

## WHAT IS AN EXPECTED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION?

The Expected Family Contribution (EFC) is calculated based on the information you reported on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The federal processor uses “federal methodology” to calculate your EFC as legislated by the U.S. Congress. This is not necessarily a true contribution nor is it the amount of any check you’ll have to write to the University. It is a component that our office is required to use when determining eligibility for need-based aid.

## WHAT IF MY FAMILY ISN’T WILLING TO CONTRIBUTE?

There are thirteen dependency questions on the FAFSA. You are considered dependent if you cannot answer “yes” to at least one of the dependency questions.

The Expected Family Contribution for a dependent student measures your and your parent(s)’ ability to pay for college; it does not measure the family’s willingness to pay. Federal regulations prohibit our office from taking the parents’ unwillingness to pay into consideration when awarding financial aid.

Whether or not your parents claim you as an exemption on their federal income tax return has no bearing on your dependency status for financial aid.

Contact your financial aid advisor if you feel your family situation warrants a review of your dependency status. Foster parents, grandparents and/or legal guardians should not be used as your parent-of-record on your FAFSA. You may submit the “Appeal for Independent Status” form and the required documentation to request a review of your dependency status.

## HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO ATTEND?

The office establishes standard Cost of Attendance each year as a basis for awarding financial aid funds. The Cost of Attendance is the maximum you can receive in financial aid and scholarships and is also known as the student budget. These budgets reflect modest but adequate expenses for Nevada based on research conducted by our office. They include estimated amounts for

- tuition and fees;
- books and supplies;
- room and board;
- personal and miscellaneous expenses; and
- transportation.

It is what it might cost you to attend during periods of enrollment. It does not include periods of non-enrollment such as summer or breaks. It could include everything from toothpaste, tuition, books and supplies, to pizza on the weekends. It is not the true costs nor is it the amount of any check you’ll have to write to the University.

The actual cost would be determined by your individual lifestyle and spending choices. Budgets are adjusted on an individual basis for enrollment status, residency status, and specific programs of study such as nursing or medical schools. We encourage you to create a spending plan or budget online at [www.edwise.org](http://www.edwise.org) to help you be realistic about your spending and be wise with your funds.

Your individual student budget is determined by questions you answered on the FAFSA and is listed on the Offer Letter. If any budget element is not correct as listed on your Offer Letter, please submit a “Reporting Resources and Changes” form. It is imperative to double-check the accuracy of the budget items listed. If our office discovers that your budget is incorrect AT ANY TIME during the year, we are required to make corrections. Corrections could result in a bill due to the University and/or changes to your financial aid and/or scholarships.

### Estimated 2009-2010 Academic Year Budgets (2 semesters)

ON-CAMPUS	FULL-TIME	3/4 TIME	1/2 TIME
Tuition/Fees	4700	3580	2656
Books/Supplies	1300	900	700
Room/Board	10145	10145	10145
Personal	2655	1475	899
Transportation	1200	900	600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$17,000</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>
OFF-CAMPUS	FULL-TIME	3/4 TIME	1/2 TIME
Tuition/Fees	4700	3580	2656
Books/Supplies	1300	900	700
Room/Board	9995	9995	9995
Personal	3205	1805	1109
Transportation	2800	2200	1600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$22,000</b>	<b>\$18,480</b>	<b>\$16,060</b>
WITH PARENT	FULL-TIME	3/4 TIME	1/2 TIME
Tuition/Fees	4700	3580	2656
Books/Supplies	1300	900	700
Room/Board	2250	2250	2250
Personal	1950	1470	724
Transportation	2800	2200	1600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$13,000</b>	<b>\$10,400</b>	<b>\$7,930</b>

#### Tuition and Fees

- The rates listed above are estimated at 15 credits per semester for undergraduates and 10 graduate level credits for graduate students plus mandatory fees.
- Tuition and fees may be higher or lower, depending on your program of study, class standing, and residency status.
- For residency questions, contact Admissions and Records.

#### Room and Board

You are assigned one of three student budgets based on the living arrangements you reported on your FAFSA.

