Satisfactory Academic Progress.  Although withdrawals may not be negative on their academic record, they are considered negative for financial aid purposes.  Withdrawals are considered courses attempted but not completed successfully.  Therefore, according to our SAP policy, withdrawals would count against students in the evaluation of the Completion Rate (67%) Rule and the Maximum Time (150%) Rule.

As stated above it can also affect a student's eligibility if they had a federal overpayment that they did not satisfy.  This could not only affect them at SWCC but could affect them at other colleges or university's since they would be reported to the U.S. Department of Education.

# Verification                                        Section 6

### What is verification?

Verification is a process in which information on a student's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is reviewed by a school for accuracy and completeness. Each year, the Federal U.S. Department of Education selects certain applicants for verification. The verification process requires the Financial Aid Office to confirm the data supplied by the student and/or parent(s). Although the College cannot determine who will be selected for verification each year, students should anticipate selection. If your FAFSA is selected for verification, immediately submit all requested documentation to our office for review. Failure to provide required documentation by stated deadlines may negatively impact/delay your financial aid award package.

### How will I know if I am selected for verification?

Your FAFSA Submission Summary will indicate whether your file has been selected for verification. The Submission Summary can be viewed after you file your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by logging into your studentaid.gov account. If you are selected for verification, there will be an asterisk* next to your Student Aid Index (SAI) figure on your Submission Summary. You will also receive notification via the Message Center from the Financial Aid Office alerting you to check your 'To Do List' of our Student Information System to determine what documentation you will be required to submit before your financial aid application is fully processed.

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### Should I send documentation even if my application has not been selected for verification?

Students should not send any financial or verification documentation unless requested to do so. SWCC only verifies the FAFSA information of selected students or in special cases when inconsistent information is found. However, the Financial Aid Office must review all information in its possession, even for students not selected for verification. Sending information that is not required could result in unnecessary delays in the disbursement of your financial aid. If you need to make corrections to your FAFSA, you may do so by logging into your application online.

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### Why was I selected for verification?

Many students selected for verification are chosen randomly. However, you are more likely to be selected for verification if the data you provided on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) was inconsistent, if the FAFSA you submitted was incomplete, or if your FAFSA contained estimated information.

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### If I am selected for verification, what do I need to do?

If your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) was selected, participation in the verification process is mandatory and must occur before need-based Federal and State

student financial aid will be awarded and/or disbursed. Students must submit the required documentation to verify the information on the FAFSA. Students may log into their MySWCC account, Student Center, To Do List to review any outstanding requirements. Most of the verification forms are provided online in fillable forms.

Please note that during the process of verification, new or additional information may be required in order to clarify inconsistencies. The Financial Aid Office will contact you by email if additional clarification is needed. It is important to respond to any information requests immediately.

Per regulations, SWCC can no longer accept copies of tax returns for verification purposes, except in rare, special circumstances. Therefore, if tax and income data are requested, students should either update the FAFSA application by using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool within the online FAFSA website –or- provide an official IRS Tax Return Transcript. A free IRS Tax Return Transcript may be obtained directly from the IRS by online request, by calling 1-800-908-9946, or by completing and mailing Form 4506-T, Request for Transcript of Tax Return, selecting the "Return Transcript" option. Further information about IRS tax return transcripts can be found at www.IRS.gov.

Verification will be completed when all required information is received by the SWCC Financial Aid Office. Your financial aid will not show as anticipated or be disbursed until all submitted documentation has been verified by the SWCC Financial Aid Office, and the U.S. Department of Education has received and accepted any changes to the original FAFSA data.

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**What is the IRS Direct Data Exchange (IRS DDX) and why should I use it?**

IRS DDX allows you to consent for the exchange of federal tax information into your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). All students and contributors must provide consent and approval to obtain their federal tax information directly from the IRS and to use that information to determine the student's eligibility for federal student aid. If a student or parent refuses consent to use the DDX, the student will not be eligible for federal student aid.

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**When is the IRS Direct Data Exchange (IRS DDX) available for use?**

The IRS DDX is only available once a Federal income tax return has been filed and processed by the IRS. In general, income and tax information will be available for import by the IRS DDX within 2-3 weeks if a Federal return is filed electronically. Federal income tax returns submitted by regular post may need to wait 8-11 weeks for tax information to be available via the IRS DDX.

Filers who owe taxes may experience longer wait times before they may access the IRS DDX in the FAFSA, particularly during peak tax filing season.

