Financial Aid

Lack of funds need not be a barrier to attending UCI; over 70 percent of UCI's enrolled students receive some form of financial aid. Students who demonstrate that they need financial assistance in order to attend may be eligible for scholarships, grants, loans, and/or work-study awards through the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. In addition to awarding aid on the basis of financial need, some scholarships are awarded on the basis of academic excellence. Information regarding the application process, deadlines, and financial aid programs for undergraduate, graduate, and medical students may be found online at http://www.ofas.uci.edu/.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA/Renewal Application and FAFSA on the Web). To obtain financial aid, new and continuing students must file the FAFSA or FAFSA on the Web (FOTW) and submit the necessary supporting documents each year. FAFSA on the Web is available at http://www.fafsa.gov/ , and paper forms are available either by completing a PDF FAFSA at http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/options.htm or by calling (800) 4-FED-AID / (800) 433-3243. Renewal notifications are mailed to current financial aid recipients starting in mid-January. Students are encouraged to apply as early as possible after January 1. The priority deadline to file the FAFSA/FOTW for loans, work-study, and most grants is March 2. For priority consideration of these funds, all other supporting documentation must be submitted to the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships by June 30 or the specified due date.

The University expects the student and the parent (or spouse) to contribute toward the educational costs to the extent possible. For dependent students, an analysis of the FAFSA and supporting documents determines the amount a student and the student’s parents can be expected to contribute toward the cost of the student’s education. For independent students, the analysis determines the amount a student and, if applicable, a spouse, can contribute to the cost of the student’s education. Income, assets, size of family, and the number of family members in college (excluding parents) are the major factors considered in the analysis. Assets include, but are not limited to, equity in real estate other than family residence; stocks, bonds, and other securities; business equity; and cash, savings, and checking accounts. Income includes wages, salaries, interest, dividends, and nontaxable income such as Social Security, Veterans' benefits, and foreign income.

All undergraduate financial aid applicants are required to apply for a Pell Grant, and eligible California residents are required to apply for a Cal Grant. The application deadline for Cal Grants is March 2 for the following academic year.

Special Expenditures. Financial aid recipients who are in need of money for special expenditures (beyond the cost of books and basic supplies associated with certain courses of study) may make an appointment to see a financial aid counselor to explore the possibility of a budget extension, based on the availability of funds. Examples of such special expenditures include special equipment for students with disabilities and computer purchases.

Eligibility Requirements for Federal Student Aid

Federal financial aid programs are subject to regulations that define the criteria students must meet to qualify and maintain eligibility for those programs. The regulations state that a student must:

1. be a U.S. citizen or an eligible noncitizen of the U.S.;
2. be accepted for admission to the University;
3. be enrolled in good standing at the University; units taken through the University Extension program are not counted toward half- or full-time enrollment;
4. demonstrate financial need (except for William D. Ford Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans and Federal PLUS loans); financial need is the difference between the reasonable, approved expenses of attending UCI and all available resources, including the expected contribution from parents, the student, and any outside aid;
5. maintain satisfactory academic progress for financial aid, as outlined below;
6. be registered with the Selective Service if the student is a male at least 18 years old, born after December 31, 1960, and not on active duty with the armed forces;
7. not owe a refund on a federal grant or be in default on a federal educational loan.

Once a student meets the above criteria, disbursement of financial aid funds is made only if the student does not have outstanding debts owed to UCI.

California Dream Application. Students who qualify for the AB 540 fee exemption and are not able to file a FAFSA, can apply for certain types of financial aid by completing the California Dream Application.

The California Dream Acts—AB 130 and AB 131—extend eligibility for privately funded UC scholarships, other UC scholarships and grants (beginning in January 2013), and Cal Grants (beginning in Fall 2013) to students, including undocumented students, who qualify for benefits under another California law—AB 540—which exempts students from paying nonresident supplemental tuition.