**On-Campus:** Housing costs can vary significantly based on your living arrangements. Residential Life offers a variety of room types and meal plans. Our office uses the average double occupancy cost in determining this budget component.

**Off-Campus:** The Reno/Sparks communities offer many options for living arrangements. The financial aid budget provides up to \$500 per month for rent (double occupancy), \$111 per month shared utilities, and \$500 per month for food and other household expenses.

**With Parent/Relative:** If you live at home or with a relative and commute to campus for classes, you reduce your overall costs significantly. An allowance for room and board of \$2,250 for the academic year is included in the student budget if you live with a parent or relative.

### **Books and Supplies**

Costs may vary by program, course load, and specific course requirements. You may be able to reduce your costs significantly by buying used books, buying books only as they are needed, or using the University's extensive library system.

### **Personal and Miscellaneous**

This category represents all other student expenses that are allowable by federal financial aid regulations—clothes and laundry, personal hygiene, and entertainment. It is the most variable and individualized component of any student's budget. Personal spending can make or break a college budget! It is suggested that you track your expenditures, set up an allowance for expenditures, and stick to your budget. Keep in mind, if you live off-campus, you will save money by having roommates. Also remember the five C's—cars, clothes, credit cards, coffee and cell phones—can bust your budget! Our office does not consider cell phones as a component. *Exorbitant spending on cell phones, texting and unlimited service can easily cause your budget to be overspent.*

### **Transportation**

Costs in this category include, but are not limited to travel to and from the student's residence to class, bus fare, gasoline, parking permits, etc... Financial aid's use is not intended for students to purchase vehicles, but to assist with day to day transportation expenses.

### **Budget Revision Request**

Budget revision requests may be submitted for medical/dental bills not covered by insurance; a one-time computer purchase; USAC costs; costs related to a documented disability; health insurance; and child care. All expenses must occur during the current academic year and be documented. If an increase is approved, your eligibility will be reevaluated, and if possible, additional aid may be offered. Budget increases for computer purchases can only be used for loan eligibility.

#### BUDGET TIPS

- Buy used textbooks
- Get a roommate and share expenses
- Carpool
- Clip coupons
- Ask for a student discount
- Take public transportation
- Avoid using credit cards
- Eat at home
- Limit cell phone use and text messaging
- Shop at discount stores
- Entertain at home
- Make coffee at home
- Utilize the least expensive parking pass and use campus escort
- Start saving now – every little bit helps

## HOW IS THE AMOUNT OF FINANCIAL AID DETERMINED?

Our office will attempt to meet your need with an offer that consists of a combination of grants, loans, and Work-Study. The type and amount of aid offered is determined by a combination of demonstrated financial need, federal award maximums, fund availability, and consideration of additional resources such as scholarships, fee waivers and stipends, veteran's benefits, 3<sup>rd</sup> party payments, etc.

Need-based financial aid is available to families who demonstrate "need-eligibility". The formula used to determine need-eligibility is:

$$\begin{array}{r} \text{Cost of Attendance (Budget)} \\ - \text{Expected Family Contribution (EFC)} \\ \hline = \text{Need Eligibility} \end{array}$$

Depending on your eligibility and the availability of funds, awards are made in the following sequence:

- Pell Grants
- Academic Competiveness Grant (less than 60 earned credits)
- SMART Grant (61-120 earned credits)
- TEACH Grant
- Additional Resources (fee waivers, stipends, veteran's benefits, 3<sup>rd</sup> party payments, etc.)
- Scholarships
- Subsidized Stafford Loans (up to the maximum eligibility based on grade level)
- Other federal/state/institutional grants
- College Work-Study
- Unsubsidized Stafford Loans
- PLUS Loans

Our awarding policy states that you may not receive more than 50% of your standard budget in gift aid. If an additional scholarship or need-based fund is added to the Offer Letter at any time, our office will reconsider your Offer Letter and adjust aid accordingly. It is your responsibility to notify our office of any resource being received to fund your education not listed on the Offer Letter such as, but not limited to, outside scholarships, 3<sup>rd</sup> party payments, fee waivers, stipends, veteran's benefits, etc. This policy allows our office to assist a greater percentage of need-eligible students with gift aid.