Cost of Attendance: How Much is a Legal Education?

We are proud of our ability to provide a first-rate law school education at an affordable and reasonable cost. *U.S. News & World Report* has ranked Florida State Law the nation’s 50th best overall and 21st best public law school. *The National Jurist* magazine consistently ranks us as one of the nation’s top 10 “Best Value” law schools.

The distribution of financial aid is based upon a Cost of Attendance (COA) or “budget” set annually by the school. The COA is an estimate of a student's educational expenses for a particular period of enrollment. To the right is the proposed 2016-2017 COA for a student taking 30 credit hours (Fall and Spring). As a state institution, our tuition/fee rate is set late summer each year by a board of trustees. While the Office of Financial Aid has authority to adjust the cost of attendance upward for extraordinary circumstances, such discretion is exercised with extreme caution.

*Final amount includes a $10 ID card fee and a $20 Student Affairs Facility Use Fee, assessed each semester.

**Required for all incoming law students

Federal Financial Aid Eligibility

Generally, to be considered for Federal Financial Aid, a student must:

1. Be a citizen, national or eligible non-citizen with appropriate documentation.
2. Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment at Florida State University and carry at least six (6) credit hours.
3. Maintain satisfactory academic progress.
4. Not owe a refund or be in default of Title IV funds.
5. Be registered with Selective Service if required to do so by law.

International students who are ineligible for financial aid can receive a private loan with a credit-worthy U.S. citizen as a co-borrower. Students from Latin America and the Caribbean (including Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands) who are receiving a state or federal scholarship of at least $500 for the academic year may be eligible for classification as Florida residents for tuition purposes only. For additional information, please contact the Admissions Office at (850) 644-3787.
FINANCING YOUR LEGAL EDUCATION

College of Law Merit and Need-Based Scholarships

The College of Law offers a program of scholarship assistance made available through the generous support of alumni and friends. Scholarships are awarded on a rolling basis. At least one-third of students in our entering class will receive a scholarship.

- **Merit:** Merit awards are based on a student’s academic record, character, motivation, potential for contribution to the legal profession, and other criteria required by donors. Scholarships are not automatically awarded upon admission. Depending on the date of admittance and/or the availability of funds, applicants may be offered an opportunity to apply for scholarship consideration.

- **Need:** Need-based awards are provided based on a combination of calculated financial eligibility and academic merit. To be eligible for need-based aid, you must first complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). A short application may also be required on a case-by-case basis.

For questions or more information, contact the Office of Student Affairs (850-644-7338 or scholarships@law.fsu.edu).

Student Loan Options: Federal Direct and Private Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Direct Unsubsidized* Stafford Loans</th>
<th>Direct Graduate PLUS Loans</th>
<th>Private Loans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eligibility</strong></td>
<td>FAFSA required</td>
<td>Credit-based application; borrower must not have an adverse credit history during the 5 years preceding the date of the credit report.</td>
<td>May require an established credit record. The cost of a private student loan will depend on your credit score and other factors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annual Limits</strong></td>
<td>$20,500</td>
<td>Equal to the cost of attendance minus other aid awarded</td>
<td>Equal to the cost of attendance minus other aid awarded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aggregate Limits</strong></td>
<td>$138,500</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interest Rates</strong></td>
<td>5.84% fixed (for loans first disbursed between 7/1/15 and 6/30/16). Interest accrues from the time the loan disburses.</td>
<td>6.84% fixed. (for loans first disbursed between 7/1/15 and 6/30/16). Interest accrues from the time the loan disburses.</td>
<td>Depends on the lender, but can be a variable rate, sometimes greater than 18%; interest may not be tax-deductible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Loan Fees</strong></td>
<td>1.073% origination fee</td>
<td>4.292% origination fee</td>
<td>Depends on the lender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Repayment/Grace Period</strong></td>
<td>Payments deferred until 6 months after graduation (or until a student drops below 6 hrs or withdraws from school). Eligible for consolidation and loan forgiveness.</td>
<td>Repayment begins 60 days after the loan funds are fully disbursed. An in-school deferment can be used to postpone payments until six months after graduation. Eligible for consolidation and loan forgiveness.</td>
<td>Many private loans require payments while still in school. Cannot be consolidated into a Direct Consolidation Loan and may not offer forbearance or deferment options.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*As of July 1, 2012, graduate/professional students are no longer eligible to receive subsidized loans.
Applying for Financial Aid