Students who think they might be eligible for an AB 540 nonresident tuition exemption should:

1. Submit a California Dream Application as soon as possible after it becomes available on January 1, but no later than March 2. The application is available from http://www.caldreamact.org/ .
2. Students who are admitted to the University and intend to enroll should submit a Statement of Legal Residence. Those who receive a nonresident classification from the campus residence deputy should submit a California Nonresident Tuition Exemption Request or a University of California Nonresident Tuition Exemption Application and Affidavit, available at the University Registrar's Office or Web site. Official high school transcripts and proof of high school graduation may be requested.

Once applicants have completed these steps, the University will notify them of any financial aid eligibility.

UCI Policies on Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid

Undergraduate and Graduate Students

In defining student eligibility for financial aid, the Higher Education Act Amendments state that a student must maintain “satisfactory progress in the course of study the student is pursuing, according to the standards and practices of the institution at which the student is in attendance.” Federal regulations state that each institution shall establish, publish, and apply “reasonable standards” for assuring that every student receiving need-based financial aid should maintain “satisfactory progress in his/her course of study.” Final Federal regulations state that “in order to receive
Student financial aid under the programs authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act, a student must be maintaining satisfactory progress in the course of study he or she is pursuing according to the standards and practices of the institution in which he or she is enrolled.”

The following disclosures on the UCI Web site provide detailed information about satisfactory academic progress requirements for receiving financial aid at UCI. The Office of Financial and Scholarships will provide a paper copy of this information upon request.

Undergraduate and Teaching Credential Students:  http://www.ofas.uci.edu/content/pdf/SAPDisclosureForUndergraduates.pdf

Graduate Students:  http://www.ofas.uci.edu/content/pdf/SAPDisclosureForGraduates.pdf


Medical Students:  http://www.ofas.uci.edu/content/pdf/SAPDisclosureForMedicalStudents.pdf


UCI Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships Student Withdrawal Policy

Students who withdraw from UCI prior to completing 60 percent of the period for which they received federal financial aid will be subject to both the UC Fee Refund Policy and the Federal Return of Title IV Funds policy. Title IV Funds are federal funds awarded to a student to meet educational expenses. Examples of Title IV Funds include Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG), Federal Direct Loans, and Federal Perkins Loans.

Cancellation of Enrollment. Students who cancel their registration or have their registration cancelled by the University prior to the first day of classes will be invoiced for all financial aid disbursed on their behalf.

The full text of this official policy is available on the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships Web site at http://www.ofas.uci.edu/content/PoliciesAndConditions.aspx.

Any student contemplating withdrawing from the University should contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships to speak with a financial aid counselor concerning the financial ramifications of withdrawing.

Students who are receiving a Cal Grant should also contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships to discuss the ramifications of withdrawing on their Cal Grant status. Students should check with their financial aid counselor on how they may be able to re-establish a quarter of eligibility for their Cal Grant.

Scholarships

Scholarships are awarded on the basis of academic ability, achievement, and promise. They do not require repayment. Although a few honorary scholarships are awarded on the basis of academic excellence alone, many also require that an applicant demonstrate financial need. UCI offers students with proven high academic achievement and leadership potential two top honors awards: Regents’ Scholarships and Alumni Association Scholarships.

Entering Freshman and Transfer Students

Students entering UCI in the fall must complete the UC Application for Undergraduate Admission and Scholarships and submit the application by November 30. The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships automatically collects information about applicants’ scholarship qualifications. Applications that meet the requirements are reviewed by the Board on Undergraduate Scholarships, Honors, and Financial Aid. Information about the Alumni Scholarship is available in the UC Application for Undergraduate Admission and Scholarships. However, a separate application is required for the Alumni Scholarship.

Regents’ Scholarships

Regents’ scholarships, among the highest honors conferred upon UC students, are awarded on the basis of academic excellence and exceptional promise. Undergraduate students are eligible upon graduation from high school or transfer from community college. Medical students are eligible upon admission to the School of Medicine. The scholarship may be renewed for an additional one or three years depending on the year of appointment, provided the student completes an average of 12 units per quarter and maintains a grade point average of at least 3.25. The amount of the scholarship may vary depending on the student’s established financial need.

