

## Understanding Your Financial Aid Award Letter

Use this example as a guide to reading your financial aid award letter. Remember, you can choose to accept or decline any part of your financial aid package. If you decide to decline, contact the Financial Aid Office. If you have any questions, make sure to contact your prospective college's aid office immediately.

### Expenses (COA\*):

Tuition:	\$7,334
Room/Board	\$5,204
Health Fees	\$ 176
Books/Supplies	\$1,015
Personal	\$2,600
Transportation	\$ 910

**Total Expenses \$17,239**

\* *Cost of Attendance (COA):* The total expenses (tuition, fees, etc.) of one year's education. Your college may also include indirect costs (books, room and board, transportation, personal expenses, etc.). Our example includes both direct and indirect expenses.

### Resources (EFC\*):

Parents Contribution	
From Earnings	\$2,500
From Assets	\$ 112
Students Contribution	\$ 500
<b>Total Resources</b>	<b>\$3,112</b>

\* *Expected Family Contribution (EFC):* Amount your family is expected to contribute per year, determined by Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) results (e.g., EFC is \$3,112 [2,500+112+500]).

The amount you end up actually paying could differ from the EFC, depending on what resources are available at your college.

### Sample Award Letter Explained

Dear Student:

The results of your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) indicate that you are eligible for financial assistance for the upcoming academic year. We are pleased to offer you the following financial aid award.

#### Awarded Financial Aid

Award	Federal Pell Grant (free money)		Option to accept or decline each award		Total
	Fall	Spring	Accept	Decline	
Pell Grant	\$ 625	\$ 625	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$1,250
Total Direct Loans					\$6,876
Direct Stafford Loan (Subsidized)	\$1,500	\$1,500	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Direct Stafford Loan (Unsubsidized)	\$1,938	\$1,938	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Total Financial Aid Package</b>					<b>\$8,126</b>

Federal Stafford Loan – Unsubsidized (Interest accrues immediately after loan is disbursed)  
 Federal Stafford Loan – Subsidized (Interest-free until 6 months after graduation when repayment of interest & principle begins)

Sincerely,  
Student Financial Services

#### What does this mean to you?

Cost of Attendance (COA)	\$17,239
Estimated Family Contribution (EFC)	\$ 3,112
<b>Total Aid</b>	<b>\$ 8,126</b>
<b>Unmet Need</b>	<b>\$ 6,001</b>

You are responsible to pay for the "Unmet Need" total if you choose to attend this school. If you have applied to other schools, compare this financial aid award with the others. Scholarships will always be the best way to meet the costs of a college education. Remember to search for scholarships at free websites like [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)!