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**Are there filers who should not attempt to use the IRS DDX if selected for verification?**

There are certain circumstances in which filers cannot use of IRS DDX tool and must request an IRS Tax Return Transcript to verify income.

- If an applicant's parent or applicant has had a change in marital status after the end of the tax year on December 31

- Filers who were married the previous calendar year but now are separated/divorced should also submit all W-2 forms if selected for verification

- Filers whose tax filing and marital statuses are inconsistent with reported household information on the FAFSA may be required to send additional documentation.

- Biological/adoptive parents of a dependent student who are unmarried, but live together

- Married tax filers who...

  - file Married-Separately

  - file Head of Household (meeting special requirements regarding timing and maintenance of a separate household from their spouse). Additional documentation of these circumstances will be requested.

- Filers who performed a direct rollover of their IRAs in the previous calendar year. Use of the IRS DDX may make it appear that they have a large amount of untaxed income at their disposal. Filers in these circumstances should submit an IRS Tax Return Transcript with the word "Rollover" next to the "Total IRA Distributions" field

and a 1099R or other supplemental documentation from the companies verifying the transaction.

- If the applicant or applicants' parents have filed a foreign tax return

- If anyone has filed an amended tax return

- Filers who have accomplished a conversion to a Roth IRA in the previous calendar year. Use of the IRS DDX may make it appear that they have more accessible taxable income. Filers in these circumstances should submit an IRS Tax Return Transcript with the word "Rollover" next to the "Total IRA Distributions" field and a 1099R or other supplemental documentation from the companies verifying the transaction.

**What is an IRS Tax Return Transcript? Is this the same as a copy of a tax return?**

An IRS Tax Return Transcript is NOT the same as a copy of the 1040 Federal income tax return. Federal aid regulations prohibit the use of a copy of a signed tax return as part of the verification process, with a few, rare exceptions. If you cannot use the IRS DDX function within the FAFSA, and must supply income and tax information for verification, you can obtain a free Federal Tax Return Transcript directly from the IRS by online request, by calling 1-800-908-9946, or by completing and mailing Form 4506-T, Request for Transcript of Tax Return, selecting the "Return Transcript" option. Note that the IRS will quickly supply filers with an online PDF version of tax return transcripts for previously-processed returns so long as filers are able to answer security questions correctly. Further information about IRS tax return transcripts can be found at www.IRS.gov.

**Can a Tax Account Transcript verify my FAFSA data?**

No. An IRS Tax Account Transcript has fewer data elements than an IRS Tax Return Transcript. For verification purposes, the only documentation allowed in lieu of IRS Data Retrieval with unchanged data is an IRS Tax Return Transcript, unless there is an allowed special circumstance. You can obtain a free IRS Tax Return Transcript directly from the IRS by online request, by calling 1-800-908-9946, or by completing and mailing Form

4506-T, Request for Transcript of Tax Return, selecting the "Return Transcript" option. Further information about IRS tax return transcripts can be found at www.IRS.gov.

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**When do I need to submit the verification documents?**

The SWCC Financial Aid Office will not disburse Federal Title IV or need-based institutional aid until the verification process has been completed. Thus, it is especially important for students to submit the required documentation as soon as possible. For students whose applications are selected for verification, financial aid awards are considered tentative until the required evaluation related to the verification process is completed.

**Deadlines:**

Students selected for verification must submit all documentation to the SWCC Financial Aid Office by the last day of the student's attendance for the aid year, meaning the student must have official FAFSA results submitted to the college and comply with all needed processes and documents.

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**Will my financial aid change due to verification?**

During the verification process, information is compared to the original data on the FAFSA and corrections may be made. These corrections may lower or raise the Student Aid Index (SAI) figure. Because financial need is determined by the SAI, aid eligibility may be impacted when changes occur during the verification process. If the verification process is completed after a student is initially awarded financial aid, changes to the original aid package may occur. The Financial Aid Office will notify you of any changes to aid via your student email account. In some cases, when financial aid has already been disbursed but the SAI increases after a late verification process, certain forms of aid must be returned to the U.S. Department of Education.

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**What should I do if I have been selected for verification but have an extension to file my tax return?**

Students and/or parents who are required to submit income and tax information for the purposes of verification will only be able to access the IRS Data DDX or IRS Tax Return Transcript once their Federal income tax returns have been processed by the IRS. If you filed an extension, the following documentation is needed:

**2024-2025 AWARD YEAR**

2024-2025 verification requirements differ according to whether the individual has an initial automatic six-month extension beyond the April tax return filing deadline or an extension beyond the automatic six-month extension. To complete verification, tax filers with the **automatic six-month extension** must provide:

- Unchanged IRS DDX data (IRS Request Flag 02);

- A copy of the IRS Tax Return Transcript; or

- An acceptable alternative tax transcript.

