



WOMEN'S INSTITUTE OF TORAH SEMINARY

**2017-2018
FINANCIAL AID
HANDBOOK**

Women's Institute of Torah Seminary (WITS) utilizes the services of Higher Education Compliance and Management, a financial aid consulting firm with many years of experience in the field of financial aid. WITS offers a variety of federal and state financial aid programs to its students. Higher Education Compliance and Management oversees administration of the federal programs.

Any student who has difficulty in meeting her educational costs at WITS should make an appointment with Mrs. Tova Rappaport (trappaport@wits.edu), Financial Aid Administrator, to learn about the options available to her, which may include grants, scholarships, work-study programs and deferred payment plans.

The Financial Aid Office, which is open during regular business hours, will make a determination as to the expected amount to be paid by the student and her family and evaluate what federal aid, if any, may be available to the student.

Financial aid packages that may be offered to students may include grants and work-study jobs. The school may also offer financial assistance in the form of institutional needs-based scholarships as long as scholarship funds are available. Eligibility for federal programs is determined by an evaluation of the student's financial need, based strictly on the formulas developed by the Department of Education.

A student's financial need is determined by subtracting the contributions expected from the student and her parents from the total cost of education. The total financial aid awarded to a student, usually cannot exceed the student's need. The process is explained in greater detail below.

In order to qualify for federal financial aid programs, a student must:

- be enrolled in an eligible program;
- be a U.S. citizen, permanent resident of the U.S., or eligible non-citizen;
- utilize all assistance funds for education-related expenses;
- have fulfilled Selective Service registration requirements;
- maintain satisfactory progress toward completion of a program of study;
- be a high school graduate or the recognized equivalent;
- sign the certification statement that she does not owe a refund to any Title IV program, and is not in default on any Title IV loan. Her certification is located in step seven of the FAFSA.

APPLYING FOR FINANCIAL AID

To apply for financial aid, a prospective student should complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The student should complete and submit her application on FAFSA's website, at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

If a student requires a paper form application, she should contact the WITS Financial Aid Office. Students may be required to supply additional documentation, such as IRS Tax Transcripts and Verification Worksheets, to verify the information supplied on the FAFSA.

Awards are made for one academic year at a time and are not automatically renewable. Students must

reapply each year before the appropriate deadline.

FINANCIAL AID NEED

Title IV federal program eligibility is based on a process called Need Analysis. The following is a brief explanation of Need Analysis.

First, a determination is made as to whether the student is independent or dependent on her parents. There are several factors that are taken into account. Students should carefully read the FAFSA and its instructions. Should the student have questions determining her status, the financial aid staff can provide further explanation.

If the student is determined to be dependent on her parents, a parental contribution is assessed. There is an amount that the parents are expected to pay, based on their income and available assets. Allowances are made for expenses such as living allowance based on family size, taxes paid and the number of children in college.

The student herself is expected to contribute towards her education, using her earnings, if applicable. The student's assets (such as savings) are generally considered to be available for the purpose of her education and are expected to be divided among her years of post-secondary education.

The Parental Contribution, where applicable, is added to the Student Contribution, to yield the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). Expenses beyond those listed above may be considered under a process known as Professional Judgment. The process can be initiated by parent or student request after the student's initial eligibility has been determined. Then, the student and/or parent would submit documentation of unusual expenses, such as tuition or medical expenses. These expenses can be taken into account by the financial aid staff to produce a different EFC.

The student's budget or cost of education is calculated based on tuition and fees plus a standard allowance for living expenses, which depends on whether the student lives on campus, with her parents or has other arrangements.

The EFC is then subtracted from the student's total budget. The result is known as the student's "need." The concept of need is the foundation of financial aid. Students who exhibit need and apply on time will probably be awarded aid.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Applications for Pell Grants may be processed until June 30, 2019. However, students are urged to submit their applications as early as possible. Late submissions may delay the processing of a student's application. More important, the funds for some programs are limited and will be distributed with priority given to those students who submit their application in a timely fashion. FAFSA applications must be submitted by March 1st for the following academic year in order to be eligible for Maryland state financial aid programs.

