

## SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Becker College, in accordance with federal regulations, requires all students who receive federal financial aid to maintain satisfactory academic progress. Student academic progress is measured at the end of each semester against the following standards.

- **Qualitative Measures:** A minimum 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) for all attempted credits must be maintained.
- **Quantitative Progress:** Students must successfully complete 67% of the courses attempted. The pace of progress is calculated by dividing the cumulative hours that have been successfully completed by the cumulative hours you have attempted.
- **Maximum Time Frame:** Students must complete their educational program of study within a time frame no longer than 150% of the published length of the educational program, as measured by the credits attempted and including transfer credits.

The Following Are Considered When Evaluating A Student's SAP:

- **Drop vs. Withdrawal:** If a student drops courses before the end of the Add/Drop period, the courses will not be counted as attempted. Any courses withdrawn from after the Add/Drop period will be counted as attempted but not completed.
- **Incomplete Grades:** A grade of incomplete will count as attempted credit hours but not completed credit hours. Once the course work is completed and a grade determined, the student must contact the Office of Financial Aid.
- **Repeated Courses:** A student may repeat a course twice in which a low grade was earned and still be eligible to receive financial aid. Transfer Credits: All academic credits transferred and accepted at Becker College will be counted as both attempted and earned credits. These credits will also be counted in the maximum time frame calculation.
- **Pass/Fail Credits:** The academic credit hours for any courses taken with a pass or fail grade will be counted toward the attempted and earned credits. These credits will also be counted in the maximum time frame calculation.

**Warning Status:** Students who initially fail any of the academic progress standards, excluding maximum time frame, may be placed on Financial Aid Warning for one semester or payment period. Students will remain eligible for financial aid while in the warning status, without filing an appeal letter. Students will be required to improve academically and meet the minimum standards of this federal policy at the end of the warning period. Failure to meet the minimum requirements of this policy will result in suspension of aid eligibility.

**Appeals:** The denial of financial aid because of failure to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements may be appealed if the student believes there were special circumstances that should be considered.

The following must be submitted along with the SAP Appeal Form at least one week prior to the first week of classes of the term:

- An Appeal/Letter must be completed online by the student, explaining what the extenuating circumstances are that prevented the student from maintaining SAP, and what has changed that will allow the student to maintain the standards going forward. Documentation supporting the extenuating circumstances should be attached to the appeal form.
- The student must confer with their academic advisor and create a SAP Academic Plan, and this plan must be approved by the committee. The SAP Academic Plan will help guide the student on how to meet SAP standards within the set time frame.

**Appeals:** The denial of financial aid because of failure to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements may be appealed if the student believes there were special circumstances that should be considered.

The following must be submitted along with the SAP Appeal Form at least one week prior to the first week of classes of the term:

- An Appeal/Letter must be completed online by the student, explaining what the extenuating circumstances are that prevented the student from maintaining SAP, and what has changed that will allow the student to maintain the standards going forward. Documentation supporting the extenuating circumstances should be attached to the appeal form.
- The student must confer with their academic advisor and create a SAP Academic Plan, and this plan must be approved by the committee. The plan will help guide the student on how to meet SAP standards within the set timeframe

**Appeal Decision:** The SAP Appeal Committee will review all requests for financial aid reinstatement and send a letter to notify the student of the decision.

- **Approval:** Reinstatement of financial aid will be granted, placing the student on probation for one semester. Further eligibility will be contingent upon the student meeting the conditions of the academic plan and SAP standards.
- **Denial:** Financial aid eligibility will not be reinstated and the student will be responsible for making alternative payment arrangements. If the student meets the SAP requirements in a future term, aid will be reinstated.

## DISBURSEMENTS

Financial aid is generally disbursed in equal amounts each semester and applied directly to the student's account. Disbursements occur after the fourth Monday of classes of the third module each semester once enrollment has been confirmed. State scholarship and grant funds are disbursed to your student account once the funds are received by Becker College.

## FINANCIAL AID REFUNDS & BOOK VOUCHERS

It is the policy of Becker College to return all verified credit balances to students each semester. If your financial aid is in excess of your College bill, refund checks will generally be available by late August for the summer semester, mid-December for the fall semester, and late April for the spring semester. These dates only apply to students who have completed all of their financial aid paperwork. Refunds are contingent on receipt of financial aid funds by the College.

