
GREATER ALTOONA CAREER & TECHNOLOGY CENTER

FINANCIAL AID OFFICE

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FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION

This brochure contains important information concerning financial aid sources for students who attend the Greater Altoona Career & Technology Center. Please read this brochure carefully and keep it with your other important papers as a reference should questions arise about financial aid.

If you still have questions after reading this, please contact our Financial Aid Office at 946-8469.

FINANCIAL AID AWARDS

PELL GRANT

A federal PELL grant is an award to help undergraduates pay for their education after high school. An "undergraduate" is one who has not previously earned a bachelor's degree. A "grant" is financial assistance that does not have to be paid back. How much grant assistance you are eligible for will depend upon your own personal financial conditions. Pell Grant applications (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) can be obtained from your high school guidance counselor or from the school's Financial Aid Officer. You can also apply on the web at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

STAFFORD LOANS

A federal Stafford loan is a low-interest loan made to students attending post-secondary school to help finance their education. "Subsidized" loans are need-based loans. The government pays the interest on your loan while you are in school. "Unsubsidized" loans are non-need based. This means that you will be responsible for paying the interest on the loan while you are in school. A student may borrow up to a maximum of \$3500, less lender's fees, through this loan program for the academic year. An independent student may be eligible for an additional unsubsidized amount. Generally, the borrower is entitled to a 6 month grace period after leaving school before the repayment period begins. Since these loans may take some time for processing, students, should apply by mid-July so the funds are available when tuition and fees are due.

Applications (Master Promissory Note) for Stafford loans may be obtained from AES/PHEAA or filed online. Before a student's loan application can be certified by the school, the student must have filed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

PLUS

Federal PLUS loans are for parents who want to borrow to help pay for their dependent children's education. It is also a low-interest loan that provides additional funds for education expenses, and like Stafford loans, must be paid back. These loans are not subsidized by the government, which means that the borrower is responsible for paying all interest that accrues on these loans.

SPOC

The SPOC program serves: • Individuals receiving public assistance through TANF; • Individuals who are employed less than full time, individuals who are still receiving TANF or food stamps.

WIA (formerly JTPA)

Individuals who meet the Workforce Investment Act eligibility requirements may participate in classroom training. Not all full-time training at the GACTC is approved for WIA eligible Individuals. All applications are taken at the Workforce Investment Act Office located in the county of residence. For more information, interested individuals should call their local WIA Office.

TRA/TAA

Funding through the Trade Act is provided to dislocated workers who have lost factory employment due to foreign competition. This funding generally pays for tuition, fees, and required supplies. Normally, individuals are notified at their place of work who to contact.

NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE BENEFITS

For more information contact the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs or your reserve unit.

VETERANS BENEFITS

Educational assistance is provided by the Federal Government to qualifying veterans or dependents of deceased or disabled veterans. Call your nearest VA Office.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) assists with funding for qualified students who possess certain disabilities. Individuals should contact the agency for eligibility determination.

Other funding sources periodically become available to select groups of individuals, such as displaced homemakers, single parents, non-traditional students, G.E.D. recipients, members of certain organizations. For further information on any of these funding sources listed, contact the school's Financial Aid Officer

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to receive federal financial aid available through the Greater Altoona Career & Technology Center, a student must:

- have financial need
- be enrolled in an approved course of study
- have a high school diploma or a G.E.D. certificate
- be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen
- make satisfactory academic progress
- register with Selective Service if required
- not be in default on a Title IV loan
- not owe a refund on a Title IV grant

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS AND ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

In order to maintain Title IV assistance (grants and loans), a student must maintain regular attendance and make satisfactory progress, as described in the Student Handbook. Failure to do so will result in termination of financial assistance.

GENERAL FINANCIAL AID PROVISIONS

STUDENT AID REPORTS

In order for a student to actually receive the financial aid awarded, students must have a valid Student Aid Report. The Student Aid Report is received by the student about 2 to 4 weeks after filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. If the FAFSA is filed online, the processing time will be reduced. The Title IV School Code and college name for the application are: 015272 - Greater Altoona Career & Technology Center.

VERIFICATION

Your financial aid award is made based on the financial information provided by you and your family. In accepting your awards, you agree to provide any additional documentation request by the Financial Aid Officer to verify the accuracy of the information given on your application. Information must be obtained and presented to the Financial Aid Officer in a timely manner after it is requested. The Greater Altoona Career and Technology Center reserves the right to reduce or cancel an award in cases where there is conflicting or missing information. (Contact the Financial Aid Office for additional information on verification.)

APPLYING YOUR FINANCIAL AID TO TUITION CHARGES

Upon acceptance to one of our programs, you will receive an invoice for full tuition payment and books, for the first payment period.

You are responsible for paying the balance due on your bill by the due date(s).

If you are applying for a Stafford loan, Pell Grant, or PLUS loan for your tuition, you should allow 60-90 days processing time. Therefore, you should complete and mail the Free Application for Federal Student Aid by **June 1** to be certain your loan or grant will be approved in time for a Fall Term due date. Applications may be filed after this date; however, the school reserves the right to ask for a tuition payment if all paperwork is not completed by the start of school.

All loan checks are sent by your lender directly to the Financial Aid Office. You will be notified when your loan check has arrived and will be asked to come in to the Financial Aid Office to sign it. Loans are disbursed in two payments. No loans are disbursed until the student has completed 30 calendar days of class. Loan amounts will then be applied to your tuition and book account and any refundable amounts will be processed through the Career and Technology Center Business Office and made Payable directly to you. These amounts are to be used for expenses related to attending school -- such as books, supplies, transportation, child care expenses, etc.

Grant monies are transmitted directly to the Financial Aid Office and disbursed in two payments. Amounts due are credited toward your account, and any refundable amounts are processed through our Business Office and made payable directly to you.

If you withdraw early or are terminated from the program, you will be responsible for paying back grant amounts for which you are not entitled

REFUND POLICY

Refunds are based on payment period costs and are calculated on a prorata basis. One hundred percent (100%) of tuition will be refunded if a student withdraws prior to the first day of class. After classes begin, refunds will be prorata. Tuition amount retained is rounded up to the nearest 10 percent of scheduled hours. After greater than 60 percent of the payment period is completed, no refund is given. Textbook payments are not subject to the prorata refund policy.

The student should officially terminate or withdraw from the program in writing. Upon completion of the withdrawal/termination form, any refund due will be calculated according to the last date of attendance.

NOTE: Students who withdraw before program completion may owe tuition or book costs based on the difference between federal aid required to be returned and the school's refund policy.

AND SOME FINAL NOTES ON FINANCIAL AID. . .

Students are classified as dependent or independent because federal student aid programs are based on the idea that students' parents have the primary responsibility of paying for their children's education. Students who have access to parental support should not receive federal funds at the expense of students who don't have that access.

If you think you may have unusual circumstances that would make you independent even though you normally would be considered dependent, talk to your Financial Aid Officer. Also, if you and your family have other unusual circumstances, such as unusually high medical or dental expenses not covered by insurance, a family member who is a dislocated worker, or other unusual circumstances that might affect your eligibility for financial aid, check with the Financial Aid Administrator before filing your application.

REFER TO "THE STUDENT GUIDE" AND CAREER & TECHNOLOGY CENTER STUDENT HANDBOOKS FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ON FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOOL POLICIES