

**Columbia University**

**Graduate School of Arts &  
Sciences**

**Financial Aid Handbook  
2005-2006**

**M.A. in French Cultural Studies  
Reid Hall in Paris**

**Columbia University in the City of New York  
107 Low Memorial Library, 535 West 116<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, New York 10027  
(212) 854-3808**

**COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES**

**GSAS Financial Aid Mission Statement**

The Office of Financial Aid of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences is dedicated to providing the full range of information and financial aid resources available for graduate education. Our office seeks to provide efficient administration of a variety of graduate student funding, including Columbia University fellowships, awards from external agencies and foundations, federal student aid and other sources of educational financing. Our goal is to facilitate and implement the necessary financial decisions of GSAS students by offering a comprehensive resource of financial aid information with superior service.

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## **PAYMENT OF TUITION AND FEES**

Student Account Statement  
Office of Student Financial Services  
210 Kent Hall, 1140 Amsterdam Avenue  
New York, NY 10027  
<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/students>

The student account statement is a list of your charges and payments. Charges include tuition, other mandatory fees (such as the one-time transcript fee, and any AcIS fees). The fall 2005 tuition and the spring 2006 tuition will appear on your bill. The summer 2006 tuition charges will be sent in a later bill. You will need to submit a new application for loans for Summer Semester 2006 by March 4th, 2006. If the Financial Aid Office has indicated that you will be receiving a scholarship or student loan, each fund will be listed as an anticipated payment. What will remain is either a debit (which you owe the University) or a credit (which the University owes you).

### **If you owe**

If after calculating all anticipated charges and payments, you still owe the University, payments should be made by the appropriate deadline (last week in August for Fall term and second week in January for Spring term). Payments should be mail to Columbia University, PO Box 19007, Newark, New Jersey 07195-9007.

After the payment due date is past, a one time late payment charge (\$150) and late payment fees (1% a month) may be assessed on the unpaid balance.

### **If you have a fellowship or student loans**

If you have a university fellowship or student loan, these will be credited (paid) to your account **AFTER** the registration period. No late payment charges or late fees will be assessed on amounts being paid by the University.

### **If you have overpaid**

If you have overpaid your account, with a scholarship and Federal loan, for example, you should apply for a refund of the overpayment. Refunds can be requested over the web at <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/students>. Refunds may be issued as paper checks mailed to your local address or as direct deposits to your bank account. Please contact Student Financial Services to file a Direct Deposit Authorization or visit Student Services website above for more information.

## LOAN INFORMATION

### How do I apply for a loan?

#### Step 1

##### Complete the FAFSA (or Renewal FAFSA)

You should submit your FAFSA as early as possible, but no earlier than January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2005. You are encouraged to complete your FAFSA or Renewal FAFSA online at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>. This process is quicker than mailing a paper FAFSA. If you cannot apply online you may obtain a paper FAFSA from high schools, post-secondary schools and local libraries across the U.S. GSAS federal school code is **E00113**.

You should renew your financial aid application each year. Continuing financial aid applicants will be sent a Renewal FAFSA or PIN between late November and January each year. Be sure to keep your address current with the federal processor because your Renewal FAFSA or PIN will be mailed to that address on file as of September. If you do not receive your Renewal FAFSA or PIN by the end of January, visit the PIN website at [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov) to request a PIN. Once you have the PIN, go to [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) submit your FAFSA online.

#### Step 2

##### Review SAR

Approximately two to four weeks after filing your FAFSA, the U.S. Department of Education will send you a student aid report (SAR), summarizing the information reported on your FAFSA. Review your SAR and make any necessary corrections. If your application information has changed, follow the instructions on the SAR to make corrections and return it to the address provided.

#### Step 3

##### Submit loan documents to financial aid office

Our office will receive your electronic student aid report (ESAR) from the federal processor two to four weeks after you apply. If you are applying for federal funds, in addition to the SAR, you should submit the following documents to GSAS Financial Aid Office:

- The 2005-2006 Application for Loans enclosed in this handbook
- Federal Stafford Loan Master Promissory Note (MPN)  
<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/gsas/pdf-files/GEN0207StaffordMPN.pdf>
- Entrance Interview (see page 4).