Book vouchers are offered to students whose financial aid is in excess of their semester charges. The amount of the voucher comes from your financial aid package, and the book voucher amount used will be charged back to your student account.

For more information on refunds or book vouchers, please contact the Office of Student Accounts at 508.373.9437, or at [studentaccounts@becker.edu](mailto:studentaccounts@becker.edu).

## RETURN OF COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS FUNDS

Any student who withdraws from all classes or takes a leave of absence, but attended Becker College for at least one day during the semester and received (or was eligible to receive) funds from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is subject to a state withdrawal refund calculation.

## FINANCIAL AID RENEWAL PROCESS

Financial aid is packaged one academic year at a time. Students must re-apply for financial aid each year and should do so as soon after January 1st as possible for the upcoming academic year, with a filing priority date of April 1st. Becker College makes every effort to offer the same financial aid package in future years.

**Financial Aid Renewal Is Contingent On The Following:**

- Continued demonstration of financial need as determined for federal and state funding.
- Satisfactory Academic Progress
- The same enrollment status as the prior year
- Federal and state governments availability of funding
- Compliance with any deadline or priority filing dates, and application processes for state funding

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Mailing Address: Office of Financial Aid – Becker College  
61 Sever Street, Worcester, MA 01609

SGPS Caseload Counselor ..... Heather Poulos  
SGPS FA Phone..... 508.373.9428  
Main FA Phone..... 508.373.9440  
Fax..... 508.890.1511  
SGPS Email..... [heather.poulos@becker.edu](mailto:heather.poulos@becker.edu)  
FA Website..... [www.becker.edu/financialaid](http://www.becker.edu/financialaid)  
Location & Hours ..... Visit our website for current listing

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

School of Graduate & Professional Studies..... 508.373.9500  
Office of Student Accounts..... 508.373.9437  
Bookstore ..... 508.373.9470  
FAFSA ..... <https://fafsa.ed.gov>  
FSA ID ..... <https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm>  
Complete Loan Requirements..... [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov)  
OSFA..... <https://www.mass.edu/osfa>



# BECKER COLLEGE

School of Graduate & Professional Studies  
61 Sever Street • Worcester, MA 01609  
[www.becker.edu/gps](http://www.becker.edu/gps)

Feb 2020



# BECKER COLLEGE

School of Graduate & Professional Studies

## OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AID

This guide was designed to assist you in understanding your financial aid offer and what you need to know regarding your eligibility for aid. We urge you to carefully review the information included in this booklet and to retain it for future reference.

The dedicated staff of the Office of Financial Aid is available to guide and assist you through all of the steps involved in the financial aid process. If you have any questions regarding your specific situation, please contact the SGPS Financial Aid Counselor at 508.373.9428 or at [heather.poulos@becker.edu](mailto:heather.poulos@becker.edu). We look forward to working with you during the upcoming academic year!

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## RETURN OF TITLE IV FUNDS

Any federal aid eligible student who withdraws from all classes in a module in which they began the class(es), and has not confirmed, in writing, their intent to return within the same semester, is subject to a return of funds calculation. **This calculation is mandated by the federal government in the following manner:**

The calculation is done by dividing the number of days the student attended classes by the number of days in the semester in which the student was registered (e.g., all modules in the semester). Students who remain enrolled through the 60% point of the semester are considered as having earned 100% of their federal financial aid funds and will not owe a repayment of federal funds. Federal Title IV funds include Federal Pell Grant, Federal Direct Subsidized & Unsubsidized Loans, Federal Graduate PLUS, & the Federal Parent PLUS Loan. Students will be notified, in writing, of any adjustments to their financial aid. A return of funds may result in a balance owed to the College.

## YOUR FINANCIAL AID PACKAGE

Please review the information on your enclosed financial aid offer. The eligibility information provided on the offer letter was used to determine your financial aid. If any of this information has changed or is incorrect (such as enrollment), please notify the Office of Financial Aid immediately so we may re-evaluate your financial aid eligibility.

If you wish to reduce or decline all or part of your financial aid package, you must submit your request in writing. Please email your request to the SGPS Financial Aid Counselor at [heather.poulos@becker.edu](mailto:heather.poulos@becker.edu). If you are a first-time student or borrower at Becker College, the loans that have been offered to you will require additional steps before they will be credited to your student account. Additional information is listed in this booklet on these requirements. The Office of Financial Aid will also send further instructions to you via email.

