

Financial Aid

All applicants for financial aid should submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at www.fafsa.gov. In addition, graduate students must submit the graduate financial aid application available in the Office of Financial Aid or at www.niagara.edu/financialaid (click on “graduate students”).

To receive federal financial aid, students must not owe any refunds on federal Pell grants or other awards paid, or be in default on repayment of any student loan. All federal programs require the recipient to be enrolled as a regular student working toward a degree or certificate in an eligible program at the university, a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen (federal definition) and, if applicable, registered with the selective service. Students must make satisfactory academic progress to maintain eligibility for federal aid. Students on NU’s warning and probation status (if reinstated) are eligible for federal and institutional aid. The maximum allowable period of time to receive financial aid is indicated on the satisfactory academic progress chart on page 16.

Before receiving payment, students must sign a Statement of Educational Purpose and a Certification Statement on Overpayment and Default (both found on the FAFSA). Students enrolled in a program of study abroad approved for credit by Niagara University may be considered enrolled at Niagara for purposes of applying for federal student aid. Students must have a valid Social Security number.

All federal programs are contingent upon actual Congressional appropriation.

Student Employment Programs Graduate Resident Director Assistantships (GRD)

A graduate resident director assistantship is awarded under the auspices of the university’s student life division. This position offers a qualified graduate student an opportunity to work with staff and residents in developing and promoting an extracurricular environment conducive to

maximum student growth in a residential setting.

The GRD is primarily responsible for the overall administration and supervision of the assigned hall and staff. This responsibility includes the oversight of minor policy violations and the implementation of educational and social programming within the building. GRDs are expected to focus their efforts on creating a hall environment that enhances the academic learning, personal development, physical comfort, and safety and security of each resident student.

Candidates must possess a bachelor’s degree, have prior residence hall staff experience, and be accepted into a graduate program at NU. The GRD position is a 10-month live-in position with opportunities for summer employment and housing.

Awards are made for one year and are renewable for a second term upon demonstration of satisfactory performance. Remuneration for service includes:

- (1) a monthly stipend.
- (2) annual tuition waiver for up to 18 hours of graduate studies at Niagara University.
- (3) partially furnished living facilities.
- (4) a meal plan.

Interested candidates should submit a letter of interest and resume to:

Director of Residence Life
O’Shea Hall, Niagara University
Niagara University, NY 14109

Federal Work Study Program (FWSP)

Application Procedures: Application is made through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Eligibility for FWSP is determined on the basis of financial need. A separate job application is required for placement purposes only. Forms are available in the financial aid office.

Selection of Recipients and Allocation of Awards: Niagara University makes employment reasonably available to all eligible students in the institution who are in need of financial aid. In the event that more students are eligible for FWSP than there are funds and/or positions available,

preference is given to students who have great financial need and who must earn a part of their education expenses.

Award Schedule: Niagara University arranges jobs on campus, or off campus, with public or private nonprofit agencies. The program encourages community-service work and work related to students’ course of study.

Factors considered by the financial aid office in determining whether, and for how many hours, the recipient may work under this program are: financial need, class schedule, and academic progress.

Level of salary must be at least the federal minimum wage; maximum wage is dependent on the nature of the job and applicant qualifications. Students are paid biweekly.

Rights and Responsibilities of Recipients: Satisfactory job performance.

Grant Programs

Students who enroll in study-abroad or off-campus programs will have the amount of any Niagara University scholarship, grant or tuition remission limited to the difference between Niagara University charges and the direct cash payment by Niagara University to the study-abroad or off-campus program.

Tuition Scholarships

Niagara University offers a limited number of full or partial tuition scholarships for a two-year master’s program.

The scholarships are granted on the basis of scholastic achievement and individual departmental criteria.

Applications should be written and contain a rationale and pertinent supporting documents. Scholarship requests should be sent to the director of the MBA program, the dean of the College of Education, or the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Graduate Assistantships

NU offers a limited number of graduate assistantships in various departments on campus to qualified matriculated students in one of NU’s master’s degree programs. Awards are made for one year and may

be renewable for a second year upon satisfactory performance. Awards vary and may include tuition remission up to 18 credit hours per academic year (fall and spring semesters) and a monthly stipend. Recipients are responsible for all fees. Duties are assigned by the department head.

Candidates should submit a letter of interest and resume to:

Associate Director of Financial Aid
Niagara University
Niagara University, NY 14109

Army ROTC Scholarships

Graduate students can apply for full tuition Army ROTC scholarships including books (\$1,200 yearly) and stipend (\$4,500 first year and \$5,000 second year). Scholarship recipients are required to attend the four-week leadership training course prior to beginning their programs at Niagara. For more information contact the ROTC department at rotc@niagara.edu or 716.286.8235/8230.

