

Friday, January 27, 2012

Dear Parents of Financial Aid Applicants:

The beginning of a new year is generally the time that our office receives inquiries from families about when they should reapply for financial aid. The reapplication process is, for the most part, the same as it has been in the past. However, there is one new procedure this year that will, hopefully, streamline the process for most of our families.

The deadline date for reapplication materials is May 1, 2012. We hope that this will give you enough time to file your federal income tax returns before completing the FAFSA. The reason that we would like you to wait until your income taxes are complete before filing the FAFSA is that the Department of Education encourages you to utilize a new tax data retrieval process when completing the FAFSA. Northwestern is supporting this effort because it will mean that we do not need to collect full tax copies from all families as we have had to do in the past. We have developed a 2012-13 Tax Status form that should help you manage this new procedure.

We realize that with any procedural changes there may be some unforeseen questions and challenges. We want to assure you that we will work closely with you through the process and that sufficient resources have been budgeted for all applicants who demonstrate financial need and apply in a timely manner.

## **2012-13 Financial Aid Process**

**Due May 1, 2012 \***

### **I. 2012-13 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**

--file electronically at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>

The 2012-13 FAFSA was available from the Department of Education on January 1. You are encouraged to wait until you have your 2011 taxes filed so that you can use the tax data retrieval process offered by the Department of Education. The tax retrieval option will be available beginning February 1, 2012. *If you have already filed your FAFSA, you may still be able to update your tax information using the retrieval process. Please refer to the enclosed 2012-13 Tax Status form for instructions.*

\* **Illinois residents** are encouraged to use estimated tax figures to complete their FAFSA application as early as possible due to limited funding for the State of Illinois MAP grant program. Then, when your 2011 taxes are filed, you should update your FAFSA information online using the tax data retrieval process.

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**II. 2012-13 College Scholarship Service (CSS) PROFILE**

--file electronically at <http://profileonline.collegeboard.com>

You will be able to file the CSS PROFILE form over the internet at any point, but again, it is suggested that you wait until your taxes are completed.

**III. 2012-13 Tax Status Form (enclosed)**

--to be used for completing the FAFSA and then submitted by mail to the Office of Undergraduate Financial Aid, 1801 Hinman Avenue, Evanston, IL 60208 or faxed to (847) 491-5969.

This worksheet is designed to help you understand the new tax data retrieval process and to give us information about any special circumstances you would like us to consider in determining your financial aid eligibility. Copies of the form will also be available on our website at <http://ug-finaid.northwestern.edu/>.

**IV. 2012-13 Northwestern University Aid Application (UAPP)**

--available via CAESAR in mid-February

Students must file a University Aid Application online. This is a form regarding students' extracurricular information used in financial aid packaging. In February, students will be able to access the UAPP through their To-Do List in CAESAR:

CAESAR > For Students > Financial Services > To Do Item History.

**V. Additional Financial Aid Documentation/Information\***

--requested on a case-by-case basis from the Office of Undergraduate Financial Aid.

This could include a request for verification forms, documentation of a special circumstance (change in income, change in employment) or clarification of reported information.

Students may access CAESAR to see if the Office of Undergraduate Financial Aid has received their application materials. We will review the files in the order the application materials are received and students will be notified when awards are available to view in CAESAR beginning in mid-June. All students who have applied on time will receive an aid decision by the middle of July.

We appreciate your patience as we establish this new procedure and encourage you to contact our office with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Financial Aid Committee  
Office of Undergraduate Financial Aid