Students will receive a financial aid award letter **after** all completed forms have been received.

### **Entrance and Exit Interviews**

The Financial Aid Office is required to inform students receiving federal funds about their rights and responsibilities before disbursing federal aid. Students are informed of this information at the time they complete an Entrance Interview. The Entrance Interview can be completed online at <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/sfs/>. You are also required by federal regulation to complete an Exit Interview before you graduate or drop below half-time attendance. The Exit Interview can also be completed online.

### **Who may apply for federal funds?**

In order to receive federal financial aid, you must meet the following criteria:

- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen
- Be enrolled at least half-time
- Be enrolled in a course leading to a degree
- Not be in default on any education loan or owe a refund on an education grant
- Have registered with Selective Service (if required)
- Making satisfactory academic progress

If you meet the above criteria, then you must file the FAFSA in order to be considered for federal financial aid.

### **Verification**

After you receive your SAR, if you are informed that you have been selected for a process known as “verification”, you will be required to submit copies of your completed 2004 federal tax returns (including W-2’s) and the 2005-2006 Verification Worksheet. This form is available at the GSAS Financial Aid Office at 107 Low Library or online:

<http://ifap.ed.gov/vgworksheets/attachments/0506VerWkshtInd.pdf>

### **What loans are available?**

**Federal Stafford Loans** –are low cost student loans that are guaranteed by the federal government. Federal Stafford Loans are either subsidized or unsubsidized. The **Subsidized Federal Stafford Loan** is a need based loan by which the federal government “subsidizes” the loan by paying the interest while you are attending school at least half-time, or while you are within the six month grace period after you leave school and during authorized period of deferment. The **Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loan** is not based on financial need. Interest accrues from the time the loan is disbursed until it is paid in full, including periods of deferment. The interest that accumulates while you are in school, in the grace period, or in a deferment will usually be capitalized; that is, the interest will be added to the principal amount of your loan and additional interest will be based on the higher amount. You can reduce the amount of your interest costs on your loan by paying the interest as it accrues each month while you are in school, or within your grace or deferment period.

### **What is the deadline for submission of forms?**

For Fall Semester 2005 and Spring Semester 2006 all forms must be received by June 1, 2005.

For Summer Semester 2006, all forms, including 2006-07 FAFSA data, must be received by March 3, 2006.

### **What is the interest rate on the Federal Stafford Loans?**

According to the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, the interest rates on the Federal Stafford loans made between July 1, 1998 and June 30, 2004 are calculated as follows:

#### **Subsidized Federal Stafford Loans:**

- In school, grace and deferment periods Interest paid by the federal government.
- During Repayment 91-day US Treasury Bill + 2.3%

#### **Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loans:**

- In school, grace and deferment periods 91-day US T-Bill + 1.7%
- During Repayment 91-day US T-Bill + 2.3%

The interest rate varies and is adjusted each year on July 1 and applies to the following 12-month period. The interest rate will not exceed 8.25%. You will be notified of any interest rate change throughout the life of your loan by the lender.

### **What are the fees?**

Although most guarantors currently waive the guarantee fee, by law, guarantors can charge borrowers up to 1% of the loan as a guarantee fee, and lenders can charge up to 3% of the loan as an origination fee. These fees are deducted before each loan disbursement.

### **Loan Application**

All new students and/or first time borrowers must complete a Federal Stafford Loan Master Promissory Note (MPN) for the Stafford Loans to borrow Federal Stafford Loans. Application for Stafford Loans are made through a participating lender, but must be certified by the Financial Aid Office. Columbia University has a selected list of preferred lenders who have a proven track record of quality services. The chart on the next page outlines the fee structure, interest rate, repayment interest rate, and repayment incentives and options for each lender.

