

Financial Matters and Procedures

Financial Obligations

Applicants who have unsettled financial obligations to their former institutions will not be admitted, nor will those be re-admitted whose financial accounts with Notre Dame Seminary have not been settled. Also, failure to settle financial accounts will result in the student's transcript being suspended and the diploma not being issued. Other services, such as reporting to employers or to other institutions, will also be suspended until accounts are settled.

Financial Aid

To be eligible for federal financial aid at Notre Dame Seminary (NDS), a student must be enrolled at least half-time (6 hours). In addition, students must meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) guidelines (see section on SAP for details pages 48-49).

Students may be eligible for financial aid to help them meet their demonstrated needs. Demonstrated need is the difference between the cost of education at NDS and the financial resources available to the student from personal earnings, family, and diocesan assistance. To determine the annual cost of education, NDS creates an Institutional Student Expense Budget that covers tuition, books, supplies, transportation, medical and living expenses. Its duration is normally 12 months. Contributions from parents, dioceses, students and student benefits are combined to form a total family contribution.

Demonstrated need will be determined when the Financial Aid Office at NDS subtracts the Total Family Contribution from the Institutional Student Expense Budget. This need will be met to the extent allowed by available funds.

NDS participates in the Title IV federally funded Direct Loan program. According to the federal student aid website, "These funds are lent directly to students for undergraduate and graduate studies, through participating postsecondary schools, with funds borrowed from the U.S. Treasury. Direct Loans include subsidized and unsubsidized loans, PLUS loans for parents and graduate or professional degree students, and consolidation loans, which allow borrowers to combine federal education loan debt."

Graduate and professional degree students may be eligible to receive aid from the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) Program. Under this program, the Department of Education is the lender rather than a bank or other financial institution.

There are two types of Direct Loans that graduate degree students may receive:

- Direct Unsubsidized Loans—Eligible students may borrow up to \$20,500 per school year.
- Direct PLUS Loans—Eligible graduate and professional degree students who need to borrow more than the maximum unsubsidized loan amounts to meet their education costs may apply for a PLUS loan. A credit check will be performed during the application process

Students must meet the following basic eligibility requirements to apply for a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan:

- be a U.S. citizen or an *eligible noncitizen*;
- have a valid Social Security number (with the exception of students from the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau);
- be registered with Selective Service, if you're a male (you must register between the ages of 18 and 25);
- be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a *regular student* in an eligible degree program (A *regular student* is enrolled or accepted for enrollment at an institution for the purpose of obtaining a degree or other recognized education credential offered by that institution.
- be enrolled for at least 6 credit hours each semester;
- annually complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (the "FAFSA");
- not be in default on any prior federal student loans;
- maintain *satisfactory academic progress* towards completing their degree requirements.

ANNUAL CAP ON BORROWING:

The Financial Aid Office at NDS determines the amount you can borrow based on your cost of attendance for the academic year and any other financial aid you receive from your diocese and any other formal aid program. For more information on your "cost of attendance", see the NDS website.

Seminarian Responsibility for Financial Aid

Financial aid for a seminarian is usually provided through the vocations office of his diocese. NDS participates in the Title IV federally funded Direct Loan program. According to the federal student aid website, "These funds are lent directly to students for undergraduate and graduate studies, through participating postsecondary schools, with funds borrowed from the U.S. Treasury. Direct Loans include subsidized and unsubsidized loans, PLUS loans for parents and graduate or professional degree students, and consolidation loans, which allow borrowers to combine federal education loan debt."

Stafford Subsidized Loans are available to all seminarians who qualify. A seminarian may borrow up to his demonstrated need, but cannot exceed \$8,500 per year. NDS recommends seminarians receive counseling from their Ordinary or Vocation Director prior to applying for a student loan. NDS also recommends seminarians do not apply for loans exceeding \$4,000 per academic year, bearing in mind the earning potential of a diocesan priest and his ability to repay.