1. Obtain the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online. FAFSA is a need-analysis tool developed by the US Department of Education. As the name implies, there is no charge for the collection and processing of data or the delivery of financial aid through this form. Do not pay to process your free application.

   - Start the financial aid process in January and complete it as soon as possible. You should not wait until after you receive admission offers to begin the planning process. While the FAFSA determines your eligibility for federal student aid funds, it also is used to award limited funding, such as the Graduate Grant and need-based scholarships. So, turning your FAFSA in early could earn you limited funds that may not be available if you delay.

   - In order for FSU to receive your FAFSA results, you must include our school code 001489. The Department of Education will generate a Student Aid Report (SAR) and send the results to you and the law schools you have listed on your FAFSA. You'll also receive a pin number to make corrections online and to complete your renewal FAFSA each year you are enrolled in law school.

2. Bear in mind that all graduate/professional students are considered independent of their parents for federal aid programs. So be sure to answer "YES" to the following two questions:

   1. Are you a graduate or professional student?
   2. Will you have completed a bachelor’s degree by July 1 of the year you will be attending law school?

3. Prepare your federal income tax returns as early as possible after the first of the year. The FAFSA requires information that is requested directly from your tax return.

   - Completing your taxes early will help you get a jump on the FAFSA, but you don’t need to complete your 2013 taxes in order to apply for federal student aid. You can use data from previous tax years to estimate figures needed to complete the FAFSA, but you’ll need to correct these figures on the form later by going to the corrections page on the FAFSA website. If you know you will be late filing your taxes, it is better to complete your FAFSA with estimated information than to wait until your taxes have been filed.

4. Soon after you’ve been admitted to FSU Law and submitted your FAFSA, the Financial Aid office will calculate your financial eligibility. A customized package listing your eligibility for federal loans and/or grants will be prepared for you and posted in your myFSU Student Central.

   - All applicants are eligible for federal student loans up to the cost of attendance minus any scholarships or outside aid you expect to receive.
   - If you are awarded a scholarship through the College of Law, it will be added to your package in August prior to the start of the fall semester. Just know that any scholarship will reduce dollar-for-dollar the total amount of loans for which you are eligible so that your total aid does not exceed the cost of attendance.

**BE A WISE BORROWER...**

If you live like a professional while you’re in school, you may have to live like a student after you graduate!
Many external organizations offer grants and scholarships to help with the cost of law school. Sources of outside scholarships include bar associations, civic associations, community foundations, employers, fraternal groups and religious organizations. In addition, there are Veterans Programs and State Programs. Be sure to check all sources with which you or your family are associated. Below are more details on some of these options.

**Veteran’s Programs.** Many veterans of the United States Armed Forces can qualify for GI benefits under one or more of the following programs: Post 9/11 GI Bill; Montgomery GI Bill; Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP); and Post Vietnam Era Veterans’ Educational Assistance Program (VEAP). There is also the Yellow Ribbon GI Enhancement Program is a provision of the Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008 and was designed to help cover the costs of private institutions of higher learning whose tuitions exceed the amount the government pays the student veteran through the Post 9/11 GI Bill. For more information, visit the FSU Veterans Office at [https://veterans.fsu.edu](https://veterans.fsu.edu).

**Diversity & Other Scholarships.** There are some scholarship opportunities that are available for students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. It is by no means comprehensive, and you are encouraged to research other opportunities that might be available.

