Now that you have been admitted, one of the next steps is determining how to pay for your education. This guide is designed to help you understand common terms and processes about financial aid. **Please read everything carefully and visit our website for more information.** An electronic version of the UTSA Rowdy’s Guide to Understanding Your Award, with hyperlinks, is available at [http://www.utsa.edu/financialaid/types-of-aid/tutorials.html](http://www.utsa.edu/financialaid/types-of-aid/tutorials.html).

**Determining your Cost of Attendance**
The Cost of Attendance (COA) represents an estimate of what UTSA has determined to be average expenses a student might incur while attending school each semester. Potential costs included in the COA are tuition and fee, books, room and board, transportation, and personal/miscellaneous expenses. The COA assigned to you will be based on full-time enrollment (12 hours or more) and cost of living expenses based on your answers to the student housing question on the FAFSA. You may be required to confirm your housing status as indicated on your FAFSA. Federal guidelines prohibit us from offering more financial aid than you are entitled to receive. This established COA may be estimated higher than what your actual direct costs may be.

UTSA has created a Financial Literacy Program and a money management website, called **Rowdy Cents**, to help you understand your finances. **We strongly encourage you to review the following resources and to complete a Spending Plan before attending college:** [Net Price Calculator], **COA Breakdown** and **Spending Plan**. Additionally, we recommend you attend UTSA’s **Rowdy Cents** money management workshops. More information about Rowdy Cents workshops will be shared during Orientation.

**Determining your Financial Need and Aid Package**
We follow the federal methodology established by the Department of Education to determine need and eligibility for financial aid. We are required to establish a COA for each student. We then subtract the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) derived from information provided on the FAFSA to determine the remaining financial need. Your estimated COA, Resources, EFC and remaining need are listed on your award letter. Resources such as outside scholarships, exemptions, waivers, and employer reimbursements will affect your financial aid package. If any of these apply, please submit either the [External Scholarship](#) or [External Resource](#) form, so we can revise your award package.

**Accepting your award & completing your financial aid file**
In order to view your financial aid awards online, log onto Automated Student Access Program (ASAP). Click on the following: **Financial Aid Tab → Award → Award By Aid Year → 2015-2016.** In ASAP, complete the following:

1. Accept or decline your financial aid and scholarship awards. You may choose to leave awards as “undecided” or accept a partial amount. You are accepting for both the fall and spring semesters. Award packages can contain a combination of grants, scholarships, loans, and work-study eligibility. Please note that awards that state “eligibility” will not disburse until you have completed the requirements to receive this fund. Additional information and requirements for specific awards can be found under the [Understanding Aid](#) section on the website.

2. Review ASAP for unsatisfied requirements, and/or holds that will prevent disbursement of aid.
   a. If you have outstanding requirements, we will email your preferred email account as listed on ASAP to inform you of this. By default, your “preferred email account” is your assigned UTSA email. All correspondence from UTSA will be sent to this address. You may change your preferred mail account to another of your choosing by doing the following: Log into ASAP → Click the Personal Information tab → Click Update Email Address → Under the bold UTSA Preferred Email Address header, click Update Address.
   b. If a form is required, download it from the [Financial Aid Forms](#) website. All of our forms must be filled out online, printed, and physically signed prior to submission via the methods listed on the form.
c. Outstanding documents must be processed by our office in order for aid to disburse. Processing time is typically 5-7 business days. However, documents submitted in peak times (July, August or January) will have a longer processing time, which may require you to submit payment or make alternate payment arrangements. You can review the tuition and fee loan option on our website or installment plan option at the Fiscal Services website.

Federal Direct Stafford Loan Requirements
Subsidized and Unsubsidized Direct Stafford loans are low-interest loans offered by the Department of Education to help cover educational expenses. You may accept your Stafford loan(s) online through ASAP. Once you have accepted your loan, complete the Stafford loan Entrance Counseling session and electronically sign your Master Promissory Note (MPN) at www.studentloans.gov.

Federal Parent PLUS Loan Requirements
The Parent PLUS loan is a credit-based loan a parent can borrow on behalf of his or her dependent student. The Parent PLUS loan awarded on ASAP is an eligibility fund. If your parent is interested in applying for this loan, your parent must apply at www.studentloans.gov and then submit the Parent PLUS Request Form to our office. This is a credit-based loan. The application process is done directly with the Department of Education on the Student Loans website.