## LENDERS LIST

Lender/Provider	Access Group	Citibank	Nellie Mae
	800-282-1550 Code: 808851 <a href="http://www.accessgroup.org">www.accessgroup.org</a>	800-967-2400 Code: 826878 <a href="http://www.studentloan.com">www.studentloan.com</a>	888-274-7466 Code: 829076 <a href="http://www.nelliemae.com">www.nelliemae.com</a>
<b>Guarantee Fee</b>	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
<b>Origination Fee</b>	0.00%	3.00%	3.00%
<b>In-School Interest Rate</b>	<b>Subsidized:</b> no interest while in school  <b>Unsubsidized:</b> 91-day T-Bill rate + 1.70% (capped at 8.25%)	<b>Subsidized:</b> no interest while in school  <b>Unsubsidized:</b> 91-day T-Bill rate + 1.70 % (capped at 8.25%)	<b>Subsidized:</b> no interest while in school  <b>Unsubsidized:</b> 91-day T-Bill + 1.70% (capped at 8.25%)
<b>Repayment Interest Rate</b>	91-day T-Bill + 2.30%	91-day T-Bill + 2.30%	91-day T-Bill + 2.30%
<b>Grace Period</b>	Payment begins 6 months after graduation or when student drops below half-time status	Payment begins 6 months after graduation or when student drops below half-time status	Payments begins 6 months after graduation or when student drops below half-time status
<b>Repayment Incentives and Options</b>	A) Reduce interest rate by 0.25% for automatic deduction from checking or savings account  B) Reduce interest rate by 2.00% after the first 48 consecutive on-time payments  C) Graduated repayment and income-sensitive repayment options are available	A) 2.00% principal reduction at repayment  B) 0.25% interest rate reduction for automatic payment  C) 2.00% interest rate reduction after the first 48 consecutive monthly payments are made on-time  D) Graduated repayment and income-sensitive repayment options available	A) After the first 33 on-time monthly payments, eligible borrowers receive a check or credit totaling 5.00% of their original principal loan balance  B) Graduated and income-sensitive repayment option are available
<b>Term</b>	10 years; up to 30 years with loan consolidation program	10 years; up to 30 years with loan consolidation Program	10 years; up to 30 years with loan consolidation program

## COST OF ATTENDANCE

For each student, GSAS establishes a standard budget that consists of the cost of tuition, fees, books and an average amount for living expenses for a nine month period, September to May (2005-2006 figures listed below).

	<u>2005-2006 Cost of Attendance</u>	<u>Summer 2006</u>
	<u>Fall 05 + Spring 06</u>	<u>Summer 2006</u>
Tuition:	\$20,250	\$3,750
Transcript Fee (one time only)	45	0
Books	1,625	0
Living Expenses	18,555	6,200
Miscellaneous Expenses	3,682	1,225
Origination Fees	555	335
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$44,712</i>	<i>\$11,510</i>

To determine eligibility for federal student aid, subtract the amount of fellowship(s) received from the Cost of Attendance. For example:

Total	\$	44,712
	minus	
Tuition Scholarship	\$	4,000
<i>Remaining need</i>	<i>\$</i>	<i>40,712</i>

Up to \$18,500 in remaining need can be borrowed from the Federal Stafford Loan program per year. Your Estimated Family Contribution, or EFC, is calculated when the FAFSA form is submitted to the federal processor. This determines how much can be taken in subsidized or unsubsidized loans. In the example above, \$18,500 can be borrowed as Federal Stafford Loans, and the difference between the remaining need (40,712) and the maximum Stafford Loan eligibility (18,500) can be borrowed from a private loan.

If you believe your EFC to be unusually high due to income in the prior year which is no longer available, please contact the financial aid officer. Similarly, if you have unusually high expenses for any one given period and need to borrow an increased amount, may also contact the financial aid officer.

NOTE: To apply for a loan for summer tuition, you will need to apply for the next academic year.

Students bring their own health insurance coverage with them.

## PRIVATE LOANS AND PAYMENT PLANS

Although there are numerous private student loans that the financial aid office can process through private lending institutions, Columbia's preferred lender for private loans is Access Group. These funds supplement the Federal loan programs. Access Group provides a specific private loan which requires a credit check, and in some cases, a co-signer. If your cost of attendance as established by the financial aid office has not been met by scholarship or federal loan programs, the Access Loan would be available to help you meet your unmet need. Interest accrues on the private loans when the funds are disbursed. Please note that your combined borrowing and scholarship, including private loans, may **NOT** exceed your cost of attendance.

