



IT'S HERE: YOUR FINANCIAL AID PACKAGE

Guide for Non-Traditional Students - 2024/2025

WHAT IS A COLLEGE DEGREE WORTH?

Short answer? Quite a lot.

Between the education and experiences you'll gain and the connections and contacts you'll make, it's hard to ignore the value that a diploma brings.

- On average, students who earn a college degree are likely to make \$500,000 more over their lifetime than those who only hold a high school diploma
- This gap widens even further for those who attain advanced degrees

It's clear that a college degree is a very valuable asset. But what about a degree from The College of St. Scholastica? Good news: we're nationally recognized for our exceptional quality and value.

- Saints' early post-graduation earnings rates #1 for Minnesota public and private colleges, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- The U.S. News & World Report includes St. Scholastica on its lists of the *Best National Universities* and *Top Performers on Social Mobility*
- St. Scholastica is ranked on Money Magazine's list of *Best Colleges for your Money* and Princeton Review's list of *Best Midwestern Colleges*
- A First Forward Institution, St. Scholastica is recognized for developing new initiatives to support first-generation student success
- St. Scholastica's six-year graduation rate is higher than the state, regional and national average



WHAT IS THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT?

It goes much deeper than a diploma.

Since 1912, The College of St. Scholastica has been preparing students for a life of purpose — as well as successful careers — by providing a rigorous, values-based education.

Our values of community, respect, love of learning, hospitality, and stewardship reflect our commitment to lifting up others and celebrating our common humanity. These aren't just words on a plaque; they're lifelong ideals that will shape your approach to leading in both your careers and your communities.

We will provide you with the tools, resources and guidance to be successful. Our faculty, staff, current student body and alumni networks want nothing more than for you to thrive. You'll experience their support from your first day of classes through graduation day to the day you jump-start your career.

YOUR FINANCIAL AID NOTIFICATION

As a St. Scholastica student, you will have access to a web-based student portal (**my.CSS**) where you will find important news, announcements, email, and links to services and support. On this student portal, you will also find the Student Checklist to view your Financial Aid Notification and find other important information.

You will need your username and password to log in to **my.CSS** and access the Student Checklist, where you can:

- View your Financial Aid Notification
- Apply for loans
- Register for classes
- Purchase books (option to charge to CSS Student Account)
- Pay your bill
- Enroll in a payment plan
- Sign up for direct deposit (Electronic Refunds) for any excess aid after your bill is paid
- Complete the Family Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) form
- View financial aid disbursement dates
- Complete a Refund Authorization (to cover charges such as books, fines, etc.)



UNDERSTANDING YOUR FINANCIAL AID

DIRECT COSTS

Tuition and fees are known as the "direct costs." As you review them, keep in mind that St. Scholastica discounts, outside scholarships, grants, and other financial aid can bring down these direct costs significantly. Tuition and fee amounts are available online at css.edu/tuition.

INDIRECT COSTS

These are costs that are not reflected on your bill. Indirect costs that financial aid can help cover include:

- Housing
- Food
- Personal expenses
- Transportation
- Books (if not charged to your student account)

ESTIMATED NET COST

The net cost is the difference between the total of the direct costs and the total of all grants, discounts, scholarships, and student loans for which you may be eligible or offered.

GRANTS, SCHOLARSHIPS & DISCOUNTS

These forms of financial aid do not have to be repaid. Discounts, if applicable, are shown on your billing statement rather than your financial aid notification.

LOAN OPTIONS

The St. Scholastica Financial Aid Office determines eligibility for federal loans based on the financial need demonstrated through the results of the FAFSA. Loans you may be eligible for are listed within your Financial Aid Notification. Loan borrowing is optional. Subsidized and/or Unsubsidized Federal Direct Loans do not require a credit check or co-signer but do require additional paperwork (entrance counseling and a master promissory note). It is strongly advised that students accept loan amounts and complete paperwork a minimum of four weeks before the start of the semester. Students should apply for loans for the full academic year if possible. Interest will not accrue on loans until funds are disbursed. You must register for at least 6 credits per semester to be eligible for federal student loan funding.

LOAN TYPES

Here are three common loan types you may qualify for based on your financial need:

SUBSIDIZED LOAN:

Interest is paid by the government as long as you are enrolled in school at least half-time (6+ credits per semester).

UNSUBSIDIZED LOAN:

Interest accrues from the date of first disbursement.

PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL LOAN:

This type of loan is in the student's name and may require a co-signer. It should be used after federal loan borrowing has been exhausted. A link to private loan options can be found on the "Student Checklist." You will be directed to a secure website where you can select a lender and begin the application process.



VERIFICATION

A small percentage of students who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) are selected for a quality control process called Verification. If you are selected, you will be notified directly about what to submit. Financial aid will not be disbursed to student accounts until the Verification process is complete.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES & PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT

A student's eligibility for need-based financial aid is based on information collected from the FAFSA. The FAFSA does not recognize unusual and non-discretionary situations, such as loss of income, private K-12 tuition, divorce/separation, extreme medical expenses, etc. To ensure that hardships don't impact a student's ability to attend college, students with special circumstances may submit an appeal (called Professional Judgment) to have their financial aid eligibility reviewed. If you have questions about whether you qualify for an appeal, please view the form at css.edu/forms.

CHARGING YOUR BOOKS

Students have the option to charge up to \$600 of class textbooks per semester to their student account.

FINANCIAL AID DISBURSEMENT

Financial aid is disbursed based on your enrolled credits and dates of attendance within the semester. Disbursement dates are posted on the Student Checklist found on **my.CSS**. Disbursement dates may vary by student.

STUDENT BILL - PAYMENT OPTIONS

St. Scholastica provides an online billing portal to students and authorized users with a variety of options to pay your bill, including cash, personal checks, money orders, cashier's checks, ACH payments or credit card payments. Student billing statements are available approximately six weeks before the semester begins. It is recommended that the billing portal (link found on Student Checklist) is viewed on a regular basis to view the most up-to-date balance.

FINANCIAL AID POLICIES

The College of St. Scholastica uses an electronic process to provide notices, make disclosures, and direct students to a secure website (**my.CSS**). Students are entitled to request paper copies of any notices or disclosures by contacting the St. Scholastica Financial Aid Office. To learn more about financial aid policies, please visit css.edu/financialaidpolicies.