Disbursement of Financial Aid
Federal, state and institutional aid is disbursed ten days before the start of the fall and spring semesters provided that all paperwork and requirements are complete. This is the earliest date, by law, that UTSA can disburse aid. You may receive notifications that your bill is unpaid prior to the disbursement of your aid. For information on how specific funds disburse, please visit our website for fall and spring disbursements or for summer disbursements. Financial aid will only disburse if you are enrolled in the required number of hours, have accepted your aid, completed all requirements and do not have any holds.

Refunds
All financial aid will be applied towards your tuition and fees first and will then be applied to any additional charges billed to you at UTSA (e.g. housing, meal plan, parking permit). If your financial aid amount is in excess of your total UTSA bill, the remaining amount will be issued to you as a refund. Refunds will be sent via US Mail (paper check) or via direct deposit approximately three business days after your account balance on ASAP shows zero. We recommend that you sign up for Direct Deposit on ASAP, as this is the fastest way to get your refund!

Withdrawal
If you decide not to attend UTSA and you have registered for classes, you will need to officially withdraw from those classes by withdrawing on ASAP prior to the first day of classes or by visiting Enrollment Services in person if classes have started. International students and Athletes must have prior approval from their respective offices before they can withdraw. If you do not officially withdraw, your classes may be held and financial aid will be credited to your account. If you officially withdraw, your financial aid will either be cancelled or a calculation will be computed to determine the percentage of aid unearned and those funds will be returned to the original source which could result in a balance due to UTSA. Please review additional information about withdrawing from the institution and how it can affect future aid. If you are registered at another institution and have not officially withdrawn from UTSA courses and cancelled your financial aid, the other institution will not be able to disburse your financial aid. Federal law prevents disbursement of financial aid at more than one institution within a term. To cancel your aid before it disburses, you may use the Request to Cancel All Aid form on our website.

Exceptional Financial Circumstances
Certain situations, including the loss of employment and unexpected costs, can affect your EFC and the ability to pay. If you feel you have an exceptional circumstance, please review our Special Circumstances site for additional information.
Financial Aid Revisions
This financial aid package was determined using information from your FAFSA. UTSA reserves the right to modify, reduce, and/or cancel your award due to any revisions you make to your FAFSA, the verification process, laws that are amended or if funds are withdrawn or exhausted.

Obligations to Continue to Receive Financial Aid
You must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP): This is an important requirement for financial aid recipients. Students must meet the following three criteria to continue to receive most types of financial aid:

- Undergraduate students must have a 2.0 cumulative GPA; graduate students must have a 3.0 cumulative GPA.
- Students must successfully complete a minimum of 67% of all attempted course work. Grades of F, IN, NR, W, RP, EX and repeated courses are considered hours attempted, but not completed.
- The number of credit hours a student attempts may not exceed 150% of the number of credit hours required for graduation in his or her program of study (typically 180 credit hours for undergraduate students and 54 for graduate students).

Enrollment Requirements
Undergraduate students are automatically awarded based on a full-time budget (12 or more hours) and graduate students based on a part time budget (4-8 hours). Grants are awarded based on full-time enrollment but will be prorated to 75% for three-quarter time enrollment or 50% for half-time enrollment. Most scholarships require full-time enrollment. Students must be enrolled at least half-time for most financial aid to disburse. There are specific enrollment requirements for Stafford Loans and grants which can be found on our website. If you are an undergraduate student with accepted loans and plan to be enrolled part time, you will need to notify our office by submitting an Enrollment Change Form.

Credit hours required for full-time, three-quarter-time & half-time status

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UTSA Financial Aid Shopping Sheet
The Financial Aid Shopping Sheet is a consumer tool designed by the Department of Education to simplify information that prospective students receive about costs and financial aid. It is meant to aid in making informed decisions about which postsecondary institution to attend. The Shopping Sheet gives you a snapshot of your award package, which can then be compared to other institutions. Graduation rates include only first-time freshmen graduating in six years and do not include transfer students graduating from the University.

Your full UTSA award package will be available on ASAP. Details on the Cost of Attendance, Grants and Scholarships, Expected Family Contribution, Work Study, Loans, and other special programs are explained in depth on our website.