**Access Group**                      **800-282-1550**      [www.accessgroup.org/](http://www.accessgroup.org/)

All students interested in a private loan, registered at least half-time can apply for the **Graduate Access Private Loan**. Students who do not qualify for this loan may apply for a **Sponsor Loan**. Any student applying for the Sponsor Loan can provide a patron that will be solely responsible for repaying the student's loan. The Sponsor Loan will enable students who would not have qualified for a private loan in the past, due to an adverse credit history to secure a loan. Approval and interest rate is based on the borrowers' credit risk category (Excellent, Very Good, Good, OK/Average/Poor). Students have a 9-month grace period and up to 20 years to repay the loan.

Credit Risk Category	Fee	Interest Rate	Eligibility for which loan
Excellent	0%	LIBOR + 1.70% (London Interbank Offered Rate)	-Applicants on their own signature -Sponsor Loan applicants
Very Good	0%	LIBOR + 2.30%	-Applicants on their own signature -Sponsor Loan applicants
Good	0%	LIBOR + 2.70%	-Applicants on their own signature -Sponsor Loan applicants
OK/Average /Poor*	0%	LIBOR + 3.30%	-Applicants on their own signature -Applicants with required co-signer

\*Some low-scoring graduate and professional student applicants will require a cosigner; they may also select the Sponsor Loan option instead.

As of January 12, 2005 the 3-month Libor was 2.57%.

**International Students** - Apply on their own if they have established at least 2 years US credit criteria. If they do not qualify they can borrow through the Sponsor Loan program.

## OTHER PRIVATE LOAN OPTIONS

**CitiAssist** 800-745-5473 [www.studentloan.com](http://www.studentloan.com)

Credit based loan offered by Citibank for US citizen and permanent residents. The interest rate is based on the Prime Rate + 0%. There is no guarantee or origination fees. Interest accrues while students are still in school, but it can be deferred. Students have up to 15 years to repay the CitiAssist loan. International students can apply with an eligible co-signer who is a US citizen or permanent resident. Co-signer must have a satisfactory credit history.

As of January 12, 2005 the Prime Rate was 4.25%.

**Canadian Higher Education Loan Program**  
**(CanHELP) 888-296-4332**  
[www.IEFC.com](http://www.IEFC.com)

Credit-based loan offered by the International Education Finance Corporation (IEFC) for Canadian students studying in the US. Students can borrow up to \$20,000 on their own signature with a good credit history. Additional funds may be obtained up to \$45,000.00 if students apply with a credit worthy co-signer. The interest rate is Prime Rate + 0.5%. A guarantee fee of 7.5% will be deducted from the disbursement and 2% will be added at the time of repayment if the student applies on their own signature. A one-time guarantee fee of 6% will be deducted from the disbursement if the student applies with a creditworthy co-signer. Students have up to 25 years to repay the loan.

### **The Columbia Payment Plan**

The Columbia Payment Plan administered by Academic Management Services (AMS) is an interest free plan that allows you the opportunity to spread annual education expenses over 10 months. **Payment plans are NOT loans.** Payments for the annual plan and the fall term start on July 1. The first payment for the spring term is due December 1.

There is an annual enrollment fee of \$85 and for single terms the fee is \$40. You may pay the enrollment fee by check or with Visa or MasterCard. To enroll, please call 1-800-635-0120 or visit the web site at [www.TuitionPayEnroll.com](http://www.TuitionPayEnroll.com)

### **LOAN DISBURSEMENT**

- *Loan Checks* for Federal Stafford Loans are sent to the Cashiers Window in 210 Kent Hall. They come in two equal disbursements and may need to be endorsed. Some banks transfer the loan funds electronically to the University. Electronic funds disburse to your CU student account directly once your registration has been verified and do not require your signature. Electronic funds also come in two equal disbursements, typically at the beginning each term. Please check with the financial aid office to find out how your student loan proceeds will be disbursed.
- *Private Loan Checks* from the Access Group can be picked up from the Cashiers Office in 210 Kent Hall. Contact Sandra Peters to have special arrangements made to have your checks forwarded to you for endorsement.

