



The University of Mississippi

Office of Financial Aid

University, MS 38677

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Policy Name: Disbursement of Financial Aid

Purpose: This document contains the Office of Financial Aid's current policies and procedures for disbursing aid to students.

Disclaimer: This policy is subject to change, without notice, in order to comply with administrative and regulatory requirements.

Policy Contents:

- 3.1 Disbursement Requirements
- 3.2 Timing of Disbursement
- 3.3 Confirming Enrollment & Attendance
- 3.4 Late Disbursement
- 3.5 Delivery of Funds
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Definitions and Terms:

COA – Cost of Attendance
MESG – Mississippi Eminent Scholars Grant
MTAG – Mississippi Tuition Assistance Grant
OFA – Office of Financial Aid
SEOG – Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant
UM – University of Mississippi

Part 3.1

Disbursement Requirements

The OFA defines the award year as comprised of: Fall (Fall Semester, Fall 1 mini-session, and Fall 2 mini-session) and Spring (Winter intersession, Spring Semester, Spring 1 mini-session, and Spring 2 mini-session). Summer is considered a trailer to the award year. It is a combined term that includes May intersession, First Summer mini-session, Full Summer mini-session, Second Summer mini-session, and August intersession.

Because a student may be enrolled for only part of a term due to registration for mini-sessions only, the OFA will hold the disbursement of eligible funds (scholarships, loans, and grants) based on each individual student's earliest course start date. This will ensure that funds are not released more than 10 days before the student actually begins classes. (Course start/stop dates are provided by the academic departments and entered into UM's student system).

All financial aid funds must pass disbursement requirements in order to be processed. These rules are programmed into the OFA database system. Any disbursement issues create "diagnostics" that will explain the reason for the hold. OFA staff members can easily reference the diagnostics to determine what the next steps should be. Students can also view the diagnostic messages for their own financial aid package through the Award Notification module in the MyOleMiss portal. Diagnostics are dynamically created and will be automatically removed once an outstanding issue is resolved.

Part 3.2

Timing of Disbursement

For Fall and Spring, the disbursement process (to credit funds to student bursar accounts) begins approximately 5 days before the beginning of the standard semester. For Summer, disbursement begins approximately 5 days before the beginning of Full Summer/First Summer. Once the process starts for a term, aid is disbursed on a daily basis (business days only) as university requirements are met. For some awards, the credit is made once funds are received from an outside source (e.g. non-UM scholarships and loans). For state grants like MTAG and MESH, disbursement will occur once the state office notifies the UM of their roster of approved awards.

Students awarded Federal Title IV aid (Pell Grant, Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant, SEOG, Federal Direct Loan, Federal Direct PLUS Loan or TEACH Grant) for summer cannot receive these monies unless they enroll in all credit hours for all summer terms reported on their Summer Application. Non-federal aid ready for release during the summer will credit to a student's bursar account prior to the first day of class if eligibility is met at an individual mini-session level.

For students enrolled in iStudy (correspondence courses), no Title IV financial aid will be released until the midterm exam is completed (or 50% of the lessons if there is not a midterm exam). The midpoint is determined by the iStudy Department. Once confirmation is received, the OFA will release funds manually to the student's bursar account.

Certain circumstances will prevent automatic disbursement of financial aid. These include:

- Not Enough Credit Hours to Meet Awarding Requirements** – This applies to students who are not yet enrolled for any courses, (i.e., new undergraduates do not typically sign up for classes until they attend an Orientation session), or who do not have enough booked hours. Financial aid is usually provided for full-time students, although some aid programs do allow part-time students to receive funding. Students who are not registered for enough hours will have to add more classes to qualify for some financial aid awards. Students can indicate on their “Financial Aid Award Notification” in myOleMiss what their actual enrollment hours will be. Since financial aid packaging is based on anticipated enrollment levels, this could mean that awards will be reduced or cancelled if the student does not meet the hours requirements for that award. Please note the enrollment level definitions below:

