

# STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Graduate students at the University of North Alabama may be considered for student loans, student employment, assistantships, and scholarships. Graduate students are not eligible to receive the Federal Pell Grant. More information is available on the UNA Student Financial Services website at <http://www.una.edu/financial-aid/>.

**The Office of Student Financial Aid communicates with individual students via the student's official UNA email account, which is the official means of communication for the University. General announcements may be communicated through other channels such as the Student Financial Aid web page or the UNA Portal homepage.**

## Loans

Graduate students may apply for Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loans only by filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Students should apply online at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa> (<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa/>) at least eight weeks prior to the beginning of the term during which the graduate student plans to enroll. Students must be registered for a minimum of five hours per semester to be eligible for federal loans.

Students may also apply for alternative or private student loans. Alternative student loans are private loans made through lending institutions based upon the student's level of creditworthiness as determined by the lender. The student's level of creditworthiness affects the loan terms and determines if a co-signer is required. The student must also be registered for a minimum of five credit hours per semester. Private student loans may be more expensive than federal government loans and cannot be part of a federal consolidation loan in repayment. Generally speaking, students should consider private education loans only if Federal Stafford Loans have been exhausted. Students can compare multiple loans using the Fin Aid Loan Comparison Calculator at <http://www.finaid.org/calculators/loancomp.phtml> (<http://www.finaid.org/calculators/loancomp.phtml>).

## Residual Aid Refunds

All financial aid funds, except work study, are credited to the student's individual account. If the payments and financial aid credits exceed the student's charges, the residual amount will be issued to the student in the form of a paper check or eREFUND. Residual aid checks are written on a regular, timely schedule by the UNA Business Office. Checks will be mailed to the student's permanent mailing address, unless the student is living in a residence hall on campus. If the student lives in a residence hall on campus, the residual aid check will be mailed to the student's campus mailbox. If a student would like to receive a refund via eREFUND, the student will need to sign up for eREFUNDS through the UNA Student Account Center (Ebill Site).

## Institutional Scholarship Refund Policy:

Institutional scholarships are applied toward the payment of UNA tuition and fees, on-campus room and board, textbooks at the UNA Bookstore. The total amount of institutional scholarship awards (per semester) may not exceed the cost of tuition, on-campus room, board and textbooks purchased through the UNA Bookstore when added to any other institutional scholarship. Institutional Scholarships are non-refundable and may not result in a cash payment to the student.

Students who receive federal aid or non-institutional scholarships may receive excess funds.

## Part-Time Employment

Graduate students are also eligible for Federal Work Study and University Work Study, a non-federal employment program on campus. Federal Work Study eligibility is determined after the graduate student files the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, which may be filed online at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa> (<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa/>).

It is the responsibility of the student to find an available position, make application, and take the necessary actions to get hired by the respective UNA office or department. The student employment program is managed from the UNA Office of Human Resources. More details on the University's student employment program may be found at <http://www.una.edu/financial-aid> (<http://www.una.edu/financial-aid/>).

## Graduate Assistantships

The University also offers a number of graduate assistantships to qualified graduate students. The primary objective of the graduate assistantship is to help the student successfully complete the stated educational goal in a timely manner. The assistantships provide professional, experiential opportunities which enhance the education of the graduate student and complement his or her formal studies through either research, instruction, or administrative assignments.

To qualify for a graduate assistantship, a student must be fully admitted in a graduate degree program, registered for a minimum of five graduate hours at the University of North Alabama, and have approval from the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled. Assistantships may be renewed for more than one award period, but not more than three award periods (academic years).

Graduate assistantships may include a tuition benefit and a monthly stipend. These positions are posted on the university's website at <http://www.una.edu/career> (<http://www.una.edu/career/>); applicants may also contact the sponsoring department program chair for graduate assistantship opportunities. For more information regarding graduate assistantships, please contact the Office of Student Employment located in Human Resources.

## Endowed Scholarships

A limited number of privately endowed scholarships may be available to graduate students. The Endowed scholarships application is available November 1 and must be submitted by March 1. Applications will be available at <http://www.una.edu/financial-aid> (<http://www.una.edu/financial-aid/>). More information about scholarship opportunities for graduate students is available at UNA Student Financial Aid or online at <http://www.finaid.org>.

## Withdrawal

If a student drops classes, withdraws, or makes other academic changes, the financial aid awards may be adjusted and repayment may be required.

If a student receives Federal Student Aid (except Federal Work Study) and subsequently withdraws from all course hours during the semester, the student is subject to federal regulations regarding complete withdrawal. If the student has not completed at least 60% of the academic semester,

he or she may have to return a portion of the Federal Student Aid to the University.

If the student stops attending classes without officially withdrawing, his or her financial aid awards may be adjusted and repayment may be required.

## **Satisfactory Academic Progress**

To be eligible for federal student aid, the student must show academic progress toward a stated degree goal. The student's academic progress is checked at the end of each semester. The student must pass 67 percent of all graduate work attempted at UNA and other institutions. Student financial aid is available for up to 150% of the number of hours required to complete degree requirements. The number of hours allowed to complete graduate degree requirements varies by program and the number of hours required to complete degree requirements. Finally, the student must maintain the cumulative UNA GPA specified by the degree program. Notification of the student's current Satisfactory Academic Progress status will be available in UNA Portal Self-Service each semester.