Financial Aid Application Tips
Fall 2015   -   Due Date May 1, 2015

HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE
Financial Aid Office

Tip #1: Check the HUB to see what is required for your aid application

- The required forms for your aid application appear on the HUB; click on the My Documents link under the Financial Information section. Items that are missing have "Not Yet Received" listed under the Status column.
- We use the FAFSA form to determine eligibility for federal aid and the Profile form for institutional aid including the Hampshire Grant. If you are not applying for institutional aid the Profile is not required; please notify the financial aid office if this is the case. If you are applying for institutional aid both the FAFSA and Profile must be received by the financial aid office by May 1.
- Plan to periodically review the HUB to make sure forms are recorded as received. Additional forms or data may be added, especially if your FAFSA report is selected for the Verification process. See Tip #8 for more information.
- Reminder: International students do not apply for aid after their first year.

Tip #2: Apply on time - this may be simple advice, but it's important

- Profile and FAFSA data are due by May 1, 2015; late applications are subject to a reduction to the Hampshire Grant.
- Data and forms required for the Verification process (see Tip #8) are not required by the May 1 due date but an award determination will not be completed until all required Verification materials have been received.
- If you are applying for financial aid for the first time and if your parents are not married to each other and not living together, then we would also need the Non-Custodial Parent Profile by May 1, 2015 to be considered on time.

Tip #3: Federal Tax Returns and W-2 forms

- In general, please do not send the financial aid office copies of tax returns or W-2 forms unless we specifically request them. If we do want specific tax information from you, it will be listed on the HUB and we will send you an email.
- If we are requesting a copy of your W-2 forms, and you worked on campus during the previous year you should have received a W-2 form from Hampshire College. You may also print a copy of your W-2 form on the HUB.

Tip #4: Completing the Profile

- We use the Profile, along with the FAFSA, to determine your eligibility for institutional financial aid. If you are not planning to apply for institutional aid the Profile is not required; please notify the financial aid office if this is the case.
- If the CSS Profile is listed on your HUB account as a requirement and if you are applying for institutional aid, complete the Profile with your custodial parent(s) at http://student.collegeboard.org/profile . Our school code for the Profile is 3447.
- This form does have a cost and you may pay with a credit card online.
- Use your correct Social Security number when completing the Profile. The data is imported electronically to your Hampshire College financial aid record. If the numbers do not match there will be a delay in processing.
- There is a two-step process to complete the Profile: first you register for the Profile, and then you complete the Profile.
- Try to complete the Profile by April 15. If your and your parents' taxes are not filed by the time you complete the Profile, you may use estimates. You are not able to update the Profile with actual amounts after it is submitted.
- Non-custodial parents of students who previously applied for financial aid are not required to complete another Non-Custodial Profile. However, these parents may request a review of their financial situation when significant changes have occurred compared to the prior year. These non-custodial parents may contact the financial aid office for details.

Tip #5: Completing the FAFSA

- All financial aid applicants (except international students) must complete the FAFSA each year. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form is used to determine one's eligibility for federal and state aid including loans, grants, and work study.
- You may complete the FAFSA online at www.fafsa.gov. Our school code for the FAFSA is 004661.
- Be sure to use your correct Social Security number when completing the FAFSA. The data is imported electronically to your Hampshire College financial aid record. If the numbers do not match there will be a delay in processing.
- Try to complete the FAFSA by April 15. If your and your parents' taxes are not filed by the time you complete the FAFSA, you may use estimates. You are able to update the FAFSA with actual amounts after the tax return information is available.
- If the student is a dependent student, the FAFSA requires information about the student and the custodial parent(s) and step-parent, if applicable.
- The FAFSA will collect information from both of the dependent student's legal (biological and/or adoptive) parents if the parents live together, regardless of the marital status or gender of the parents. The goal of providing information on the FAFSA is to determine the family's financial strength. Therefore, if both legal parents live in the household (whether they are married or not), the FAFSA wants to know about both of them in order to get the full financial picture.
- Information about a non-custodial parent, not living in the student's household, should not be included on the FAFSA.