BORROW ONLY WHAT YOU NEED

Interest on an unsubsidized direct student loan begins to accrue as soon as the funds are fully disbursed. NDS recommends seminarians receive counseling from their Ordinary or Vocation Director as well as completing both the online *Entrance* and *Financial Awareness Counseling* modules on the Studentloans.gov website prior to applying for a student loan. NDS also recommends seminarians do not apply for loans exceeding \$4,000 per academic year, bearing in mind the earning potential of a diocesan priest and his ability to repay

- If you choose not to pay the interest while you are in school and during grace periods and deferment or *forbearance* periods, your interest will accrue (accumulate) and be capitalized (that is, your interest will be added to the principal amount of your loan).

Other Available Funds

Veterans' Benefits may be used to pay for a student's expenses while attending NDS.

Applications for these benefits must be made through the Veterans Administration Office

Vocational Rehabilitation is available to students who qualify. Students can inquire about this state aid program by calling or writing the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation.

Notre Dame Seminary Work Study Fund is a financial aid program available to students at Notre Dame Seminary. Applications for this program should be made to the NDS Financial Aid Office

Archdiocese of New Orleans Handing on the Faith Program

The student must complete the one-time Theology Scholarship Agreement which requires either: a) a commitment to full-time employment in a Catholic parish, school, office or approved ministry of or located in the Archdiocese of New Orleans for three years; b) repayment of all tuition remission received through HOF.

The student must also complete the Application for Scholarship, which must be submitted every semester. All forms must be submitted to the Master of Arts Department by the appropriate deadline (i.e. 1st Monday of April for Summer, 2nd Monday of July for Fall, and 1st Monday of December for Spring, unless these dates are seminary holidays. In the latter case, students will be notified and the date will usually be postponed one week.).

Students who meet the above requirements must attach a Written Explanation of their Financial Need to the Theology Scholarship Agreement. A new written explanation of financial need must be submitted every two years.

Finally, the Catholic Foundation will make the final decision regarding funding. Preference is given to students who have made significant progress toward degree completion and who have demonstrated strong academic success in the Theology Program.

Application for Financial Aid

To apply for financial aid at NDS, a student must complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) on line at www.FAFSA.ed.gov.

A student will be notified by award letter or a letter of non-eligibility after their file is complete. If a student does not return the documents at the specified time, the Financial Aid Office will assume that the student is no longer interested in receiving funds. In addition, no federal funds can be paid to a student who is in default of a student loan.

Financial Aid may be withdrawn if the student is placed on academic probation. See Probation Policy.

The student aid application and acceptance process is separate from the admission process of NDS. Acceptance for student aid does not constitute acceptance for admission to NDS. Any

offer of student aid made by the Financial Aid Office becomes null and void if the student in question is not accepted for admission.

Payments

All NDS students are expected to pay all tuition/fees promptly. Special arrangements may be requested in writing through the Finance Office and adherence to the arrangements will be strictly enforced.

Grades will not be officially recorded on the transcripts of students who have not settled their financial accounts with NDS, nor will a transcript request be honored. Grades and all other services will be held until all unpaid fees are met.

Refund of Tuition

A student who withdraws from NDS must return a completed withdrawal form to the Registrar's Office. The last day for official withdrawal from classes is listed on the Academic Calendar which can be found on the website. Mere cessation of attendance does not constitute withdrawal as the completion of a withdrawal form is mandatory.

Students who withdraw from the school or from a course are entitled to a refund of a percentage of their tuition. The date of receipt of the withdrawal notice by the Registrar will determine the amount of tuition refund. Refunds are a percentage of the total tuition payable in the semester in which the student withdraws, not a percentage of the total amount billed to the student. No refunds are made when a student is suspended or dismissed for academic, disciplinary or financial reasons. Tuition refunds are made on the following basis:

- ◇ If formal notice is received within a week after the beginning of the semester, a refund of 80% of the tuition is made.
- ◇ If formal notice is received within three weeks after the beginning of the semester, a refund of 60% of the tuition is made.
- ◇ If formal notice is received within five weeks after the beginning of the semester, a refund of 40% of the tuition is made.
- ◇ No refunds are allowed after the fifth week of classes.
- ◇ Refunds for Saturday classes will differ. Please contact the Finance Office for details.