## DETERMINING YOUR NEED

**Your financial aid eligibility is determined by the information provided on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). To be eligible for federal and state financial aid, you must meet the following:**

- Have a high school diploma or a General Education Development (GED), or pass an exam approved by the U.S. Department of Education.
- Be officially accepted into an eligible program of study.
- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen.
- Have a valid Social Security Number (unless you are from the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau).
- Be enrolled at least half-time (6 credits) each term, although some students may be enrolled in only 3 credits and be eligible for the Federal Pell Grant.
- Meet Selective Service registration requirements.
- Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP).
- Not be in default on a federal student loan or owe an overpayment on a federal grant.
- Not have a drug conviction for an offense that occurred while receiving federal student aid (such as grants, loans, or work study).
- Demonstrate financial need (except for a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Direct Loan).

The Office of Financial Aid primarily uses two factors to determine your aid eligibility. These are Cost of Attendance (COA) and Expected Family Contribution (EFC).

- **Cost of Attendance (COA):** At Becker College, a standardized set of budgets are used as a basis for determining a COA. The COA includes the direct costs such as tuition, which Becker College charges and the indirect costs such as books, supplies, transportation, and personal expenses.
- **Expected Family Contribution (EFC):** The EFC is the number used to determine a student's eligibility for financial aid. This number results from the financial information the student and parents provide on the FAFSA.

A student's financial need is the difference between the COA and EFC.

## SCHOLARSHIPS & GRANTS

**Federal Pell Grant:** Eligibility for the Federal Pell Grant is determined by the U.S. Department of Education and is limited to undergraduate students (with no prior bachelor's degree) who meet all eligibility criteria for federal financial aid and demonstrate exceptional financial need. The amount a student is eligible to receive is also based upon enrollment status. A student is eligible for a maximum of 6 years of their full-time Pell Grant.

**State Grant and Scholarship:** States provide need-based grant and merit-based scholarship assistance to students who meet the eligibility criteria. For most programs, the student must be enrolled full-time (12 or more credits each semester) and meet their state of residency application deadline. States that currently allow students to use state funds at Becker College include Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Vermont. Aid from states other than Massachusetts will be added once the scholarship office has notified us of eligibility. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts-sponsored aid amounts are estimated until the College receives notification from the Office of Student Financial Assistance.

**Massachusetts Early Childhood Educators (ECE) Scholarship:** This scholarship is designed to provide financial assistance for Massachusetts residents who are currently employed in early childhood and out of school time educators and providers who are enrolled in an approved degree program. A supplemental application must be submitted to the Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA). Such aid is added for each term of eligibility once Becker College's Office of Financial Aid has received a certification roster from OSFA. These rosters are typically received toward the end of the second month of each semester. Funding for the summer semester is dependent on funding availability from the Commonwealth. You are encouraged to register for all your semester courses at the start of each term to allow the Office of Financial Aid to properly certify enrollment and financial aid eligibility with the Commonwealth.

**Massachusetts Paraprofessional Teachers Preparation Grant (PPG):** This scholarship is designed to provide financial assistance to Massachusetts residents who are currently employed as paraprofessionals in Massachusetts public schools, but wish to become certified as full-time teachers. A supplemental application must be submitted to the Massachusetts Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA). Such aid is added to each term of eligibility once Becker College's Office of Financial Aid has received a certification roster from OSFA. These rosters are typically received toward the end of the second month of each semester. Funding for the summer

semester is dependent on funding availability from the Commonwealth. You are encouraged to register for all your semester courses at the start of each term to allow the Office of Financial Aid to properly certify enrollment and financial aid eligibility with the Commonwealth.

**GI Bill Yellow Ribbon Program:** This institutional and federal match program is open to eligible U.S. veterans. Recipients must be in a degree-seeking, undergraduate program. You must contact the Veteran's Certifying Official in the Office of the Registrar at Becker College to have your eligibility for this program certified.

The Yellow Ribbon Program is comprised of a Becker College Yellow Ribbon Grant and a federal Yellow Ribbon Match. Funding levels are very limited and available on a first-come basis. Funds will be credited to your student account once the federal match component is received for the semester. Students must maintain eligibility and renewal criteria as outlined by the Veterans Administration.