- **ABA Legal Opportunity Scholarship Fund**
- **American Indian College Fund**
- **The Gates Millennium Scholars**
- **Harry S. Truman Scholarship**
- **HNBA Legal Education Fund**
- **IPMA-HR Graduate Scholarships**
- **Lloyd M. Johnson Jr. Scholarship Program**
- **Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)**
- **NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.**
- **The National Asian Pacific American Bar Association Scholarships**
- **Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowships for New Americans**
- **The Sidney B. Williams, Jr. Scholarships**
- **Sponsors for Educational Opportunity**
- **United Negro College Fund (UNCF)**
- **William S. Bullinger Scholarship**
- **Zelle Hofmann Diversity In Law Scholarship**

**State Loan Programs.** Several states offer loan programs to residents attending postsecondary institutions outside of the states. Their rates may be more attractive than some of the other loan programs.

- **Alaska** (800-441-2962)
- **Connecticut** (860-947-1800)
- **Massachusetts** (800-266-0243)
- **Minnesota** (800-657-3866, requires a co-signer)
- **New Jersey** (800-792-8670)
- **Rhode Island** (800-758-7562, requires a co-signer)
- **Vermont** (800-642-3177)

**Other Scholarship Search Engines.**

- **Admissions Dean Scholarship Finder**
- **American Bar Association**
- **Cappex Search Engine**
- **College Resource Network**
- **EdFed Scholarship Search**
- **FastWeb**
Your Cost of Attendance Calculator

**ESTIMATED COSTS:** Below is an estimated Cost of Attendance (“budget”) for 1Ls for the 2016/2017 academic year. You can use this as a guide to determine whether your financial aid will cover your full cost of attending Florida State Law and create your own budget for law school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Florida Residents</th>
<th>Non-Residents</th>
<th>Use this column to fill in your estimated costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition/Fees*</td>
<td>$20,693</td>
<td>$40,705</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room/Housing</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board/Food</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books/Supplies</td>
<td>$1,700</td>
<td>$1,700</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal/Misc.</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laptop</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>$1,990</td>
<td>$1,990</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$39,083</strong></td>
<td><strong>$59,095</strong></td>
<td><strong>$</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on 30 credit hours (Fall, Spring)

**FINANCIAL AID:** List the amounts of any loans, grants, and/or scholarships you expect to receive for the 2015-16 academic year. Remember, your total aid cannot exceed the cost of attendance (except under extraordinary circumstances with prior approval).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2015</th>
<th>Spring 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan</td>
<td>$10,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Grad PLUS Loan?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Grant?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship (law school or outside)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Outside Source____________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Outside Source____________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL AID</strong></td>
<td><strong>TOTAL AID</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(cannot exceed Cost of Attendance—above)</td>
<td>(cannot exceed Cost of Attendance—above)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*If your financial aid award is greater than your tuition charges, the University will disburse to you the difference to help pay your other educational costs, such as books, living expenses and transportation. If your financial aid package does not cover the full cost of your tuition, please make arrangements with the Student Business Services/Cashier's Office to pay the remaining balance by the appropriate deadline.

**OVERVIEW OF THE LOAN PROCESS**

1. Make sure you have submitted the FAFSA (see [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)).
2. Determine the amount you will need to borrow, after considering your expenses and resources.
3. Complete [Loan Entrance Counseling](http://www.studentloans.gov) for each type of loan online (see [studentloans.gov](http://www.studentloans.gov)).
4. Complete a [Master Promissory Note](http://www.studentloans.gov) for each type of loan online (see [studentloans.gov](http://www.studentloans.gov)).
5. Complete the Disbursement Permissions online through myFSU Student Central. This authorizes FSU to disburse your funds either through electronic funds transfer to your designated bank account or through check by mail to your local address on file with the University.
FAQs: Frequently Asked Questions

How will I know what type/amount of financial aid I’ve been awarded? Each April, the Office of Financial Aid begins preparing award packages based on submitted FAFSA info. The award package will contain information about the amount and type of your award (including loans, grants). If you are selected to receive a Law scholarship, you will be notified directly by the Office of Student Affairs and if accepted, that award will appear later in the summer.