Refund of Room and Board

Seminarians boarding at the seminary that are dismissed or suspended during the semester are not entitled to any refunds. Seminarians in good standing who voluntarily withdraw from the seminary during the semester are not entitled to any refund on the cost of their room. They may receive a refund on Board, prorated from the date of withdrawal. This refund must be approved by the Rector-President.

Title IV Funds for Aid Recipients

NDS participates in the Title IV federally funded Direct Loan program. According to the [federal student aid website](#), “These funds are lent directly to students for undergraduate and graduate studies, through participating postsecondary schools, with funds borrowed from the U.S. Treasury. Direct Loans include subsidized and unsubsidized loans, PLUS loans for parents and graduate or professional degree students, and consolidation loans, which allow borrowers to combine federal education loan debt.”

Official and Unofficial Withdrawal Date

When a student withdraws from school the withdrawal date, as determined by NDS, is the date the student and the administration notify the Registrar’s office, in writing, of their intent to withdraw.

If a student takes a leave of absence that does not meet the requirements of a Title IV approved leave of absence, the withdrawal date will be understood as the one on which the leave of absence began. In the event a student does not return from a Title IV approved leave of absence, NDS will consider the date the leave of absence began as the official withdrawal date.

In the case of a student who withdraws without official notification the withdrawal date will be the mid-point of the payment period of enrollment.

When a student is not able to withdraw officially on account of illness, accident, grave personal loss or other circumstances beyond his control, the mid-point of the payment period of enrollment will be considered the withdrawal date.

Treatment of Title IV Funds When a Student Withdraws

When a recipient of Title IV grant or loan assistance withdraws during a payment period, NDS must determine the amount of Title IV grant or loan assistance earned by the student as of the withdrawal date. The financial aid officer is required by federal statute to recalculate federal financial aid eligibility for students who withdraw, drop out, are dismissed, or take an unapproved leave of absence prior to completing 60% of a payment period. The amount of federal aid awarded is reviewed to see if the student is still eligible for the full amount. If a student leaves the institution prior to completing 60% of a payment period, the financial aid officer recalculates eligibility for Title IV funds. Recalculation is based on the percentage of earned aid using the Federal Return of Title IV funds formula.

If the total amount is less than the amount of Title IV disbursed, the institution must return it to the Title IV programs. If the total amount is greater than the disbursed amount, the difference will be treated as a post-withdrawal disbursement. Once the withdrawal date has been established and the calculations made, NDS will follow the procedures outlined for providing notification to the student about disbursing or returning funds. If there is any standing charge in the student’s account and the student is entitled to a post-withdrawal disbursement, the institution may use some or all of the funds to cover certain charges outstanding on the student’s account, such as tuition and fees.

NDS must offer to the student, as a requirement for making post-withdrawal disbursement, any amount of a post-withdrawal disbursement that is not credited to the student's account. There are cases when, in addition to the written notification of eligibility, the institution must make the student aware of the outcome of any post-withdrawal disbursement request. If no response is received from the student declining the funds, the institution does not need to make a follow-up contact, and must return the funds earned by the student to the Title IV program. However, in compliance with Sec. 668.22(a)(4)(ii)(E), the institution must notify the student when the student's acceptance of the post-withdrawal disbursement was received after the 14-day time limit for responding has elapsed and the institution does not choose to make the post-withdrawal disbursement.

If a student fails to return from an approved leave of absence on the scheduled date and has not contacted the school for an approved extension to the leave of absence, the school will calculate a return of Title IV funds.

Order of Return of Title IV Funds

The order in which funds are to be returned is specified in Section 668.22(i):

- ◇ Subsidized Federal Stafford Loans
- ◇ Other assistance under this title for which a return of funds is required.

Time Frame for the Return of Title IV Funds

NDS will return the amount of Title IV funds for which it is responsible as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days after the date the institution determines that a student withdrew. NDS will determine the withdrawal date for a student who withdraws without providing notification to the institution no later than 30 days after the end of the payment period of enrollment, academic year, or educational program, as appropriate.