## FEDERAL STUDENT LOANS

**Federal Direct Loan:** Administered by the U.S. Department of Education, these low-interest loans require repayment of the full amount of the loan borrowed and disbursed to students who are enrolled at least half-time (6 credits each semester). Students may decline all or a portion of any loan that is offered in their financial aid package without impacting any other form of aid offered. A student must notify the Office of Financial Aid in writing of any requests to decline these loans.

**All first-time borrowers at Becker College must complete both the Federal Direct Loan Entrance Counseling & Master Promissory Note (MPN) before any funds may be disbursed to the student's account. Students may complete these requirements online at [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov). Once the Office of Financial Aid has received notification from the U.S. Department of Education that these requirements have been completed, the funds from these loans may be used toward the student's account.**

- **Fees:** The Federal Direct Loan Program will charge an origination fee for all loans. This fee will be deducted from the loan at the time of disbursement. Please visit our website for information on the current Federal Loan Origination Fee amount.
- **Interest Rates:** Congress sets the interest rates for the Federal Direct Loan Programs. Our website contains information on the current interest rate.
- **Grace Period:** There is a six-month grace period following graduation, withdrawal, or a drop to less than half-time enrollment. Principal payments may be deferred during the grace period.
- **Term of the Loan:** The repayment period is between 10 and 30 years (depending on the amount borrowed) through loan consolidation. Most repayment plans require a minimum payment of \$50 a month.
- **Repayment:** Repayment of both the interest and principal begins six months after the student graduates, withdraws, or ceases to be enrolled at least half-time. There are several repayment plans available such as Standard Repayment, Graduated Repayment, Extended Repayment, and Income-Based Repayment. Additional information on the various repayment plans and loan consolidation may be found on the U.S. Department of Education's website at [www.studentloans.gov](http://www.studentloans.gov).
- **Federal Direct Subsidized Loan:** Students who demonstrate financial need are eligible to receive this loan. The federal government pays the interest.

interest on this loan while the student is enrolled at least half-time (6 credits per term).

**Annual Aid Amounts (per academic year):**

1st year	(0-27 credits)	\$3,500
2nd year	(28-54 credits)	\$4,500
3rd and 4th year	(55+ credits)	\$5,500

Students who are new borrowers beginning July 1, 2013, may receive the Federal Direct Subsidized Loan for a time frame equivalent to 150% of the length of the student's degree, provided that all eligibility criteria are met. In addition, any previously borrowed Subsidized Direct Loans will begin to accrue interest at the time you reach the 150% time frame.

- **Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan:** This is a non-need-based loan in which the student is responsible for the interest regardless of enrollment status.

Annual Aid Amounts (per academic year)		Dependent	Independent*
1st year	(0-27 credits)	\$2,000	\$6,000
2nd year	(28-54 credits)	\$2,000	\$6,000
3rd and 4th year	(55+ credits)	\$2,000	\$7,000

\* *Independent students and dependent students whose parents have been denied a Federal Direct Parent PLUS.*

Aggregate Loan Limits	Federal Direct Subsidized Direct Loan	Federal Direct Loans (Subsidized & Unsubsidized)
Dependent Undergraduate Students (whose parent has not been denied a Federal Direct Parent PLUS)	\$23,000	\$31,000
Independent Undergraduate Students (and Dependent Students whose parent has been denied a Federal Direct Parent PLUS)	\$23,000	\$57,500

## VERIFICATION

Students selected for verification will be notified by the Office of Financial Aid. If the student is selected for verification and did not elect the usage of the IRS Data Retrieval Tool on the FAFSA, the student and parent will be required to provide a federal income tax return transcript from the IRS. Other documents may be required to complete the verification process as well.

## CONDITIONS AFFECTING AID

**Enrollment Status:** Aid is based on the assumption that you will be three-quarter time (9 credits) each term. Your enrollment status is verified after the fourth Monday of classes of the third module of each semester. You must notify the Office of Financial Aid if your enrollment status changes from what is on your financial aid package as it may affect your eligibility.

**Outside Assistance:** Your financial aid package may change if you receive assistance from sources outside of Becker College, including private scholarships, tuition remission, ROTC, or other aid after you submitted your financial aid application. It is the College's policy to reduce your unmet financial need before reducing federal funds. You are responsible for providing documentation of outside assistance and for ensuring the funds are sent to the Office of Student Accounts.