Religious Reduction

Tuition discount offered to members of a Roman Catholic religious order (priest, brother, nun). For more information, contact the Financial Aid Office at finaid@niagara.edu or 716.286.8686.

Federal Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant

Application Procedure: The FAFSA is available on the Web at www.fafsa.gov.

Students must apply annually.

Method of Selection of Recipients and Allocation of Awards: Students enrolled in program of study designated as TEACH Grant eligible. Eligible programs at NU are those that prepare a student to teach in a high-need field in a school serving low-income students. Applicants must also meet stringent academic requirements set by federal regulations.

Award Schedule: Awards may range up to \$4,000. Recipients must sign an Agreement to Serve and Promise to Pay with the U.S. Department of Education. If teaching service requirements are not fulfilled, a recipient must repay the grant as a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan, with



interest accrued from date grant funds were first disbursed.

Federal Loan Programs Niagara University Student Loan Code of Conduct

To comply with the 2008 Higher Education Opportunity Act, enacted Aug. 14, 2008, Niagara University adopts the following Student Loan Code of Conduct to serve as formal guidance in ensuring the integrity of the student-aid process and ethical conduct of Niagara employees in regard to student loan practices.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to ensure that all employees of the university, particularly those involved in the affairs of the financial aid office, understand their obligations to protect the rights and serve only the interests of students and parents.

Revenue-sharing arrangements: Per the 2008 Higher Education Opportunity Act, a "revenue-sharing arrangement," means any arrangement between an institution and lender (making loans per Title IV), wherein the institution recommends the lender or the loan products of the lender and in exchange, the lender pays a fee or provides other material benefits, including revenue or profit sharing, to the institution, an office or employee of the institution.

Niagara University and its employees will not enter into any type of revenue-sharing arrangement with any lender.

Gifts: Employees of the financial aid office, or anyone having authority over the financial aid office, are prohibited from soliciting or accepting any gifts from lenders, guarantors or servicers of educational loans. Per the 2008 HEOA, a gift is any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, or other item having monetary value of more than a de minimus amount. This includes a gift of services, transportation, lodging or meals, purchase of a ticket, payment in advance, or reimbursement after the expense has incurred.

Contracting Arrangements: Employees of the financial aid office may not accept from a lender, or affiliate of any lender any fee, payment or other financial benefit as compensation for any type of consulting arrangement or other contract to provide services to a lender or on behalf of a lender relating to education loans.

Borrower Choice: The Office of Financial Aid may not assign a borrower's student loan to a particular lender. The borrower will be responsible for deciding who to borrow his/her loan through after review of lender benefits and services. Niagara University will not

refuse to certify, or delay certification of, any loan based on the borrower's selection of a particular lender or guaranty agency.

Opportunity Pool Loan: Niagara University will not request or accept from any lender any offers to be used for private education loans, including funds for an opportunity pool loan, in exchange for providing concessions or promises to the lender for a specific number of loans made, insured or guaranteed, a specified loan volume, or a preferred lender arrangement.

Staffing Assistance: Niagara University will not request or accept from any lender any assistance with call center staffing or financial aid office staffing.

Advisory Board Compensation: Employees of the Office of the Financial Aid Office who serve on an advisory board, commission, or group established by lender, guarantor, or group of lenders or guarantors, are prohibited from receiving anything of more than de minimus value from the lender, guarantor, or group of lenders, except for reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred by the employee for serving on the advisory board, commission or group.

In addition to the above, employees are held to the requirements of the Niagara University Conflicts of Interest Policy.

Federal Perkins Loans

Niagara University participates in the Federal Perkins Loan Program which provides loan money to graduate students. The loans are repayable beginning nine months after termination of schooling at a 5 percent interest charge. Graduate students may borrow up to \$8,000 per year, with a cumulative maximum of \$60,000 for both undergraduate and graduate education. Awards are based on exceptional financial need and available funding.

Loan repayment is deferred during periods of at least half-time study, during service in the armed forces, and several other periods.

Further details of the program may be requested from the financial aid office. Application is made through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Federal Direct Student Loans

Graduate students who have been accepted as matriculated students and are enrolled at least six credits per semester at Niagara University may apply for a loan through the Federal Direct Student Loan Program. Eligibility is based on students' cost of attendance and financial need.

Graduate students may borrow up to \$8,500 per year on a subsidized basis. Students can borrow up to an additional \$12,000 per year on an unsubsidized basis (loan accrues interest during in-school periods).

The maximum aggregate amount a student can borrow for graduate and undergraduate education is \$138,500. (Only \$65,500 of this amount may be in subsidized loans.)

The interest rate is set by the federal government at a fixed rate of 6.8 percent. There may be an origination/default fee deducted from the loan amount. Students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to begin the application process for this loan. First-time borrowers are required to complete a Master Promissory Note and entrance counseling at StudentLoans.gov. Exit counseling is required at graduation or withdrawal from the university.