Restrictive Scholarships

Eligibility requirements for Restrictive Scholarships vary greatly and are restricted in terms of such student characteristics as geographic location, family background, academic major, and career goals. For the most part, these scholarship awards are based on the student’s established financial need. All UCI students will be considered for Restrictive Scholarships based upon information from the UC Application for Undergraduate Admission and Scholarships and their current academic records.

Grants

Grants are awarded on the basis of financial need. There is no repayment requirement. A student’s financial aid award includes grant funds whenever regulations, UC policies, and funding levels permit.

Federal Pell Grant is the largest federally funded grant program and provided up to a maximum of $5,550 for the 2012–13 academic year. To be eligible, applicants must be U.S. citizens or eligible noncitizens, be enrolled as undergraduates, have not previously received a bachelor’s degree, and demonstrate financial need. Students must use the FAFSA to apply for this grant. Students must be enrolled full-time (12 units) to receive the full grant and enrolled at least half-time (6 or more units) to receive a prorated amount. The amount of Pell Grant funds students may receive over their lifetime is limited to the equivalent of six years of Pell Grant funding.

Cal Grant A is a state-funded scholarship program which currently provides awards to be applied to the payment of University tuition and fees. In 2013–14, Cal Grant A awards pay up to $12,192. To be eligible, applicants must be California residents and demonstrate financial need. Students must use the FAFSA and GPA Verification Form to apply for Cal Grant A. The filing deadline for new applicants is March 2 for the following year.

Cal Grant B is a state-funded grant program which provides awards up to a maximum of $1,473 in 2013–14 during the student’s first year and $1,473 plus $12,192 toward tuition and fees during subsequent years. To be eligible, applicants must be California residents, demonstrate financial need, and be entering college or not have completed more than
Loans are often part of a financial aid award. They provide recipients with an opportunity to defer the cost of their education by borrowing when needed and paying later. However, loan recipients must pay interest on the amount borrowed. The deferment and cancellation provisions for the loans listed below are contained on the promissory note each recipient must sign and also may be obtained from the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships.

A student’s loan responsibility, prior to acceptance of the loan, is to understand the terms of the loan. After accepting the loan, the recipient must repay the loan in accordance with the repayment schedule, advise the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships upon leaving UCI; participate in an exit interview; and provide the Financial Services Office with a current address after leaving UCI. In case of death or total disability, outstanding loan obligations may be cancelled upon presentation of official confirming documents.

Federal Perkins Loan provides long-term federal loans for U.S. citizens and eligible noncitizens. The amounts awarded vary, depending on financial need, but cannot exceed $5,500 annually for undergraduates and $8,000 annually for graduate students. Cumulative totals for the full term of college attendance may not exceed $27,500 as an undergraduate and $60,000 as a graduate student. No interest is charged nor is repayment required while the borrower is enrolled in at least one half of the normal academic load. Interest of five percent a year begins nine months after the borrower ceases to be enrolled or is enrolled less than half-time, and repayment must be completed within a 10-year period.

University Loan, funded by The Regents of the University of California, provides long-term loans to full-time students who demonstrate financial need. The maximum amount for an academic year is $3,000. Interest of five percent a year begins six months after the student ceases to be enrolled at least half-time, and repayment must be completed within ten years. Two cosigners are required.

William D. Ford Direct Loan Program

Subsidized William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan, processed through the U.S. Department of Education and UCI, is available to undergraduate and teaching credential students who are U.S. citizens or eligible noncitizens, and who demonstrate financial need. During an academic year, the maximum a student may borrow is $3,500, freshmen; $4,500, sophomores; $5,500, juniors, seniors, and teaching credential students. Both a guarantee and origination fee will be deducted from the amount of the loan prior to issuing the check.

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) provides grant aid for U.S. citizens and eligible noncitizens who are undergraduate students and have demonstrated financial need. These federal grants range from $100 to $4,000 per year, depending upon financial need.

UCI Grant is funded by The Regents of the University of California and by the State of California and provides grant aid for full-time students who demonstrate financial need. The amount awarded depends upon financial need and funding levels.

Loans

Federal Direct Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students (PLUS) are designed to assist parents of dependent undergraduate students who are unable to demonstrate financial need for campus-based funds. Parents are eligible to borrow up to the cost of education for the academic year, less any estimated financial aid each academic year, on a student’s behalf. The loan is limited to parents who do not have adverse credit histories as defined by regulation.