Program Type	Full-time	3/4-time	1/2-time	Less than 1/2-time
Undergraduate, Pharmacy (EE 1-3, Pre-Pharm, PY 1-4)	12 or more hours	9-11 hours	6-8 hours	1-5 hours
Graduate, MBA, PMBA, Online Grad	9 or more hours	7-8 hours	5-6 hours	1-4 hours
Law, LLM – Space Law	10 or more hours	8-9 hours	5-7 hours	1-4 hours

- Waitlisted Courses** – This is a tentative class status, for which students are not considered to be officially registered. Once a term starts, students should consult with their instructor(s) to determine whether they will be enrolled in the desired course(s). Or, students may consider signing up for different course(s). Otherwise, if the inability to secure a waitlisted course or courses changes a student’s enrollment status (e.g., from full-time to part-time), then the student’s financial aid package may have to be adjusted.
- Audit Courses** – Courses taken for “no grade” (which means that there will be no credits or hours earned for the course), do not count towards a student’s enrollment for financial aid purposes.
- Courses Coded as “Free of Charge”** – This course is set by UM administrators, and is typically used when outside organizations have a contract with UM to pay for a class for their employees. Students who are not responsible for paying any tuition for their course(s) have a reduced COA which may impact their eligibility for other financial aid. Any possible awards must be determined and processed manually.
- Independent Study (iStudy) Courses** – Correspondence courses, offered through the Office of Independent Study, do not always follow the timeframe of a traditional semester. Students enrolled in iStudy courses may or may not be eligible for financial aid. Typically, the student must register for term-based (not full-year) iStudy courses to qualify. Please visit <http://finaid.olemiss.edu/istudy/> for more information.

- **Courses that are Mismatched to the Degree Program** – If a student is taking a graduate/professional class but pursuing an undergraduate degree, OFA will treat the class as irrelevant to the academic program and therefore ineligible for aid. The same is true for graduate/professional students taking undergraduate courses (i.e., 100 to 400 level) – unless those undergraduate classes are specifically listed as required prerequisites for your academic program (published in the catalog for all students in that major). The OFA cannot consider case-by-case exceptions, so letters from instructors will not be able to establish eligibility.

The additional reasons below are related ONLY to Federal Title IV aid (Pell Grant, Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant, SEOG, TEACH, Work-Study, Direct Loans, and PLUS loans).

- **Attendance Has Not Been Verified** – Per federal regulations, students establish eligibility for aid only if they actually SHOW UP for their classes. Their presence in a class will be documented by the instructor by taking roll or by use of attendance ID scanners. This will be done at one of the class meetings within the first two weeks of class for a regular Fall/Spring semester (shorter time frames apply for mini-terms like Winter Intersession and summer). Please visit <https://olemiss.edu/info/gotoclass/>. This policy also applies to online classes, thesis/dissertation hours, labs, Study Abroad, and internships – although the methods of “attendance collection” are modified.
- **Enrollment Was Not Confirmed in All Classes by the Mandatory Drop Date (MDD)** – Financial Aid will “lock in” enrollment for each term based ONLY on those classes in which the student is still actively registered AND attendance has been verified. This will occur on the MDD. Please visit <https://registrar.olemiss.edu/academic-calendar-menu/> to confirm the MDD for each term. Disbursement of Title IV aid for that term will be based only on these “locked in” credit hours, and any previously disbursed aid may have to be adjusted to them.
- **Consortium Contract** – If a student has a written agreement to take classes at another college, and UM has approved these credit hours, then the financial aid must be handled manually. Please visit <https://finaid.olemiss.edu/study-abroad-and-consortium-study/> for additional information.
- **Repeated Coursework** – A student cannot receive federal student aid for repeating a passed course (receiving a “D” grade or higher) more than ONE time, regardless if credit is provided again by the institution – and regardless if the academic major requires the student to retake the class to obtain a better grade.
- **Remedial Coursework** – Only up to 30 semester hours of remedial classes can be counted in a student’s enrollment. Remedial courses are identified by the prefix “DS” – Development Studies.
- **Coursework Not Counting Towards Your Degree** – Only classes that are necessary for the student’s major, OR are allowable electives, can be used towards his/her enrollment level for federal aid purposes.