The federal student aid ombudsman of the U.S. Department of Education helps borrowers resolve disputes and solve other problems with federal student loans. The ombudsman office is where borrowers can turn after trying other ways to resolve a student loan dispute. Contact the ombudsman by:

Telephone: 877.557.2575 (toll free)
202.377.3800 (toll call)

Fax: 202.275.0549

Mail: U.S. Department of
Education
FSA Ombudsman
830 First Street N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20202-5144

Online: www.ombudsman.ed.gov

E-mail: fsaombudsmanoffice@ed.gov

Federal Direct PLUS Loans for Graduate Students

Eligible graduate students can borrow under the PLUS Loan Program up to their cost of attendance minus other estimated financial assistance. Requirements include a determination that the applicant does not have an adverse credit history and a fixed interest rate of 7.9 percent. Loan amounts are reduced by four percent as an origination fee with a 1.5 percent up-front interest rebate. Applicants for these loans are *required* to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). They also must have applied for their annual loan maximum eligibility under the Federal Subsidized and Unsubsidized Direct Loan program before applying for a graduate PLUS loan.

NU Student Emergency Loan Program

An emergency student loan fund has been made available by Niagara University which enables students to borrow loans on a short-term emergency basis at a nominal service charge. The office is located in the Office of Student Records and Financial Services, Butler Building.

Other Information

Over-awards: Each semester a number of financial aid recipients become "over-awarded" as the result of receiving additional assistance after receiving their initial financial aid package or because the students enrollment status changes. As a result, some students may have received refunds for which they are no longer eligible which may result in owing a balance back to the university. To avoid this problem, students are urged to notify the Financial Aid Office promptly when they receive additional funds from any source not listed in their award letters or when students change their enrollment status.

Students must reapply for financial assistance each year. The academic year begins with the summer session and continues with the fall and spring semesters. Students who attend in the fall and spring and then wish to attend

Niagara University the FOLLOWING summer session must complete a new FAFSA as the summer begins a new academic year. The FAFSA is available at www.fafsa.gov.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Each student's progress will be evaluated at the end of each payment period (summer, fall, spring). Satisfactory Academic Progress is achieved by maintaining an appropriate academic average (GPA) and a minimum number of successfully completed hours.

The first time a student is not making satisfactory academic progress, the student may receive an automotive waiver, be permitted to remain matriculated at Niagara University, and remain eligible to receive federal student aid.

A student who is not making satisfactory academic progress a second or third subsequent time may appeal to the Satisfactory Academic Progress Committee. The appeal letter must include:

- (1) a description of why the student failed to make academic progress.
- (2) An explanation of what has changed in the student's situation that would enable him/her to demonstrate Satisfactory Academic Progress at the next evaluation period.

- (3) A description of how the student will meet SAP during the next evaluation period, or, in the case where it will take more than one semester to regain SAP, an academic plan that, if followed, will enable him/her to make SAP in the specific timeframe.

If the SAP committee accepts the appeal, the student will be readmitted to the university, placed on Academic Probation for the semester reinstatement, and will remain eligible to receive federal student aid for that semester. If the committee denies the appeal, the student will be dismissed which requires total separation from the university.

Appeal of Decision

A student may appeal the decision of the Satisfactory Academic Progress Committee to the associate vice president for academic affairs for programs and policies. The decision of the AVPAA is final.

Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP)

The Ontario Student Assistance Program offers financial assistance to help students from lower income families meet the costs of postsecondary education. OSAP assistance is intended to supplement financial resources of students and their families. (A student must be a

Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada or a protected person.)

Assistance is based on financial need as established by the federal and/or provincial governments and as determined by the Ontario Student Assistance Program. The amount of loan students are eligible to receive is based on the information they provide.

Online application is recommended as there are no application fees; website (osap.gov.on.ca) is available 24 hours a day, and students can get an on-the-spot estimate of the amount of funding they may receive.

For complete details, access the OSAP website at osap.gov.on.ca.

Canadian Lifelong Learning Plan (LLP) — Form RC96

The Lifelong Learning Plan allows individuals to withdraw up to \$10,000 a calendar year from their registered retirement savings plans (RRSPs) to finance full-time training or education. To participate in the LLP you must be an RRSP owner with a qualifying RRSP plan. To make an LLP withdrawal, use Form RC96 (Lifelong Learning Plan Request to Withdraw Funds from an RRSP).

Form RC96 can be accessed on the website www.cra.gc.ca along with detailed program information.

Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress for Federal Aid Programs — Graduate Definition for Programs in Education, Business, and Arts and Sciences

At the completion of this full-time semester	1	2	3	4	5	6
A student must have completed this number of hours	6	12	21	30	45	60
A student must have the required GPA	2.5	2.6	2.75	3.0	3.0	3.0
<i>Calendar: Semester</i>						