## GOOD CREDIT

Repaying your student loan in a timely fashion is important, because it is a crucial step in establishing a positive credit history. Your credit history will be reviewed by a lender as part of the approval process whenever you try to obtain credit. If you are late in submitting a loan payment, it will be reflected in your credit history and could have a negative impact on your ability to borrow in the future.

Unlike federal loans, which do not require credit approval all private loans are submitted through an approval process. The lender of your private loan will review your credit history to determine your eligibility for the loan.

### **Credit History and Credit Report**

Anyone who has ever used a credit card in his or her name has established a credit history. Creditors such as banks, mortgage companies, finance companies, credit card companies and major retail stores report their customers' credit information to authorized credit bureaus. Lenders examine these records to determine whether they should extend credit to you. A good credit record indicates that you are likely to repay the loan for which you are currently applying.

### **Credit Score**

A credit score is a score that can be used to predict how well you will manage credit, based on your past credit performance. Some examples of the factors used to calculate your credit score include promptness in paying bills, number of accounts, total available credit, and the amount owed on accounts.

### **Credit Bureaus**

Credit reports are generated by authorized credit bureaus from your credit history. The three national credit bureaus are:

- Equifax  
[www.equifax.com](http://www.equifax.com)  
800-685-1111
- Experian  
[www.experian.com](http://www.experian.com)  
888-397-3742
- TransUnion  
[www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com)  
800-888-4213

For more information about credit scoring, or to obtain a copy of your credit score and analysis, visit [www.myFICO.com](http://www.myFICO.com).

## REPAYING YOUR FEDERAL LOANS

The terms and conditions of each loan and your rights and responsibilities as a borrower are stated in the promissory note of your loan. Default occurs when you fail to meet the terms of your promissory note.

Repayment on most education loans begins after the grace period. The grace period begins when you graduate, leave school, or when your enrollment status drops below half time, whichever comes first. Your first loan payment is due at the end of the grace period.

Your lender and/or servicer will send you a letter about repayment of your education loans. **If you do not receive a notice regarding repayment, then you should take it upon yourself to contact your lender or servicer.** You are still responsible for repaying your student loans on time. Failing to do so can result in serious damage to your credit history, garnishment of wages, and seizure of federal and state tax refunds. You will also be required to pay the entire unpaid balance including interest. If you are having difficulties in repaying the loan, **please communicate with your lender(s).**

### Repayment Options

Lenders are required to provide borrowers with four repayment options for the Federal Stafford Loans borrowed under the **Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP)**. Repayment options will be sent to you during the grace period. If you do not choose a plan within 45 days of the lender's offer, the lender will use the Standard Repayment Plan. You may change your repayment plan annually. The four options are:

- **(1) Standard Repayment Plan**  
Under this plan, you pay an equal amount each month for up to 10 years. All payments include both the principal and interest.
- **(2) Extended Repayment Plan**  
This plan is available to new borrowers who first borrowed loans on or after October 7 1998, and whose total loan debt exceeds \$30000.00. Since you make payments over a longer period (not to exceed 25 years) your monthly payments will be lower. However, the total amount of interest you repay will be greater.

- **(3) Graduated Repayment Plan**  
Under this plan you will start with a low monthly payment, but over time your monthly payments will increase as the principal is included. Initial payments are lower than the standard plan since these payments typically cover only interest. Before choosing this plan, be sure that you will be able to afford the increased monthly payments at the higher level.
- **(4) Income Sensitive Repayment Plan**  
Under this plan, your payments are adjusted annually, based on your expected total monthly gross income and federal student loan debt. This is the most flexible plan, but it can also be the most expensive in the long run. Additionally, you are required to reapply annually.

### **Federal Loan Consolidation**

Another loan repayment option is the federal loan consolidation. A Federal Consolidation Loan is a loan that allows you to combine several types of federal student loans with various repayment schedules with one monthly repayment. The interest rate is fixed and is the weighted average of the interest rate of the loans being consolidated, rounded up to the nearest 1/8<sup>th</sup> of one percent. The interest rate does not exceed 8.25%. The length of repayment can range from 10 to 30 years, depending upon your total student loan debt. Interested students should contact their lender about loan consolidation.