Part 3.4**Late Disbursement**

In certain conditions, students may still be able to receive a disbursement of federal Title IV aid after the payment period is over. Students may be considered for a disbursement if they are otherwise eligible for federal Title IV aid and the following conditions apply: they are no longer enrolled for the term at least half-time, or no longer enrolled at UM for the award year. Based on federal regulations, the OFA will determine based on the charts in Appendix A, if the student is eligible for a late disbursement (see Part 3.6, Appendix A), and if a late disbursement request form is required.

Part 3.5**Delivery of Funds**

If the amount of aid exceeds the amount that the student owes the university, a credit balance is created. In this case, the bursar's office will refund the difference to the student by direct deposit to the student's personal checking/saving account or via a check mailed to the student's billing address on file. Students cannot pick up checks in person. (See the Bursar's policy on "Refund Checks" at <https://secure4.olemiss.edu/umpolicyopen/ShowDetails.jsp?istatPara=1&policyObjidPara=10644382>.)

All refunds are given to the student except for credit balances caused by a Federal Parent PLUS loan. In these cases, the excess proceeds are delivered to the borrower. Checks will be mailed to the parent address on the PLUS application unless the parent signs up for direct deposit for PLUS loans. Direct Deposit applications are available at <http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/bursar/directdeposit.html>.

Federal Work-Study checks, based upon actual hours worked, are issued bimonthly by mail or direct deposit through the Payroll Department of Human Resources (see policy "5.0 Federal Work-Study").

Financial aid refund checks that are not consummated within 240 days of issue will be cancelled by the Office of the Bursar. The funds will be returned to the financial aid programs that caused the credit balance.

How to Determine Eligibility for Fall Disbursement of a Direct Loan and Teach Grant (including Subsidized, Unsubsidized, Parent and Grad Plus)				
	FALL/SPRING LOAN PERIOD	FALL/SPRING LOAN PERIOD	FALL/SPRING LOAN PERIOD	FALL ONLY LOAN PERIOD
	Student is going to graduate at the end of fall OR indicated plans not to return in the spring	Student has registered for spring hours (registered for at least one federal hour)	The student is not going to graduate and has not indicated plans to leave, BUT is not currently registered for spring classes	
<u>Loan originated prior to fall semester end date</u> Must have locked in at least 1/2 time fed enrollment for Fall and not withdrawn.	Eligible, but loan period must be fall only. Form? Yes	Eligibility depends on Spring SAP status. =====	Eligibility depends on Spring SAP status. =====	Eligible only if the student requests it, because the loan period is over. (Spring enrollment is irrelevant in this case.) Form? Yes
<u>Loan originated during the gap period between semesters</u> Must have locked in at least 1/2 time fed enrollment for Fall and not withdrawn. ISIR must have had an "official EFC" (not rejected) before the end of Fall.	Ineligible. Loan should be cancelled.	Eligibility depends on Spring SAP status. =====	Eligibility depends on Spring SAP status. =====	Ineligible. Loan should be cancelled.

SEOG

- The federal regs for SEOG state that students must “still be enrolled for the academic year” to be eligible. Ask the Bursar to lift the accounts receivable hold to allow registration if possible.
- The grant will disburse automatically for fall if (1) there is any Spring federal enrollment AND (2) the student is not on SAP suspension – as long as no other diagnostics are holding it up.
- If no Spring enrollment, the grant must be manually disbursed. The award must have been added prior to the end of Fall. (We should never manually award a late Fall SEOG anyway.) Spring SAP status is irrelevant. Late disbursement form is required.

Pell Grant

- Originated Pell will disburse automatically for fall if (1) there is any Spring federal enrollment AND (2) the student is not on SAP suspension – as long as no other diagnostics are holding it up.
- If no Spring enrollment, the grant must be manually disbursed. Spring SAP status is irrelevant. No late disbursement form is required because Pell is an entitlement.

