

Step-by-Step Financial Aid Process

1. **If new to VCU, apply for admission to a degree/certificate program.** Students do not need to receive an admissions decision before applying for financial aid.
2. **Complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) every year.** The FAFSA is available on the web at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>. This web application automatically prompts applicants to enter all required fields and questions any discrepant data. Renewal applicants may access their Renewal FAFSA at this site using their Personal Identification Number (PIN). The federal processor will send a FAFSA PIN number to continuing applicants each year. Students and parents also may request a PIN by going to <http://www.pin.ed.gov/>.
3. **Review the Student Aid Report (SAR) or electronic SAR Acknowledgement.** Students will receive the SAR after filing the 2008-09 FAFSA. Students should make any necessary corrections but should not send the SAR to the processor or make corrections online. Instead, students should submit corrections to the VCU Office of Financial Aid for electronic transmittal. If all of the information is accurate and VCU is listed as a school to receive the FAFSA results, students should keep the SAR for their records. Please note that VCU students should ignore the verification notice on the SAR if selected for verification.
4. **Respond promptly to financial aid or any other inquiries from VCU.** The VCU Office of Financial Aid will notify students if additional information is needed to complete processing of their financial aid application. Therefore, it is imperative that students check their VCU email account regularly. It is also the responsibility of students to maintain current addresses and telephone numbers with VCU.
5. **Receive Financial Aid Award Notification (FAAN) from VCU.** First-time freshmen who have filed their FAFSA by the priority filing dates and responded promptly to requests for information should receive their FAAN in April. Other students filing by these dates should receive their FAAN in June. Applications submitted after these dates will be processed in the order in which they are received.
6. **To avoid financial aid disbursement delays, submit required paperwork.** Some students may be required to submit an Authorization to Use Federal Title IV Funds form or sign an electronic Master Promissory Note; those students will be notified. Students should submit a Change Form if they wish to reduce or decline aid offered or if they need to report changes to the eligibility factors listed in the FAAN. Financial aid not listed on the FAAN, including scholarships awarded by other VCU departments, may require a recalculation of financial aid eligibility, as well as graduating at the end of the Fall 2008 semester.
7. **Sign up for direct deposit.** A student's financial aid is credited to his/her VCU student account. Once all university charges have been deducted, any excess financial aid will be paid through a refund. Direct deposit makes these funds available more quickly by electronically depositing the refund to a personal bank account. Applications are available on the VCU Disbursements Operations website (<http://www.vcu.edu/treasury/dispooper.htm>).
8. **Register for classes.** New undergraduates will register for classes when they attend an Orientation program (First Year Student Services will send information to students). Continuing students may register for classes via the web. All other students should contact their adviser/academic department about registration.
9. **Students eligible for veteran's benefits should contact the Veterans Affairs counselor** in the Office of Records and Registration at (804) 828-6166.
10. **Receive VCU bill in early August (if registered).** Bills are payable one semester at a time. Students will receive a bill if their financial aid does not cover their university charges. Students receiving bills should subtract aid that appears on the bill and pay the difference, or sign up for the VCU Installment Payment Plan.

Helpful Hints for Completing FAFSA on the Web

Complete the Pre-Application Worksheet

Students will find completing *FAFSA on the Web* easier if they first complete the Pre-Application Worksheet (available online at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>). The paper FAFSA should not be used for this purpose because the order of the questions on it does not match the order of the *FAFSA on the Web* questions.

Complete 2007 Federal Tax Returns

Please complete the FAFSA using data from completed 2007 tax returns. If necessary, use estimated tax return data to file the FAFSA in order to meet the VCU priority filing date. The VCU Office of Financial Aid may request a signed copy of completed 2007 tax returns from students who file the FAFSA using estimated tax information.

Provide Parental Data if a Health Profession Student or Required

Student answering "No" to each question in Step 3 must provide student and parental information. Health Profession students (Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing or Pharmacy) must provide both student and parental information to apply for Title VII grants and loans from the Department of Health and Human Services.

Provide Accurate Parental Data

Social Security numbers, names, and dates-of-birth of the parents reporting information on the FAFSA must be provided. This information will be matched with the Social Security Administration's database.

Sign the FAFSA Using the PIN

The preferred method for signing *FAFSA on the Web* is using the PIN (the application is processed more quickly). If the student is required to provide parental information, the parent also should sign electronically. Students and parents who do not have a PIN may request one online (<http://www.pin.ed.gov/>). Students and/or parents who do not wish to sign using the PIN should print, sign, and submit the paper signature page.

Use the Appropriate Navigation and Save Buttons

Do not use the navigation buttons (Back, Forward, Reload, and Stop) on the browser's toolbar. Instead, use the "Next" and "Previous" buttons at the bottom of each page of the FAFSA to navigate through the form. Also, do not use the "Save" function under the browser's File menu when saving the FAFSA application. Instead, use the "Save" button at the bottom of the screen.

Additional Information

Detailed information about financial aid programs, policies, and procedures are available online (<http://www.vcu.edu/enroll/finaid>). For questions or printed materials, contact the appropriate Office of Financial Aid location.

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901 W. Franklin St. P.O. Box 843026
Richmond, VA 23284-3026
Telephone: (804) 828-6669
Fax: (804) 827-0060
Email: faidmail@vcu.edu

Medical Center:

Schools of Allied Health Professions, Nursing and Pharmacy

Sanger Hall, Room 1-055
1101 E. Marshall St. P.O. Box 980244
Richmond, VA 23298-0244 (804) 828-9800

School of Dentistry

Lyons Building, Room 309
520 N. 12th St. P.O. Box 980566
Richmond, VA 23298-0566 (804) 828-6374

School of Medicine

Sanger Hall, Room 1-008
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