Please note that students may be required to update certain types of information that they have entered on their application, i.e. dependency status, household size and number of family members enrolled in post-secondary education. Be sure to discuss any such changes with the Financial Aid Office.

FEDERAL AID PROGRAMS

The Federal Pell Grant Program provides grants to undergraduate students. These grants do not have to be repaid. The program is an "entitlement" which means that each eligible student who attends an eligible institution and applies on time may receive a Federal Pell Grant. Grants may increase to a maximum of \$6,095 annually based on the EFC generated by a federally mandated formula.

Financial aid disbursements in the Federal Pell Program are scheduled at the beginning of each semester, provided that all paperwork has been submitted and is complete. A student generally receives half of her scheduled award during the first semester and the second half during the second semester. Students whose paperwork is completed during the second semester may be paid retroactively for the first semester.

Payments from the Federal Pell Program will either be made by credit to the student's tuition account or by direct disbursement to the student. Students will be informed of the expected amount of these payments. Students may inspect their tuition records during regular business hours at the Financial Aid Office.

The Campus-Based Programs are a group of programs funded under Title IV. The campus-based programs in which the institution participates are:

- FSEOG - Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants
- FWS - Federal Work Study

In the above programs, fixed sums are allocated to each school based on its size and other factors. The institution then analyzes the needs of all eligible financial aid applicants whose paperwork is completed in a timely manner and determines an equitable distribution of the funds available in a process known as "packaging." Students who apply after the initial packaging deadlines (as posted in school) may be too late to receive any funds from these programs.

The FSEOG is a campus-based grant program available to undergraduate students. Awards, when available, will range from \$100 to \$4,000.

Financial aid disbursements in the FSEOG Program are scheduled at the beginning of each semester, provided that all paperwork has been submitted and is complete. A student generally receives one half of her scheduled award during the first semester and the second half during the second semester. Students who complete their paperwork during the second semester may be paid retroactively for the first semester. However, students should keep in mind the strong likelihood that all FSEOG funds will have been allocated by that time.

Payments from the FSEOG program will be made by credit to the student's tuition account. The funds are matched 25% institutional funds to 75% federal funds. Students will be informed of the expected amounts of these payments, and may inspect their tuition records during regular hours of the Financial Aid Office. The institution does not plan to utilize funds from the FSEOG Program for the 2018-2019 year.

The Federal Work Study Program (FWS) is an employment program. Funds are allocated to schools as part of the campus-based programs as explained above. Eligible students are offered part-time employment. The Financial Aid Office, in consultation with the faculty, determines if a student is eligible for employment, based on her ability to fulfill her academic responsibilities with the added burden of employment. Employment is also contingent on student qualifications for the positions available.

FWS disbursements are in the form of payrolls, distributed monthly during the duration of the student's work schedule. The institution pays a percentage of matching funds for each federal dollar of Work Study. The institutional portion may be paid to the student or may be credited to the student's tuition account. The funds are matched 25% institutional funds to 75% federal funds. The institution does not plan to utilize funds from the FWS Program for the 2018-2019 year.

INSTITUTIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Institutional scholarship funds are available to students who have exhausted all other avenues of assistance and are still unable to meet their cost of attendance.

The family is expected to contribute towards the student's education, based upon their ability to pay, as determined by formulae explained above. Students who apply for other types of financial aid will automatically be considered for institutional scholarships. Those who wish to be considered for an institutional scholarship should complete the WITS Application for Institutional Scholarship available in the Financial Aid Office. The deadline to apply is August 1st.

While the institution does not guarantee the availability of funds, every effort is made to offer the student a package of federal, state and institutional aid which will assist the student with her unmet financial need.