If the tax filer gets an **IRS-approved extension beyond the automatic six-month extension**, the school must collect all of the following alternative documentation to complete verification for the taxpayer:

- A copy of IRS Form 4868, "Application for Automatic Extension of Time to File U.S. Individual Tax Return" that the individual filed with the IRS for the tax year (IRS Record of Account transcript can be used instead of 4868);

- A copy of an unexpired IRS approval of an extension beyond the automatic six-month extension if the individual requested an additional tax filing extension for the tax year;

- A copy of the IRS Verification of non-filing Letter, or confirmation of non-filing status from another relevant taxing authority, dated on or after October 1, 2020.

- A copy of a W-2 or equivalent document for each source of employment income received for the tax year; **and**

- If self-employed, a signed statement certifying the amount of the individual's AGI and U.S. income tax paid for the tax year.

NASFAA has confirmed with ED that, for individuals who are granted an IRS-approved extension beyond the automatic six-month extension and who are selected for verification,

the IRS Verification of non-filing Letter or other confirmation of non-filing status from the IRS or relevant tax authority is required, even for the dependent student.

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**What if I am selected for verification but will not file a Federal Income Tax Return?**

Whether or not you are required to file a Federal income tax return depends on many factors, including your filing status, citizenship, income amount, income sources, age, etc. This Internal Revenue Service (IRS) link may be used to determine whether or not you are required to file. The main IRS website may be used to obtain directions, forms, and answers to frequently asked questions. Further questions should be directed to the IRS or to a qualified tax professional.

Students and/or parents whose income falls below the minimum filing threshold for a given tax year should complete the required Verification Worksheet and submit all W-2 forms and/or other statements of income. If evidence suggests that a student or parent should have filed, but did not, this represents conflicting information which must be resolved.

Students and/or parents who file returns outside the United States should review the Special Cases FAQ below...

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**Are there Special Cases in which other documentation may be accepted in lieu of an IRS Tax Return Transcript or use of the IRS DDX?**

If a student and/or parent is able to obtain alternate official documentation (such as the "Return Transcript for Tax Payer") directly from the IRS that includes all income and tax information for the tax year to be verified, AND if the SWCC Financial Aid Office judges this alternate documentation to be official and complete, such documentation may be used in rare circumstances to complete the verification process in lieu of the IRS Tax Return Transcript.

The SWCC Financial Aid Office is aware of only the following circumstances in which students and parents who have filed returns cannot use IRS DDX, nor can they submit an IRS Tax Return Transcript:

- Cases of Identity Theft: The student and/or parent should submit...

- A signed copy of the paper Federal income tax return AND...

- A copy of IRS Form 14039 Identity Theft Affidavit," –or- a signed & date statement of the IRS' investigation of the matter, -or- a police report.

- Amended Returns: Students / parents filing an amended Federal income tax return should submit...

- an IRS Tax Return Transcript (that will only include information from the original tax return and does not have to be signed), or any other IRS tax transcript(s) that include all of the income and tax information required to be verified; and

- a signed copy of the IRS Form 1040X that was filed with the IRS.

- Filing of Tax Returns outside the US: When students/ parents are not obligated to file US income tax returns and ONLY file abroad...

- Citizens of Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam should submit a signed copy of their commonwealth's/ territory's tax return (e.g. the Planilla de Contribución Sobre Ingresos for residents of PR).

- Citizens of the Freely Associated States should submit signed copies of Wage and Tax Statements from each employer –and- a signed statement identifying all income and taxes for the tax year.

- Citizens of foreign countries should submit...

- A signed & dated copy of the foreign tax return with an English translation of all pertinent fields –and- a monetary conversion of foreign currency to US dollars at the exchange rate in effect when you originally filed your FAFSA, –OR-

- A signed statement identifying all income and taxes paid for the tax year (for foreign citizens not obligated to file a foreign tax return)

# Awards                                    Section 7

**How Much Financial Aid Will You Receive?**

Financial need is determined by the Cost of Attendance (COA) minus the Student Aid Index (SAI)

The maximum Federal Pell Grant for 2024-2025 award year (July 1-2024-June 30, 2025) is $7395.

The award you will receive is dependent on multiple factors such as:

- Your Student Aid Index

- Your level of enrollment

- Your cost of attendance

- Your plans to attend for a full academic year or less

Awards will be adjusted based on your actual enrollment level and subject to adjustment and possible repayment due to changes in enrollment status or financial need.

