

TYPES OF FINANCIAL AID FOR GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

→ [FINANCIALAID.UIOWA.EDU](https://financialaid.uiowa.edu)

Your loan options for 2026–27 depend on when you first borrowed in your current program.

New Graduate & Professional Students Starting On or After July 1, 2026

Available Federal Loan

Direct Unsubsidized Loan

- File the FAFSA.
- Interest accrues while you are in school.
- Repayment begins after you leave school or drop below half-time.

Loan Limits

Graduate Students, Master's, and PhD

- Up to \$20,500 per year
- \$100,000 total lifetime limit

Professional Programs (Medicine, Dentistry, Law, Pharmacy, Clinical Psychology PhD)

- Up to \$50,000 per year
- \$200,000 total lifetime limit

Important Notes

- Undergraduate federal loan borrowing **does not count** toward these totals.
- If you are both a graduate and professional student at different times, your combined borrowing cannot exceed \$200,000.

Returning Borrowers in Same Program Legacy Eligible Students

You Lose Legacy Eligibility If You

- Change academic programs
- Withdraw from all courses during a term
- Take a leave of absence

Legacy limits remain in effect for up to three academic years or until you are expected to finish your program, whichever comes first.

Available Federal Loans

Direct Unsubsidized Loan

File the FAFSA. This loan accrues interest while you are in school and enters repayment after you leave or drop below half-time.

Loan Limits for Graduate and Professional Students:

- Up to \$20,500 per year
- \$138,500 total lifetime limit

Important Note

- Undergraduate unsubsidized federal loan borrowing **counts** toward this total.

Direct Graduate PLUS Loan

File the FAFSA and must pass a credit check. This loan accrues interest while you are in school and enters repayment after you leave or drop below half-time.

Loan Limits:

- Up to your full cost of attendance
- No limit on lifetime borrowing

Direct Unsubsidized Loan for Select Health Professionals

File the FAFSA. This loan accrues interest while you are in school and enters repayment after you leave or drop below half-time. Eligible students are automatically awarded based on their program.

Loan Limits for Graduate and Professional Students:

- Pharmacy, MPH, MHA, PhD, Clinical Psychology
 - Up to \$12,500 - \$16,667 per year, based on program length
 - \$224,000 total lifetime limit
- Medicine and Dentistry
 - Up to \$22,222 - \$26,667 per year, based on program length
 - \$224,000 total lifetime limit

Important Note

- Undergraduate and graduate/professional federal loan borrowing **counts** toward this total.

OTHER LOAN OPTIONS

for both new and legacy borrowers

Health Professions Loan

Available to students enrolled in the College of Dentistry and the College of Pharmacy. Students will automatically be considered for this loan if they complete the FAFSA, complete a supplemental form provided by our office, and demonstrate financial need. Funds are limited and are offered on a first-come, first-served basis.

Private Loan

Private loans are available from many lenders, and you may choose any lender you prefer. Review interest rates, repayment options, cosigner requirements, and your ability to repay before borrowing. Visit financialaid.uiowa.edu/private-loans for details and to view our [preferred lender list](#).

Tip: Strong credit may improve eligibility for private loans. See the back of this guide for credit tips.

Lenders that may offer an international student private loan without a U.S. cosigner include MPower Financing, Acent, and SoFi.

STEPS TO RECEIVE FINANCIAL AID

- 1** File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at studentaid.gov every year.
→ FILE ASAP ONCE FAFSA OPENS
- 2** Check MyUI (myui.uiowa.edu) for your financial aid offer and your financial aid to do list.
→ COMPLETE TO-DO ITEMS ASAP BEFORE THE START OF YOUR PROGRAM
- 3** Financial aid will be applied to your U-Bill prior to your program start. Any excess financial aid will be refunded to you during the first week of classes.
→ SET UP DIRECT DEPOSIT IN MYUI

WHERE TO FIND FINANCIAL AID SUPPORT

Graduate and professional students may work with more than one financial aid office. Some professional colleges have their own financial aid staff, while others have staff who provide financial information specific to their program. The Office of Student Financial Aid manages federal aid programs and student loans. These offices work together to support you throughout your program.

Your College or Program

- Fellowships
- Assistantships
- Department scholarships
- Program-specific funding

Office of Student Financial Aid

- Federal and private loans
- Financial Aid Offers
- Loan counseling and repayment guidance
- Questions about federal aid requirements



If you are unsure where to start, contact our office and we will help connect you with the right team.

FINANCIAL WELLNESS TIP: Build Strong Credit

Good credit can help you qualify for private education loans and may allow you to borrow at a lower interest rate. Wise credit habits can also support future goals such as renting an apartment, buying a car, or purchasing a home.

Tips for maintaining strong credit:

- **Pay every bill on time.** Payment history has the biggest impact on your credit score. Even one late payment can lower your score.
- **Keep credit card balances low.** Aim to use less than about 30% of your available credit limit.
- **Avoid taking on more debt than you can manage.** Borrow only what you need and plan ahead for repayment.
- **Check your credit report regularly.** Review your credit report at annualcreditreport.com to make sure your information is accurate.
- **Build a consistent credit history.** Responsible use of a credit card or other small credit account over time can strengthen your credit profile.