LATE DISBURSEMENT REQUEST FORMS MUST BE PROCESSED NO LATER THAN 180 DAYS AFTER FALL SEMESTER ENDS
(but no later than the federal deadline for FISAP processing – typically the end of September)

How to Determine Eligibility for Spring Disbursement of a Direct Loan and Teach Grant (including Subsidized, Unsubsidized, Parent and Grad Plus) **Loans will not originate after spring semester has ended**		
	<u>FALL/SPRING LOAN PERIOD</u> Second Disbursement	<u>SPRING ONLY LOAN PERIOD</u>
<u>Loan originated prior to spring semester end date</u> 1. <i>Must have locked in at least 1/2 time fed enrollment for Spring and not withdrawn.</i> 2. <i>ISIR must have had an "official EFC" (not rejected) before the end of Spring.</i> 3. <i>In all cases, the student should be meeting Spring SAP.</i>	Student completed the entire loan period with all earned grades (no abandoned F's). Eligible. Form? Yes ===== Student did not complete the entire loan period. Ineligible.	Eligible only if the student requests it, because the loan period is over. Form? Yes

SEOG

- The award must have been added prior to the end of spring. (We should never manually award a late spring SEOG anyway.) Late disbursement form is required.

Pell Grant

- No late disbursement form is required because Pell is an entitlement. The grant must be manually disbursed.

LATE DISBURSEMENT REQUEST FORMS MUST BE PROCESSED NO LATER THAN 180 DAYS AFTER SPRING SEMESTER ENDS

(but no later than the federal deadline for FISAP processing – typically the end of September)

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The University of Mississippi

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Request for Late Disbursement

This form is used to request a late disbursement of federal grants and/or loans. You can be considered for a disbursement if you are otherwise eligible for Federal Title IV aid and the following situations apply:

- For a Direct Loan, you are **no longer enrolled for the term as at least a half-time student**; OR
- For Federal Pell Grant, FSEOG, or TEACH Grant you are **no longer enrolled at the institution for the award year**

TO BE COMPLETED BY OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AID:

STUDENT LAST NAME _____ STUDENT FIRST NAME _____ STUDENT MIDDLE NAME _____
OLE MISS STUDENT NUMBER _____ TERM _____ AID YEAR _____ NEXT TERM OF ENROLLMENT _____ GRAD DATE _____

Below are the award amounts currently available to you.

Aid Type	Offer Amount	
Federal Pell Grant		
Federal Supplemental Grant (SEOG)		
Federal TEACH Grant		
Federal Direct Subsidized Loan	Net Amt	Gross Amt
Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan	Net Amt	Gross Amt
Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loan	Net Amt	Gross Amt
Federal Direct Parent PLUS Loan	Net Amt	Gross Amt

Currently, the balance on your Bursar statement is \$ _____.

TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT AND PARENT (IF APPLICABLE):

Funds are disbursed in accordance with your wishes. Please indicate your preference below:

____ I would like the funds to be disbursed to my Bursar account in full. Any amount in excess of the outstanding charges should be sent to me (or the parent, if a PLUS Loan) as a refund.

____ I would like just enough funds disbursed to cover my outstanding Bursar charges at the time of processing.
(Please note that any grants that are awarded will be credited first, before loan funds.)

It is important to understand that accepting any late disbursements of student loan funds will increase your overall student loan debt. By accepting all or a portion of a Federal Direct, Graduate PLUS, and/or Parent PLUS loan, I know that I am responsible for repayment in accordance with the terms of my master promissory note. Please visit www.studentaid.ed.gov for current interest rates.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Signature* _____ Date _____
* (PARENT SIGNATURE REQUIRED FOR PLUS LOAN ONLY)

STUDENT TELEPHONE NUMBER _____ STUDENT EMAIL ADDRESS _____

PARENT TELEPHONE NUMBER _____ PARENT EMAIL ADDRESS _____