Students must complete the FAFSA application process by May 1 to receive full consideration for financial aid at Southwest Virginia Community College. Awards are contingent upon annual federal, state, and local appropriations and availability.

**To determine your financial aid award(s):**
If you are not enrolled in at least 12 credits, to view your pending award amount based on your actual enrollment:

1. Click on VCCS SIS: Student Information System

2. Click on Student Center

3. Select Financial Aid

4. Click on Aid Year to View

Most financial aid programs require students to be enrolled for a minimum of 6 credits. You may want to review your Financial Aid Award Notification for more information or review the requirements for your awards on the Types of Financial Aid page.

***Any enrollment change (drop, withdraw, never attend or stop attending) may result in a debt to financial aid (aid eligibility may decrease) and/or SWCC. See the Financial Aid Office for assistance on the impact of your award(s) before making any enrollment decrease or before you stop attending. If you begin attendance in a class(es) and do not finish, you may owe a portion of your award(s) back to SWCC and/or the Department of Education.***

To view cost of attendance, based on your level of enrollment, log into the MySouthwest Portal, SIS, Student Center, Student Budget.

# Southwest Virginia Community College

## 2025-2026 Student Budget

| In-State Full Time Dependent | 4.5 Months (1 semester) | 9 Months (fall/spring) | 12 months (summer/fall/spring) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tuition & Fees | $ 2,625.75 | $ 5,251.50 | $ 7,877.25 |
| Books & Supplies | $ 750.00 | $ 1,500.00 | $ 2,250.00 |
| Living Expense (R&B) | $ 3,150.00 | $ 6,300.00 | $ 8,400.00 |
| Personal Expense | $ 3,150.00 | $ 6,300.00 | $ 8,400.00 |
| Transportation | $ 945.00 | $ 1,890.00 | $ 2,520.00 |
| **Totals** | **$ 10,620.75** | **$ 21,241.50** | **$ 29,447.25** |

*Based on 15 credit hours at $175.05/credit hour & $700.00/mo living expense.

| In-State Full Time Independent | 4.5 Months (1 semester) | 9 Months (fall/spring) | 12 months (summer/fall/spring) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tuition & Fees | $ 2,625.75 | $ 5,251.50 | $ 7,877.25 |
| Books & Supplies | $ 750.00 | $ 1,500.00 | $ 2,250.00 |
| Living Expense (R&B) | $ 4,837.50 | $ 9,675.00 | $ 12,900.00 |
| Personal Expense | $ 3,150.00 | $ 6,300.00 | $ 8,400.00 |
| Transportation | $ 945.00 | $ 1,890.00 | $ 2,520.00 |
| **Totals** | **$ 12,308.25** | **$ 24,616.50** | **$ 33,947.25** |

*Based on 15 credit hours at $175.05/credit hour & $1,075.00/mo living expense.

| Out-of-State Full Time Dependent | 4.5 Months (1 semester) | 9 Months (fall/spring) | 12 months (summer/fall/spring) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tuition & Fees | $ 5,882.25 | $ 11,764.50 | $ 17,646.75 |
| Books & Supplies | $ 750.00 | $ 1,500.00 | $ 2,250.00 |
| Living Expense (R&B) | $ 3,150.00 | $ 6,300.00 | $ 8,400.00 |
| Personal Expense | $ 3,150.00 | $ 6,300.00 | $ 8,400.00 |
| Transportation | $ 945.00 | $ 1,890.00 | $ 2,520.00 |
| **Totals** | **$ 13,877.25** | **$ 27,754.50** | **$ 39,216.75** |

*Based on 15 credit hours at $392.15/credit hour & $700.00/mo living expense.

| Out-of-State Full Time Independent | 4.5 Months (1 semester) | 9 Months (fall/spring) | 12 months (summer/fall/spring) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tuition & Fees | $ 5,882.25 | $ 11,764.50 | $ 17,646.75 |
| Books & Supplies | $ 750.00 | $ 1,500.00 | $ 2,250.00 |
| Living Expense (R&B) | $ 4,837.50 | $ 9,675.00 | $ 12,900.00 |
| Personal Expense | $ 3,150.00 | $ 6,300.00 | $ 8,400.00 |
| Transportation | $ 945.00 | $ 1,890.00 | $ 2,520.00 |
| **Totals** | **$ 15,564.75** | **$ 31,129.50** | **$ 43,716.75** |

*Based on 15 credit hours at $392.15/credit hour & $1,075.00/mo living expense.