### **Postponing repayment of your federal loans**

If you are currently in school, temporarily unemployed or disabled, or experiencing economic hardship, you may qualify for loan **forbearance** or **deferment** of your loan payments. A **deferment** is a period of time during which the borrower is not required to make payments. Deferment is a borrower's right, as long as the borrower is eligible. Students must contact their lender(s) directly to determine eligibility. **Forbearance** is an agreement between the borrower and lender of a loan that allows the borrower to temporarily lower or postpone payments. Borrowers must contact their lender(s) to request forbearance.

## **RECORD KEEPING**

Maintaining accurate and complete records of your financial activities are very important in managing your loans. Loan related documents you should keep in a file:

- Applications
- Promissory Notes
- Disclosures statements
- Notices from your lender
- Income tax returns (both federal and state)
- Repayment schedules
- Lender correspondence
- Award letters

You should also keep track of all written communication (including e-mails) and a log of all phone conversations.

## **Borrowers Rights and Responsibilities for Federal Student Loans**

**Rights:** You have rights to:

- Written information on your loan obligations and information on your rights and responsibilities as a borrower.
- A grace period and an explanation of what it entails.
- Receipt of a disclosure statement that includes information about interest rates, fees, balances, and the number of payments, prior to repayment of your loan.
- Request forbearance.
- Defer repayment on certain periods, if you qualify and if you request it.
- Prepay your loan in whole or in part at anytime without an early repayment penalty.
- Notification in writing if your loans are sold or transferred to a new holder.

### **Responsibilities**

- When you sign a promissory note, you are agreeing to repay the loan according to the terms of the note. You must repay your loan even if you do not complete your academic program, are dissatisfied with the education you receive, or are unable to find employment after you graduate.
- You must make payments on your loan even if you do not receive a bill or repayment notice.
- If you apply for a deferment or forbearance, you must continue to make payments until you are notified the request has been granted. If you don't you may end up in default.
- You must notify your lender if you graduate; change your graduation date; withdraw from school; drop below half-time status; change your name, address, or Social Security Number; or transfer to another school.
- You must complete an entrance interview before you first loan disbursement. You must also complete an exit interview before you leave school or drop below half-time enrollment.

## GLOSSARY

**Accrued Interest:** Interest that accumulates on the unpaid principal balance of a loan.

**Award Letter:** The official document issued by the Financial Aid Office that lists all of the financial aid awarded to a student.

**Capitalization:** The process by which fees and accrued interest on a loan are added to the principal balance. Capitalizing the interest increases the monthly payment and the total repayment amount.

**Co-signer:** A signer of a Promissory Note who assumes responsibility for the loan if the borrower fails to repay.

**Cost of Attendance (COA):** The total estimated amount it will cost you to attend school. Also known as cost of education or “budget”, the COA includes tuition and fees, room and board, books, supplies, transportation and personal expenses.

**Credit Bureau:** An agency that compiles, maintains, and distributes credit and personal information to authorized parties. This information may include your payment history, number of credit accounts, account balances, place and length of employment and records of financial transactions.

**Credit Report:** This report contains a summary of your credit history. It is maintained by an authorized credit bureau and sent to parties, when requested. Credit reports contain information on your past and present addresses, employment history, and payment performances for at least the past seven years, types of debt and the lending institution for each account, available credit, and current balances.

**Credit Score:** A consistent method of determining the likelihood that you will repay a future debt. An evaluation tool that predicts how well you will manage credit, relative to other borrowers, based on past credit performances.

**Default:** Failure to repay a loan according to the terms agreed to when you signed a promissory note.

**Deferment:** A period during which repayment of the principal amount of the loan is suspended as a result of the borrower’s meeting the terms as stated in the promissory note. Most federal loan programs allow the borrower to defer their loans while they are in school at least half time.

**Delinquent:** When a borrower fails to make one or more scheduled payments by the due dates.

**Disclosure Statement:** A statement of the actual loan cost. It includes the interest rate and any additional fees at the time the loan is made.

