FINANCIAL AID

No student should ever decide against attending Concordia College on the basis of cost without first conferring with the Financial Aid Office. More than $50 million per year in financial aid is made available by the college, gifts to the college, and the state and federal governments. Funds are distributed through scholarships, grants, loans and work opportunities to students who without such help would be unable to attend college.

Eligibility for assistance is based on need and/or on academic achievement. Need-based financial aid is applied toward those attendance costs that you and your family cannot provide, while merit-based financial aid recognizes academic potential. Aid is granted for a one-year period only, so application must be made each fall or spring for the coming academic year.

A student is expected to maintain satisfactory academic progress according to the standards and practices of Concordia. Failure to do so may result in ineligibility for financial aid. For specific information on Satisfactory Academic Progress as it relates to financial aid eligibility, please see www.ConcordiaCollege.edu/sappolicy (https://concordia-www.s3.amazonaws.com/files/resources/finaidhandbook-2023-24.pdf)

How to Apply for Financial Aid

To apply for all forms of need-based financial aid – scholarships, grants, loans, work study – you need only complete one form: the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which is available at www.studentaid.gov/fafsa (http://www.studentaid.gov/fafsa/).

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid is available in October and should be completed and sent in as soon as possible after Oct. 1 for the following academic year.

There is no deadline for incoming students for completion of the FAFSA. For returning students, the deadline to submit the FAFSA is March 15.

Financial aid is awarded to first-year and transfer students on a rolling basis, which means that as soon as you are accepted for admission and file for financial aid, you will be notified concerning financial aid. **Returning students can expect aid offer notification beginning in late May** and carrying on into the summer depending upon when the FAFSA is submitted and after state and federal program parameters are finalized. **Remember that need-based financial aid can only be given on an annual basis – reapplication must be made each year.** Because the financial status of a family often changes, it is impossible to award aid for more than one year.

A financial aid offer is based on information included on the corresponding FAFSA year. The FAFSA utilizes prior-prior year tax information, for example, the FAFSA for the 2026-2027 academic year is based on 2024 tax information. We understand that for some families, the income year you are required to report on the FAFSA does not accurately reflect your current financial situation. If your family circumstances have changed, please reach out to the Financial Aid Office.

Financial Aid Revisions

Your financial aid offer may be revised based on receipt of additional information or financial assistance from other sources. You are required to notify the Financial Aid Office of all such aid received from any source.

Scholarships and Grants

Scholarships are given to recognize outstanding achievements and/or provide assistance based on financial need. Grants provide financial assistance based on financial need. Grant and scholarship funds are outright gifts and need not be repaid. Institutional scholarships and grants are only available during fall and spring semesters and require full-time enrollment (minimum of 12 academic credits each semester).

The amount offered is based upon need determined by the federal need-analysis formula. Concordia College adheres to all applicable federal and state data privacy r protecting your personal information.

Concordia Grants: Concordia grants are offered on the basis of financial need.

Concordia Congregational Matching Scholarship: If you are awarded a congregational scholarship by your church, notification of this scholarship must be received by the Financial Aid Office no later than **Aug. 15, 2026**, to be eligible for the matching scholarship. Even if the scholarship is for second semester, the deadline for *notification* is still Aug. 15. Concordia will match up to $500 per year. It is not acceptable for parents or other relatives to contribute to the Concordia Congregational Matching Scholarship and to designate their relatives as the recipient. This is a violation of tax law that can jeopardize nonprofit status for both Concordia and the church. Concordia reserves the right to refuse matching funds if the program is used improperly. Congregational scholarships must be drawn on church checking accounts to be eligible for the match. Scholarships from organizations outside of the church (for example, Catholic United Financial and Thrivent for Lutherans) do not qualify for matching funds. Students receiving the Concordia Promise, VA benefits, or any tuition allowance or exchange are not eligible to receive the matching funds.

Concordia Endowed and Restricted Scholarships: Concordia receives funds from a large number of foundations, corporations, and private donors to be offered as scholarships to students on the basis of financial need and/or selection criteria established by the individual donors. Concordia scholarships/awards may be renamed to reflect donor-funded scholarships. Admission to Concordia College constitutes students' application for these scholarships.

External Scholarships: You are required to notify the Financial Aid Office of all such aid received from any source via the External Scholarship Reporting Form. If you are receiving need-based financial aid, external scholarships might cause your award to exceed federal need. In these cases, we are required by federal regulations to either justify additional funding or reduce need-based aid. If you have unusual expenses that would justify the additional funding, please attach an explanation to the External Scholarship Reporting Form.

