

How to Ace Your Financial Aid Application on the First Try

Filling out forms is never fun. But these tips will make applying for federal financial aid as fast and painless as possible.

Check it out—and gather the information and documents you need before you log on to fafsa.ed.gov.

You'll ace this application—and save time, too.



1. Get an FSA ID

You'll need to create an FSA ID to access the Federal Student Aid online system. The ID can also serve as your legal signature for approving application documents. (If you already have an ID, skip this step.)

10 minutes | [Start here](#)



3. Complete the Online Loan Entrance Counseling form

If you've never had a Direct Loan or Federal Family Education Loan, you're required to complete entrance counseling to ensure that you understand the responsibilities of taking out student loans. You'll also be asked to estimate how much aid you might receive from other sources (scholarships, employer reimbursement, etc.). Have an estimate on hand. (See this checklist.)

20-30 minutes | [Read more](#)



5. Complete Capella's Financial Aid Agreement

This agreement allows you to disclose any nonfederal financial aid you may be receiving. It's required of all applicants. Log on to the [Capella Student Center](#) to complete the form.



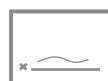
2. Fill out the FAFSA

To apply for federal financial aid, complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid at fafsa.ed.gov. You'll need the following to complete the form:

- Capella school code: 032673
- Financial aid year: 2017-2018
- 2015 tax returns

Details matter, so make sure to select the right undergraduate/graduate options where appropriate. Don't forget to hit Sign and Submit at the end of the application. That final step is key.

20 minutes | [Apply](#)



4. Sign the Master Promissory Note

When you apply for federal student loans, you have to pledge to repay them, along with any interest and fees. You'll need to complete the application in one session with the following:

- An FSA ID (see Step 1)
- Your school name and location (Capella University, headquarters in Minnesota)
- Contact information for two people who have known you for at least three year and can serve as references

Other tips: Be sure to select the Subsidized/Unsubsidized Loan option unless you're a PLUS graduate.

30 minutes or less | [Confirm](#)