How can I check my financial aid award status? Your financial aid status is available online through the myFSU Student Central. Simply log onto Student Central at https://my.fsu.edu. You’ll need your FSUID and your EMPLID (if you don’t recall it, please request it at admissions@law.fsu.edu).

What steps must I take in order to receive my financial aid funds? If you’ve been awarded a scholarship through the College of Law, you simply need to complete and return the Scholarship Acceptance Form sent to you.

What if I’m selected for the Verification Process? If you are selected for verification, you have two options. You may amend your FAFSA using the Data Retrieval Tool, which allows your tax data to be imported directly from the IRS. Or, if this option is not available, you can call the IRS at (800) 829-1040 to request a Tax Transcript (Form 1722). Upon receipt, sign a copy of the tax transcript(s) and forward to the Office of Financial Aid via fax, mail, or hand-delivery. Note: OFA no longer accepts copies of actual tax returns.

To receive the federal aid that has been awarded to you, you must:
• Complete a Master Promissory Note (for each type of loan); see www.studentloans.gov.
• Complete the one-time Loan Entrance Counseling (there is a combo option for both Stafford and GradPlus loans)
• Complete “Disbursements Permissions” in myFSU to designate your preferred method of receiving net refunds: via check or electronically deposited into your designated bank account.

How do I accept/decline my financial aid awards? You can accept or decline awards in your financial aid package via myFSU Student Central:
• Click on “Main Menu”—>“Self-Service” —>“Campus Finances”— >"Accept/Decline Awards."
• Scholarships and grants are assumed to be automatically accepted.
Financial Aid Checklist for New 1Ls

1. ____ Be sure you’ve complete the 2016-2017 FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), www.fafsa.ed.gov (school code #001489). This makes you eligible for University grants and Federal loans. You can do so as early as Jan. 1, 2016.

2. ____ Check your financial aid status and estimated award package online through myFSU Student Central (you must have an active FSUID to log in to the FSU system): https://my.fsu.edu.

3. ____ Apply for a Direct Grad Plus loan if you will need additional funds above and beyond the Stafford unsubsidized loan of $20,500. Complete the online request process after July 1 here: https://studentloans.gov. A credit history check is a required component of the application. If the loan application is denied, you may appeal or apply again with a co-endorser. The typical loan period is based on an academic year (i.e., 08/16 - 05/17). The Grad Plus loan will disburse in two equal parts (fall/spring). If you desire to receive the max amount for the year, leave the “amount requested” question blank.

4. ____ Sign Federal Direct Loan Master Promissory Note (MPN) and complete Loan Entrance Counseling (LECF) for Stafford (and Grad Plus Loans, if applicable) online via https://studentloans.gov.

5. ____ Enroll in Direct Deposit through your myFSU Student Central to have your refund sent to any domestic bank. Federal Financial Aid will always pay towards your tuition and housing charges, but the University needs your permission to apply any leftover federal aid (Stafford and PLUS Loans) to other charges on your bill. Please note that if you do not grant this permission, you might receive a refund when you still owe charges to the University. Click this link for instructions on how to complete this step: http://controller.vpfa.fsu.edu/student-business/direct-deposit.

6. ____ Submit all requested verification documents, if any, to the Financial Aid Office (main campus), i.e., tax return transcript. This includes any supporting documents for “Special Circumstances Review” (see “Financial Aid Forms” (left-hand column) at www.financialaid.fsu.edu). Check the “To Do List” in your myFSU Student Center to see what may be outstanding.