In the event that we cannot justify additional funding, Concordia's policy is to reduce loans or work study. Keep in mind, however, that total gift assistance from all sources cannot exceed comprehensive fees (tuition, standard fees, standard housing and food plans). When this occurs, Concordia College Scholarships and/or Grants will be reduced to keep gift assistance within the comprehensive cost of attendance. External scholarships are credited one-half to each semester unless the donor requests, in writing, that all funds can be credited to either the first or the second semester.

Merit-Based Scholarships: The Concordia Admission Office publishes a complete list of merit-based scholarships annually. Incoming students

who are offered a merit/performance scholarship may receive funding for a maximum of eight consecutive semesters or until graduation, whichever comes first, provided the student meets the necessary renewal criteria and Satisfactory Academic Progress guidelines (view guidelines on the following page).

Minnesota State Grant Program: All Minnesota residents will be evaluated for eligibility for a Minnesota Grant if they complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid and have the results sent to Concordia. The grant is offered based on financial need. Official program requirements and longevity of grant eligibility are determined by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education and the State of Minnesota. Visit the Minnesota Office of Higher Education website at https://ohe.mn.gov/grant-scholarship/minnesota-state-grant (https://ohe.mn.gov/grant-scholarship/minnesota-state-grant/), or contact the Financial Aid Office for the most current regulation. You must be registered for at least 15 credits each semester to receive the maximum Minnesota Grant for which you are eligible.

Federal Pell Grant Program: The Federal Pell Grant is a program designed to provide eligible undergraduate students with help to defray the costs of a postsecondary education. Application is made through completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant: This federal grant is intended to assist those students with exceptional financial need who, without the grant, would be unable to continue their undergraduate education. Grants under this program range from $100 to $4,000 per year.

TEACH Grant: Concordia College participates in the federal TEACH Grant program. TEACH Grants are offered to students planning to teach in certain subject areas and in low-income schools. At Concordia, students must be enrolled in or have completed Education 212 in order to be eligible (usually taken in the sophomore year). For more information, contact the financial aid office.

Reserve Officer Training Corps Scholarships: These awards, providing for tuition, fees, textbooks, supplies and a monthly stipend, may be offered to students who meet established criteria. See ROTC (https://catalog.concordiacollege.edu/undergraduate-programs/undergraduate-academic-community/expanded-academic-opportunities/reserve-officer-training-corps/).

Census Date: The value of Pell Grants and Minnesota State Grants are determined based on enrollment as of the census date (generally the 10th day of class each semester). Per federal regulations, no adjustments can be made after these dates.

Loans

Three types of loans for college costs at Concordia are available:

1. **Federal Direct Loan Program:** This program, through the Department of Education, provides loans at a fixed interest rate. Interest rates for the upcoming academic year are determined by Congress and can be found on the Federal Student Aid website, https://studentaid.gov. Students demonstrating need, according to federal guidelines, may obtain a subsidized Federal Direct Loan. Under this program, the federal government will pay the interest until you graduate or are enrolled less than half time. Students who do not demonstrate financial need may obtain an unsubsidized Federal Direct Loan and interest will accrue while enrolled in college, as well as repayment. The maximum amount for this loan is $5,500 per year for first-year students, $6,500 for second-year students and $7,500 for each year thereafter, with an undergraduate maximum of $31,000 for dependent students. Based on updated federal regulations, students enrolled less than full-time in a semester and/or less than 24 credit hours within one academic year, will be subject to a prorated loan reduction.
2. **Federal Direct Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students:** The Federal Direct PLUS program was established to help parents borrow money to defray the cost of education for their dependent children. Regardless of income, parents who are creditworthy may borrow up to the cost of education minus any financial aid the student is receiving. Fixed Interest rates for the upcoming academic year are determined by Congress Interest rates for the upcoming academic year are determined by Congress and can be found on the Federal Student Aid website, https://studentaid.gov. Applications and further information are available from the Financial Aid Office. All new borrowers after July 1, 2026, may not exceed $20,000 per year per dependent student (combined total for parents, if applicable) and a $65,000 aggregate limit per dependent student (without regard to amounts forgiven, repaid, canceled, or discharged).
3. **Private Loans:** Many commercial lenders offer private student loans. Generally, these loans require a co-signer. Application forms are available online and borrowers are urged to carefully evaluate the interest rate and fees before processing a private loan. Concordia College maintains a list of private loan lenders (https://choice.fastproducts.org/FastChoice/home/234600/). Students are free to select a private loan program that is not on this list. If a student chooses to borrow from a private loan program, the use of a lender or loan program is entirely the choice of the student. If a student chooses to use a loan program that is not on Concordia's list of lenders, we will process the loan in the same time frame as we would for the loan programs previously used by Concordia students.

