Other Financing Options

UC Berkeley Financial Aid & Scholarships Office

The Financial Aid and Scholarships Office (FASO) is here to assist you in identifying other financing options and provide information that will help you decide what works best for you and your family in meeting your expenses outlined in the Cost of Attendance

Outside Scholarships
UC Berkeley students are awarded more than $15 million annually in outside scholarships. Outside scholarships are those you earn and bring with you to Berkeley. We strongly encourage you to apply for these scholarships each year. Starting your search sooner rather than later will greatly increase your chances of finding scholarship opportunities.

Search for outside scholarships today: financialaid.berkeley.edu/scholarship-search

Access information about nationally competitive scholarships at: scholarships.berkeley.edu

Federal regulations mandate that scholarships be included in your financial aid package. Total aid cannot surpass the estimated cost of attendance.

Best for: Students who want to reduce their loan and work obligations in meeting their estimated costs.

Fee Payment Plan (FPP)
The Fee Payment Plan (FPP) allows for qualified registration fees to be paid in five monthly installments. FPP enrollment is established on a per semester basis, not an academic year, and you must sign up for the plan every semester. Please refer to the Fee Payment Plan FAQ web page if you have further questions.

Best for: Students who do not have enough grant or scholarship aid to cover tuition and fees for the term.

Not recommended for: Recipients of the Cal Grant, Native American Opportunity Plan, Cal Veterans Fee Waiver, or other fee-paying awards.

Federal Parent PLUS Loan
Direct PLUS Loans are federal, unsubsidized loans for parents of dependent undergraduate students who file the FAFSA. They cover educational costs not met by other aid, including the Student Aid Index (SAI). Repayment is flexible and can be deferred until the student graduates. Eligibility requires a satisfactory PLUS Loan credit check and no adverse credit history.

Parents can start applying for PLUS loans for the upcoming aid year (Fall Semester) beginning in mid-May. Information about the PLUS loan, including how to apply, can be found on our website.

Best For: Parents of undergraduate students looking for options to assist their student in covering the student aid index and the estimated cost of attendance. Important note: For students new to Berkeley or for students have not had a federal loan disburse on or before July 1, 2026, the PLUS loan program caps the borrowing for Parents at $20,000 annually, with a total borrowing limit of $65,000 per student.

Not recommended for: Independent students, students who are fully funded with gift aid from all sources.

Private Alternative Loans
Private or alternative loans can cover the gap between the cost of attendance and other financial aid. Lenders vary in rates, terms, and requirements, often needing bank, credit union, or non-profit approval. *Research is recommended.* UC Office of the President provides a Private Loan Preferred Lender list, but you can choose any lender. International students should use the [Private Loan Preferred Lender list for International students] and consult the [Berkeley International Office].