Graduate PLUS Loans are available to graduate and professional-level students. Students may borrow up to the cost of education for the academic year, less any estimated financial aid. The loan is limited to students who do not have adverse credit histories as defined by regulation.


Unsubsidized Federal Direct Loans have the same terms and conditions as the Federal Direct Loan, including the aggregate loan limits, interest rate, and repayment. During an academic year the maximum a dependent student may borrow is $5,500, freshmen; $6,500, sophomores; $7,500, juniors and seniors. Independent students may borrow an annual maximum of: $9,500, freshmen; $10,500, sophomores; $12,500, juniors and seniors; $20,500, graduate/professional; and $32,000, medical students. These maximum amounts include any amount borrowed under the Subsidized William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan program. However, the loan is not based on need. Students may borrow an amount equal to the cost of attendance, less any estimated financial assistance up to the annual loan limits in effect at the time the loan is disbursed. Students must first apply for the Federal Direct Loan prior to consideration for the Unsubsidized Federal Direct Loan. There is no interest subsidy for this loan; students pay the interest charged while enrolled at UCI. Students may receive both subsidized and unsubsidized Federal Direct loans but the total may not exceed the loan limits. Borrowers with both types of loans may have a single repayment schedule.

Cumulative maximum: None. Deferment period before repayment: 60 days from day of final check disbursement for loan period. Full repayment: Up to 10 years.

Loans for Disadvantaged Students and Primary Care Loans are available to medical students. For information, call the School of Medicine Financial Aid Office at (949) 824-6476 or visit http://www.ofas.uci.edu/content/medical.aspx.

Emergency loans are made from an emergency student loan fund made possible through various philanthropic individuals and organizations. Undergraduate, graduate, and medical students who have experienced unanticipated financial problems of a temporary nature may borrow up to $300 without interest or service charge. Emergency loans must be repaid within 30 days after disbursement or by the end of the academic quarter, whichever occurs first. Applications are available in the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships or at the School of Medicine Financial Aid Office. This loan is not based on demonstrated financial need.

Federal Work-Study

The Federal Work-Study Program offers eligible students who demonstrate need an opportunity to pay for their living and educational expenses as they occur. By participating in the Federal Work-Study Program, students can reduce the amount of the loan to be repaid after leaving school. Medical students must obtain the approval of the Associate Dean of Student and Resident Affairs prior to obtaining work-study employment. Students awarded work-study have the choice of obtaining a work-study job either on campus or off campus at an approved nonprofit agency. A variety of work opportunities are available, and such part-time work experience can be a valuable asset when seeking employment after graduation. Students eligible for work-study will be notified as such via their UCI Financial Aid award notification. Specific information regarding the terms and conditions of work-study employment will be available with the award notification.

Veterans Work-Study Program is available only to U.S. military veterans and their eligible dependents, and members of the Selected Reserve and National Guard, while receiving Veteran Affairs Federal Educational Benefits, such as Ch. 30, Post 9/11 GI Bill, or Ch. 35 benefits. Positions are limited. For applications and detailed information, call the Veteran Services Office at (949) 824-3500 or visit http://www.veteran.uci.edu/.

Additional Aid for Graduate and Medical Students

Most graduate fellowship programs are administered by the Graduate Division, 120 Aldrich Hall, telephone (949) 824-4611. Medical students should contact the School of Medicine Financial Aid Office, 836 Medical Education Building, telephone (949) 824-6476.

Aid for Students with Disabilities

All forms of student financial aid are available to eligible students with disabilities. Interested students should follow the regular financial aid application procedures and should notify the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships of any additional expenses they may incur because of a disability. Supporting documentation must be provided.

Student Employment

The UCI Career Center, located in the Student Services I building, assists UCI students in obtaining part- or full-time employment during the academic year as well as summer. Financial aid recipients who have been awarded work-study also may obtain on-campus or off-campus job referrals in the Center. Students may easily access all job listings using their student ID number via ZotLink on the Career Center’s Web site at http://www.career.uci.edu/.