Work

Student Part-Time Employment: A variety of valuable employment opportunities in part-time work exist for Concordia College students.

A substantial number of students hold on-campus part-time jobs while attending Concordia College. In fact, approximately 900 students – first year to seniors – are employed on campus each year.

There are a variety of jobs available that are arranged around class blocks. Examples of on-campus positions include Dining Services culinary and service positions. Other on-campus jobs include departmental and administrative clerical help, Information Technology Services, Library, and grounds services. Students can find campus jobs on Handshake, a job posting site found on the Career Center website.

For students receiving financial aid, part-time employment may be considered as part of their financial aid offer. Work Opportunity on the financial aid offer provides the opportunity to work, not the guarantee of a job.

Federal and Minnesota Work-Study Program: Students with financial need who require a job to help pay for college expenses are potentially eligible for employment by the college under federal and state supported work-study programs.

To work under this program at Concordia College, a student must be enrolled at least half time (6 credits) and be in good standing, or be accepted for enrollment as at least a half-time student.

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

Policy: In accordance with federal and state regulations, all undergraduate students must demonstrate satisfactory academic progress toward the attainment of a degree. At Concordia College, satisfactory academic progress is monitored at the end of every academic period (i.e., semester and/or summer school).

All financial aid applicants are subject to the standards outlined here even if financial aid was not received in the past. There are three distinct dimensions to the satisfactory academic progress standards: maintaining the minimum required grade point average, successfully completing a degree at the required pace of progression, and completing your program of study within an established time frame.

At minimum, students must maintain the academic progress requirements outlined in the chart below and obtain a first bachelor's degree within 189 attempted credits.

Minimum Academic Progress Standards for Financial Aid

Academic Period	Cumulative GPA	Pace
First Academic Period	1.7	50.00%
Second Academic Period	1.8	62.50%
Third Academic Period	1.9	68.75%
Fourth Academic Period and Beyond	2.0	68.75%

Admission to Concordia College or academic standing as defined by the Registrar's Office does not necessarily constitute maintaining satisfactory academic progress for purposes of financial aid.

Programs Covered by this Policy: All federal, state and institutional scholarship, grant, loan and work-study programs are covered by this policy. Institutional scholarships and awards are covered by this policy and are also subject to the criteria defined for the specific scholarship/award.

Monitoring Progress: A student's progress will be monitored at the end of fall and spring semesters and summer school. The overall cumulative grade point average (GPA), pace and maximum time-frame assessment will be based on the student's entire academic record, including all transfer credits accepted.

Maximum Time Frame: Undergraduate students are eligible to receive financial aid for up to 150 percent of their program length. As a result, students acquiring a first Bachelors degree must obtain their degree within 189 attempted credits. Attempted credits include all "I," "F," "DR," "U," "W", "NR" and "NG" grades; along with satisfactory grades of "A,""B," "C," "D" and "S," including pluses and minuses. Courses that are repeated are counted each time they are attempted yet only count as "earned" credits once (assuming the student earns a passing grade). A student may retake a passed course one additional time to improve the grade and still receive financial aid assuming the student meets other satisfactory academic progress standards. If the student receives a failing grade in the previously passed course, the course cannot be included in determining future federal financial aid. Students can retake a failed course until they are successful in passing the course and still receive aid assuming they are in compliance with all other satisfactory progress standards. All transfer credits accepted by the institution are counted as attempted and earned. Audit credits are not counted. Seeking multiple majors or minors is not an acceptable reason to exceed maximum time frame.

Pace of Progression: Pace of progression is measured by dividing the cumulative number of earned credit hours by the cumulative number of credit hours the student has attempted at the completion of each academic period. This includes any course for which the student has remained enrolled past the Drop/Add period. A student's pace must be 50% or greater after the first academic period, 62.50% or greater after the second academic period and 68.75% or greater thereafter. Satisfactory grades are "A," "B," "C," "D" and "S," including pluses and minuses. Unsatisfactory grades are "F," "DR," "U," "NG," "NR," "I," and "W." Both Concordia credits and transfer credits are used to calculate pace.

Minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average: A student must obtain at least a cumulative GPA of 1.7 at the end of the first academic period, a 1.8 at the end of the second academic period, a 1.9 at the end of the third academic period and a 2.0 or greater thereafter. Concordia and transfer courses (i.e., overall cumulative GPA) are used to calculate the cumulative GPA. Grades of "NG," "NR," "S," "I," "W," "U" and "DR" do not affect the GPA calculation. Grade changes of an incomplete ("I") grade will affect the GPA calculation once the final grade is submitted.