Tip #6: Signing your FAFSA
- The FAFSA form must be signed by the student. If the student is a dependent student, then a custodial parent must also sign the FAFSA form. The student is dependent if the parents need to provide their information on the student's FAFSA form.
- The easiest and fastest way to sign the FAFSA form is to do it electronically, using the Federal Student Aid (FSA) PIN or ID. The student and custodial parent(s) must have their own FSA PIN or FSA ID.
- To request a federal PIN number, prior to April 26, 2015, visit www.pin.ed.gov and follow the instructions.
- **New for 2015-16:** On and after April 26, 2015, when you or your parent try to log on to any FSA website including FAFSA, the user will be asked to create a username and password. This username and password will be your FSA ID and it replaces the FSA PIN. If you have a FSA PIN, you will have the option to link it to your new FSA ID, which will allow you to immediately use the ID to log on to the FAFSA site and to electronically sign your submitted FAFSA form.

Tip #7: Read your Student Aid Report
- Your Student Aid Report (SAR) summarizes the information you provided on your FAFSA. It is important to review your SAR to make sure all of your information is correct and complete. If you provide an email address on the FAFSA, your SAR will be sent by email within five days. If you do not provide an email address, your SAR will be mailed to you within three weeks.
- Your SAR will also notify you if you have been selected for the Verification process by the U.S. Education Department.

Tip #8: The Verification Process
- Your Student Aid Report (SAR) will notify you if you have been selected by the U.S. Education Department for the process known as Verification. Hampshire College may also select you for the Verification process.
- The Verification process requires the student to complete and return a specific Verification Worksheet to the financial aid office. There are five different Worksheets: the **Standard**, **Child Support Paid**, **Custom**, **Aggregate,** and **Household Resources**. Students must be sure to complete their specific Worksheet. You may view which of the five is required by visiting the My Documents section of the HUB. Once you have confirmed which Worksheet is required, visit http://financialaid.hampshire.edu and click on Financial Aid Forms to print the appropriate Worksheet.
- For more information about the Verification process, please visit our website, http://financialaid.hampshire.edu .

Tip #9: The IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) on the FAFSA
- The IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) on the FAFSA is a method to electronically transfer the student's and/or custodial parents' IRS tax information to the student's FAFSA. All students are encouraged to use the DRT to ensure that accurate information is provided on the FAFSA.
- If the FAFSA was originally submitted with estimated tax and income data, you may make a correction on the FAFSA to use the DRT after the federal tax returns are filed and after waiting for the IRS to process the tax return.
- If you were selected for the Verification process, and if you need to complete the **Standard, Aggregate**, or **Household Resources** Verification Worksheet, the financial aid office will need to verify your and your parents' income. Income verification may be done by using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) on the FAFSA, providing us with a copy of the IRS Tax Return Transcript, or completing the Non-tax filing statement on the Verification Worksheet, if applicable. Note that we CANNOT use an actual tax return to verify income; the data must come directly from the IRS.
- For more information about the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) on the FAFSA, and how to request an IRS Tax Return Transcript, please visit our website, http://financialaid.hampshire.edu .

Tip #10: Field Study Aid
- Students planning to go on field study must also complete and submit the Field Study Budget Form to the financial aid office if applying for financial aid. This form allows you to itemize the costs associated with your field study project. If you are planning to attend another college during the field study, you may also need to submit a consortium agreement completed by that college. If the consortium agreement is needed we will send it to you.
- The maximum field study grant cannot be more than the cost of the Hampshire College field study charge, which is approximately one-sixth of Hampshire's annual tuition cost. Merit scholarships are included in this maximum grant amount.
- The Field Study Budget Form may be printed at http://financialaid.hampshire.edu , click on Financial Aid Forms.

Tip #11: Your Award Letter
- After we receive all of the required documents and data for your financial aid application, we will review your application and determine if we can provide you with need based aid. If you are eligible for need based aid you will receive an award letter from us beginning in late June. Carefully review this letter with your parents.
- You need to sign the award letter and return it to the financial aid office promptly. We need your authorization to post your awards to your college bill, and to originate your federal student loans.

Tip #12: If you have any questions about the financial aid process, please contact the financial aid office
- Call us at 413.559.5484; send us an email at financialaid@hampshire.edu ; or visit us in Blair Hall; we are open Monday through Friday from 8:30AM to 4:30PM. Our fax number is 413.559.5585. Our web address is http://financialaid.hampshire.edu .