

## Steps to Applying for Summer Financial Aid

By Jessica Richmond

### This is the process for applying for summer financial aid as I know it.

You can always obtain more info from the Financial Aid Office at <http://www.uakron.edu/finaid/workStudy.php> or by calling them at 330-972-8074.

You can apply for federal work study as well as for student loans to help with expenses over the summer. Note that if you apply for student loans for the summer sessions, the amount of student loans that you are eligible for in the Fall and Spring will be decreased. For example, if you usually take out the maximum subsidized Stafford Loan (\$8500) for the academic year and you request \$2000 of that to cover your summer expenses, you will only have \$6500 left in Subsidized student loans for use in the Fall and Spring.

For Federal Work Study things are a little different. First a few key things to note about what Federal Work Study is :

- NEED-BASED federal money, this means the amount of money you are eligible for is determined by your financial need as specified on the FAFSA. If you have a spouse whose income you report on the FAFSA, this will most likely decrease the amount of Federal Work Study money you are eligible for.
- The maximum (to my knowledge) that you can receive is \$5000. This is for the entire summer (all 3 sessions), from May 12<sup>th</sup> to August 22<sup>nd</sup>
- The amount of money you receive is also based on the number of credit hours you are taking over the summer (this also is considered need). This being said, the amount of money that your Summer Aid Award letter says you are eligible for may NOT be the final amount you get! Last year I originally was approved for the entire amount and then decreased my summer credit hours and the amount

of money I was eligible for decreased. (It took a lot of phone calls to the work study office for me to figure this out!) The summer aid form asks you to specify the number of credit hours you will be taking over the summer (you may need to guesstimate). Do not think that by putting down the max hours you will get the max money! You want to be as realistic as possible so that you are not disappointed when you register for less credit hours than you originally specified and see your award amount decrease! After you have registered for all your summer classes you will want to check out your personal financial aid info available through Zipline to see exactly how much you are really getting.

- Unlike student loans, your tuition fees that are not covered by the Fee Waiver (there always seems to be about \$300 or so that isn't waived) do NOT come directly out of your work study. Therefore, you will receive a bill for those extra fees that you have to pay on your own.
- Work Study positions vary by department, you can work as a research assistant, teaching assistant, office assistant, clinic worker, etc. Checking with your advisor or the secretary of the department is always a good place to start when trying to find a work study placement.
- You are paid bi-weekly through the university (you will have to fill out a time card) and can only work a maximum of 30 hours a week. You receive an hourly wage that may vary based on your position, but I think in general it works out to \$12 or \$13 an hour.
- You can only work until you have earned the amount you have been approved for. In other words, if you are approved for \$3500 and are paid \$12 an hour you would be eligible to work about 291 hours over the

summer (just divide the money you are eligible for by the hourly wage). This means that if you work 30 hours a week, after almost 10 weeks you will have earned the maximum amount of money. You cannot work extra hours to earn more money! If you continue to work and fill out a timecard after your money has been expended, you are working for free!

- The number of weeks you work and hours a week you work are determined by your work study placement, but in my experience, it is extremely flexible!
- These positions are on a first come, first serve basis. There are not always enough spots or federal money for everyone who wants work study so you want to apply early! Applications are available online and at Simmons Hall after March 14<sup>th</sup>.
- To be eligible you must have a 2.25 GPA (I think we are all fine there!) and be enrolled for at least 6 credit hours over the summer. This can be a combination across all summer sessions and does not have to be 6 credits in one session.
- You are eligible to work the entire summer (or until your funds run out) as long as you do not have a break in enrollment for longer than 5 weeks.
- Your summer award letter is typically mailed out two weeks or so after your complete application is submitted.

I believe I have covers everything that I can think of regarding summer financial aid. If you have any additional questions feel free to email me at [jmr1@uakron.edu](mailto:jmr1@uakron.edu) and I will be happy to try and answer any questions you may have. I hope this helps with the financial aid application process!