Failure to Maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress: A student who does not meet the above standards of satisfactory academic progress at the end of each academic period will automatically be placed on financial aid warning for the following academic term. A student on financial aid warning may continue to receive financial aid for one academic period even though the student is not meeting the minimum satisfactory academic progress standards. At the end of the warning period a student's satisfactory progress will be evaluated again. If it is determined that the student is meeting the minimum progress standards, the student will be considered to be in good standing and may receive financial aid in the upcoming term. If the student fails to meet the minimum satisfactory academic standards after the warning period, aid will be suspended for the upcoming term.

A student will be placed on **suspended** status if the student:

- Fails to make financial aid satisfactory academic progress while on **warning** status or
- Has a cumulative GPA below 2.0 after two years of college attendance (two years of college attendance is defined as any four semesters of attendance, including summer)

A student whose financial aid has been suspended is not eligible to receive financial aid until the student meets one of the following conditions:

- Continues to attend Concordia College at their own expense and returns to full compliance with all parts of the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy or
- Demonstrates special circumstances to justify appeal consideration.

Students will be notified through their Concordia College email address if they have been placed on warning or suspension.

Right to Appeal: A student whose financial aid has been suspended can submit a written appeal to the Financial Aid Office. An appeal form is included with the suspension notification letter and is also available in the Financial Aid Office.

The appeal form and supporting documentation should be submitted to the Associate Director of Financial Aid by following the submission steps and deadline information indicated in the suspension notification. The appeal should clearly detail the mitigating circumstances that hindered the student's academic performance and relevant documentation should accompany the appeal form. Acceptable reasons to appeal include but are not limited to: illness or injury of the student, illness or death of an immediate relative of the student, military service, divorce or separation of student/spouse, etc.

Acceptable reasons to appeal maximum time frame suspension include but are not limited to: change of major, transfer credits that did not apply toward your degree/program, and music ensemble and private instruction credits for students not majoring or minoring in music. Seeking multiple majors or minors alone is not an acceptable reason to exceed the maximum time frame.

If an appeal is granted, or approved, the student will be placed on financial aid probation and aid eligibility will be reinstated for one academic period. Concordia may develop individual academic plans for students whose appeal has been approved if it is evident that the student cannot attain, or is unlikely to attain, the satisfactory academic progress standards after completing one academic period of coursework, or if outside assistance is required (i.e., working with an academic counselor, personal counselor or other resources) to improve the situation. The purpose of an academic plan is to ensure that the student is able to meet the institution's satisfactory academic progress standards by a specific point in time. Assuming the student meets all conditions of the academic plan for the term, or meets the minimum satisfactory academic progress standards, the student can continue to receive aid in subsequent terms until they are again meeting the satisfactory academic progress standards listed above. If the student fails to meet the minimum satisfactory academic progress standards or the conditions of the academic plan, future aid is suspended until the student is in full compliance with all satisfactory academic progress standards or provides justification for another appeal consideration.

Action taken on a financial aid appeal is final and is transmitted to the student via their Concordia email. Appeals should be submitted by the deadline detailed in the suspension notification. Depending on the timeliness of the appeal, it is possible for a student to have an appeal denied and also not be entitled to a refund of charges if the student chooses to withdraw from classes. A student who enrolls and attends class whose appeal is subsequently denied will be eligible for a refund of charges based solely on the schedule of refunds in the Business Office.

Cautionary Note

Because the status of federal and state student assistance programs is ever changing, we run the risk that published information may become outdated. Should this occur, we will publish all applicable changes using the numerous media available on this campus.

Glossary of Terms

FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid – financial statement that is used in applying for need-based financial aid

Grant: a monetary gift awarded on the basis of financial need

Lender: your local bank, savings and loan, credit union, or other financial institution participating in a private loan program

Need: the difference between the cost of attendance and the Student Aid Index (SAI) as calculated by the FAFSA

Package: the financial aid, determined by the Financial Aid Office, that you receive

Rolling Basis: an arrangement in which once you are accepted and apply for financial aid, you are notified immediately of the financial aid decision

Scholarship: a monetary gift usually awarded according to donor's specifications, such as financial need, achievement or field of study

FAFSA Submission Summary: the report the student receives from the USDE indicating financial information on file regarding the student; it is used in the corrections process

Verification: a requirement of the federal government to verify accuracy of the financial data in the aid application

Work Study: on- or off-campus part-time employment that students can participate in while in school. Earnings are paid by the employer and through federal and state funds as applicable