7. ____ Report any outside aid (“non-FSU”) online via myFSU Student Central. If you have been awarded a scholarship from the College of Law, please note that the award will not appear in your award package until early to mid-August. This additional aid may reduce any loans that you had previously been awarded so that your total aid does not exceed the Cost of Attendance.

8. ____ Accept or Decline awards in your financial aid package via myFSU Student Central (under the Financial Aid tab, click on “View Financial Aid Awards/Status”). Scholarships and grants are automatically accepted. For further instructions, see http://financialaid.fsu.edu/aid/loans/LoanAction.html.

*NOTE: Financial aid traditionally disburses each semester on the Tuesday after drop/add ends, which for the fall semester will be September 1. However, if you have completed all of the above steps, you may be eligible to receive a disbursement for some types of aid the week before the term starts. So it pays to be in compliance!*
Tips for Getting Your “Financial House” in Order

$ **Consider alternatives before borrowing.** Don’t borrow without looking into alternate methods of financing your education: i.e., scholarships, fellowships, employee tuition reimbursements, etc. Look into local sources of aid provided by community organizations and civic groups.

$ **Borrow wisely.** Borrow as little as possible and only what you need. You can choose to decline or accept only a portion of an loans offered. Repay your debts as soon as possible. The longer you owe, the more you owe. To help secure your financial future, stay in touch with your lender.

$ **Prepare (and stick to) a reasonable budget.** While loans may be available to students, the question of how much to borrow is often asked. In preparing your overall budget, begin with the law school’s “Cost of Attendance” (COA) for estimates of school and living expenses. Also, consider tracking your current spending habits and comparing them to the COA. You may also look into having a roommate, paying off consumer debt, or learning to cook as these related expenses are often budget-busters.

$ **Check your credit report.** There is a quick, easy, secure, and FREE way to Request your free annual credit report: [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com). This central site allows you to request a free credit file once every 12 months from each of the nationwide consumer credit reporting companies: Equifax, Experian and TransUnion. We suggest checking with a different consumer credit reporting company every four months. FICA (credit) score is not included, a separate charge applies to receive your FICA score.

$ **Check with your financial aid counselor to ensure you have submitted the necessary documents.** You are encouraged to contact Gail McKinney-Rogers at 850-644-0376 or via email at grogers@admin.fsu.edu (for specific questions about federal financial aid), or the law school’s Office of Student Affairs at 850 644-7338 or via email at saffairs@law.fsu.edu (for questions about scholarships or financial aid in general).

$ **Keep your own financial aid file.** Keep in it photocopies of everything you ever submit to the Office of Financial Aid or the law school regarding your financial aid.

$ **Be patient.** The financial aid process takes a lot of time, but it does work if you have carefully followed all

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**Important Contact Info.**

**Florida State Law Office of Student Affairs**  
425 West Jefferson St., Suite A310  
Tallahassee, FL  32306-1601  
Phone: (850) 644-7338, Fax: (850) 644-4358  
Email: saffairs@law.fsu.edu

**University Office of Financial Aid**  
A4400 University Center—Tallahassee, FL 32306  
Phone: (850) 644-0376, Fax: (850) 644-6404  
Contact: Gail McKinney-Rogers  
Email: grogers@admin.fsu.edu

**University Student Business Services**  
A1500 University Center—Tallahassee, FL 32306  
Phone: (850) 644-9452  
Email: StudentBusiness@fsu.edu

**Helpful Websites**

**FSU Office of Financial Aid:**  
[www.finaid.fsu.edu](http://www.finaid.fsu.edu)

**Law School Cost Comparison:**  
[www.law.fsu.edu/prospective_students/expenses.html](http://www.law.fsu.edu/prospective_students/expenses.html)

**FAFSA application:**  
[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

**Financial Aid in General:**  
[www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org)

**Federal Loan Programs:**  
[https://studentloans.gov](https://studentloans.gov)

**Access Group:**  
[http://www.accessgroup.org](http://www.accessgroup.org)