

# UNDERSTANDING YOUR FINANCIAL AID OFFER

Your offer of financial aid from UW-River Falls is available to review and accept through your UWRF web portal (eSIS).

The types of aid and the amounts offered are based on the information you reported on your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the eligibility rules which apply to each financial aid program.

Depending on the type of financial aid being offered, additional steps may be required before the money can be paid toward your UWRF tuition, fees and other charges on your student billing account.

Contact the Financial Aid Office at 715-425-3141 or [finaid@uwrif.edu](mailto:finaid@uwrif.edu).

## Viewing and Accepting Your Aid

To accept, reduce or decline your financial aid offer, follow these steps:

1. Log into your eSIS account with your UWRF student ID number (W number) and password.
2. From your eSIS Student Center (homepage), click on View Financial Aid.
3. Choose the academic year (new students have only one aid year available).
4. View your award for the year and read all information provided.
5. Click on Accept/Decline Awards. Next, you'll need to accept, reduce or decline the amount of any work study and/or loan offers on this page. Click the "Accept" box next to the type of financial aid offered. You can reduce the amount of loans and work before acceptance by clicking on the "Accept" box and entering your desired amount. To indicate you do not wish to accept a type of financial aid, click "Decline."
6. Click "Submit" when finished.

Note: If you later wish to make changes to the financial aid you have accepted or declined, please contact the UWRF Financial Aid office to speak with a financial aid counselor.

## Processing Student Loans

If you have accepted the Federal Direct Loan included in your offer of financial aid, and you have not received one before, you must complete three additional steps to finalize your loan.

1. Complete an Online Entrance Counseling tutorial provided by the U.S. Department of Education at [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov) and click on Complete Loan Entrance Counseling under the Popular Topics section on the In School tab.
2. Complete the Master Promissary Note process for a Subsidized/Unsubsidized Loan at the same web site.
3. Complete the Annual Student Loan Acknowledgement at the same website.



## Options if You Need Additional Financial Aid

If you find you are unable to meet the student and family share of the total estimated cost to attend UWRF, there are several options for additional financial aid.

**Federal Parent PLUS Loan:** This is a U.S. Government Loan to assist parents with paying for a child's college expenses. This loan is borrowed by a parent and is not considered a debt of the student. The parent must have an absence of negative credit history. For more information and an application, visit [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov) and click on Loans and Grants.

**Private Educational Loan:** These loans are financed by commercial lending institutions to assist students and their families with meeting educational costs. The loan is typically borrowed jointly by the student and at least one adult relative with a positive credit history. For more information, visit:

<https://choice.fastproducts.org/FastChoice/home/392300/3>

**529 Plan Withdrawals:** Families who previously established 529 plans (Edvest, MN College Savings, etc.) may withdraw money from those plans to use tax-free for qualifying education expenses. Contact your 529 Plan administrator for more information.

**Non-UWRF scholarships:** Scholarships from entities other than UWRF help millions of students each year with the cost of attending college. You may find a list of scholarship search engines on our website at:

<https://www.uwrf.edu/FinancialAid/TypesOfAid/OutsideScholarships.cfm>.

**ROTC, Armed Forces Reserves and National Guard:** Military service commitment benefits include varying forms of financial aid for tuition and other expenses. For more information, contact your local armed forces recruiting office or the UWRF ROTC Program at:

<https://www.uwrf.edu/ROTC/>

**Veterans Educational Benefits:** If you or one of your parents is a veteran, you may be eligible for financial aid from the VA or the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs. For more information, visit:

[https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/get\\_started.asp](https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/get_started.asp) or <https://dva.wi.gov/Pages/educationEmployment/Education.aspx>

## Report Any Other Anticipated Grants, Scholarships or Loans

Your offer of financial aid is based in part on our estimated cost for you to attend UWRF. Financial aid from outside UWRF, such as scholarship or grants from private organizations or loans obtained for the purpose of paying for educational costs, must be within the limits of your estimated educational costs. Use the Outside Resource Notification Form (<https://www.uwrf.edu/FinancialAid/ReportOutsideAid.cfm>) to notify us of any sources of assistance you receive from an entity other than UWRF. Please be aware that federal and state financial aid eligibility may change as we adjust your award to include outside scholarships, grants, DVR assistance, etc. If you are a veteran of the U.S. armed forces, a dependent of a veteran who is eligible for benefits or a current member of the military or National Guard, please contact the Veteran Services Coordinator to begin the process of certifying your benefits.

## Payment of Your Financial Aid

All accepted and completed financial aid (with the exception of Federal Work Study) will be paid directly to your student account with UWRF. It will be applied to your tuition, fees, housing, meal plan and other charges. Financial aid payments begin approximately one week before the first day of classes. If you are not enrolled full-time, adjustments to reflect your enrollment load will be made after the first week of the semester.

When your total financial aid exceeds the charges on your student account, it creates a credit balance. You are eligible for the excess money from this credit balance to be given to you for your out-of-pocket educational expenses. To receive a credit balance payment, you should apply for direct deposit to a personal bank account. There is a link under the "Finances" section of your eSIS portal where you can complete an online application for direct deposit.

Unlike grants and loans, Federal Work Study is paid to qualified students as wages for hours worked in an on-campus job. These wages are paid through the university payroll process. You receive this financial aid directly; it does not pay toward the charges on your student account.