**Extended Repayment:** A loan repayment option that allows borrowers to make monthly payments based on a fixed annual or graduated repayment amounts over a period not to exceed 25 years. Available only to those who first borrowed federal loans on or after October 7, 1998 and have a total FFELP loan debt exceeding \$30,000.00.

**FFELP (Federal Family Education Loan Program):** A loan program authorized by the federal government in the Higher Education Act. This program includes Federal Stafford and Consolidation Loans. These loans are funded by banks, guaranteed by guaranty agencies and are insured by the federal government.

**Financial Aid Package:** The total amount of financial aid (federal and nonfederal) a student receives. The amount of federal student aid in a package is affected by other sources of aid received (scholarship, state aid, etc).

**Forbearance:** An agreement to accept a temporary suspension of loan payments, or an extension of time for making payments. Forbearance is granted at the lender's discretion, often in cases of extreme financial hardship or other unusual circumstances.

**Grace Period:** The period of time before principal repayment of loan begins (after the student graduates, leaves school, or drops below half time status).

**Graduated Repayment:** A repayment option in which the monthly payments are lower in the beginning of repayment and increase in steps during the repayment period.

**Guarantee Fee:** A percentage of the loan principal charged to the borrower by the guarantor to insure lenders against losses due to a borrower's default, death, disability, or bankruptcy. It is deducted from the principal prior to loan disbursement.

**Guarantor:** A state agency or private, nonprofit organization that insures lenders against losses attributed to a borrower's default, death, disability, or bankruptcy.

**Holder:** The lender, institution, or agency that originated the loan and holds its legal title; or a lender or a secondary market that purchases the loan from the original holder.

**Income-Sensitive Repayment:** A loan repayment option that is based on the borrower's income, and total federal loan debt. Payment increases as the income rises

**Interest:** An accrued fee assessed against the amount to be borrowed. It usually consists of a percent of the outstanding loan amount, and is paid over the life of the loan. Interest rates are either fixed or variable. The percentage rate is tied to one of several indexes (Prime Rate, LIBOR, or U.S. Treasury Bills).

**Lender:** The bank, savings and loan association, credit union, or other financial institution from which a student obtains a loan.

**Origination Fee:** A loan processing fee that is payable to the lender or loan originator. The federal government pays the fee on the Stafford Loans. The fee is calculated as a percentage of the principal amount borrowed and is charged to the student by the lender (some lenders will pay this fee on behalf of the borrower). The fee is usually deducted from the amount of the loan prior to disbursement of funds.

**Principal:** The total amount borrowed plus any capitalized fees and interest.

**Promissory Note:** A legal binding document signed by the borrower when obtaining a loan. The note lists the conditions under which the loan is made and the terms under which the borrower agrees to pay back the loan.

**Servicer:** A company that specializes in handling billing, collections, deferments, and other loan transactions for the lender/holder.

**Terms:** The specific conditions of a loan, including the requirements governing receipt and repayment of the loan.

## NOTES

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

*The Office of Financial Aid, GSAS* (212) 854-6725  
Sandra Peters [scp3@columbia.edu](mailto:scp3@columbia.edu)  
Financial Aid Officer  
107 Low Memorial Library

*Student Financial Services*  
210 Kent Hall [sfs@columbia.edu](mailto:sfs@columbia.edu)  
Student Accounts Billing/Refunds (212) 854-4206  
  
Mery Suazo [mms8@columbia.edu](mailto:mms8@columbia.edu)  
Cashiering Stipend/Loan Checks (212) 854-1518  
  
Loan Collections Bills in Collection (212) 854-4206  
Third Party Billing (212) 854-3807

*Student Administrative Services*  
John Carter [jpc11@columbia.edu](mailto:jpc11@columbia.edu)  
Associate Registrar  
208 Philosophy Hall

Registrar Transcripts/  
Enrollment Certification (212) 854-4330

*FAFSA* Forms and Information (800) 4-FED AID  
(800) 433-3243  
Or on line <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>

See **Student Services Online** for account balances, refunds, address changes, grades, holds, and transcript orders  
<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/students>

See **GSAS Online** for financial aid information, forms, outside fellowship listing: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/gsas>