



THE LEDGER

A Communique from Student Financial Services

Office Phone: 253.535.7161 Office Email: sfs@plu.edu

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Required Annual Notifications

The Higher Education Opportunity Act requires that all enrolled students receive specific consumer information from the university on an annual basis. Below is the list of reports necessary to satisfy this requirement. Some reports were already emailed to students previously or will be coming to you directly from the responsible university office. All reports (or links) can be found on the PLU Student Financial Services website on the "Consumer Information" page (under the Cost tab), or by clicking on the report name below. Upon request, you may receive a paper copy of any report.

- * [Available Financial Aid](#)
- * [Equity in Athletics](#)
- * [Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Program](#)
- * [FERPA](#)
- * [Fire Safety Report](#)
- * [Security Report](#)
- * [Crime Statistics/Log](#)
- * [Timely Warnings](#)
- * [Emergency Notifications](#)
- * [Emergency Response & Evacuation Procedures](#)
- * [Missing Student Response Policy](#)
- * [Retention Rate](#)
- * [Graduation Rate](#)
- * [Placement Rate](#)

2019-20 FAFSA Now Available

It is time to submit your FAFSA for the 2019-20 year. The FAFSA priority filing date for continuing students is December 1, 2018.

The income tax information to be submitted on this year's FAFSA will be from the 2017 calendar year. Unless you filed an amended tax return or as "married, filing separately", you should be able to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool on the FAFSA website. You are

strongly encouraged to utilize the DRT to ensure the accuracy of your information and reduce the likelihood of being selected for the verification process, which adds more paperwork to your application process and delays your award. 2019-20 financial aid awards are expected to be released in mid February after JTerm grades have been posted.



Current and Relevant News Updates

The Student Financial Services homepage is now posting updates that could improve your financial aid award or assist with your student account. New scholarship opportunities especially relevant and of interest to PLU students will be featured as rotating announcements on our homepage. While there are many outside scholarships offered each year, PLU students have historically been successful recipients of these scholarships.

The second update appears in the pink message box, where upcoming student account deadlines will be posted that could save you a few dollars to a few hundred dollars in finance charges.

File your 2019-2020 FAFSA on your Smart Phone

The U.S. Department of Education unveiled what they hope will be a game changer in making it easier for families to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Beginning with the 2019-2020 FAFSA, applicants can now complete and submit their application via their mobile devices. Because of the smaller screen sizes, FAFSA questions will be presented to the applicant not as an entire page, but as a single question or a few questions at a time. This is intended to ensure questions are not overlooked, or left blank when a response is required. All the skip logic or edit features found within the desktop version will continue in the mobile device version. Your FSA ID and password will still be required to access and submit your FAFSA.

Students near 128 Credits

If you have completed the requisite credits to graduate from PLU, federal and state regulations make you ineligible thereafter for the Federal Pell & SEOG grants, the Washington State Need Grant, College Bound Scholarship, and the Opportunity Scholarship. Pursuit of another major, minor or certification will not alter your ineligible status.

If your academic plans are contingent upon sufficient financial aid funding, plan your course schedule accordingly, lest you run out of grant aid eligibility prematurely.

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Stay on top of your finances with the SFS Facebook!



SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

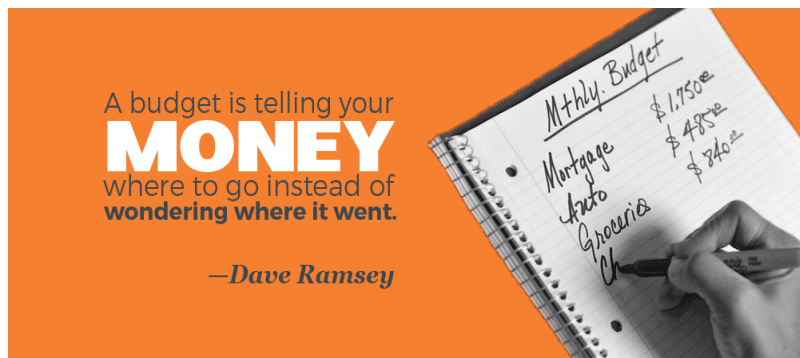
Students receiving federal, state or PLU financial assistance are required to maintain satisfactory progress toward the completion of a degree program. At a minimum, undergraduate students must complete at least 67% of attempted credit load with a 2.0 cumulative GPA. Two consecutive semesters with a GPA below 2.0 or completing less than 67% of attempted credits will result in the loss of financial aid eligibility. Loss of aid eligibility may be appealed if extraordinary circumstances (e.g. significant health issues or family issues) impacted your academic performance. Please note that a grade of C-, because its GPA equivalent is 1.67, will only help you to attain the 67% completion rate, but may hurt you because it is below 2.0 on the GPA scale. For a full summary of the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy, see our financial aid Handbook, page 8.

It's YOUR Money

Have you ever run out of money before the end of the month?

Do you have a dream or a goal that costs money?

Do you have an emergency fund?



When it comes to developing a personal budget getting started can be the hardest part. The first step to developing a budget is determining your income and your expenses. There are many tools available, such as the [Lute Budget](#), budget apps like [Mint](#) and [Dollarbird](#) or you can develop your own budget with paper and pen (or Excel).

Examining your expenses may reveal some hard truths, i.e. “I’m spending \$200.00 a month dining out?!” It may also reveal your ability to start saving towards that JTerm study away trip. You may find \$20 in your budget to do some investing or paying down a student loan.

A personal budget doesn’t mean the fun is over. You should budget for entertainment and things you enjoy; you get to decide just how much you want to spend on those experiences.

If your budget doesn’t balance perfectly in the first month or two, don’t be discouraged, this is normal! It takes time to get it just right and it is common to have to make small adjustments until you and your budget agree.

Consider your personal budget as the first step towards becoming empowered by your personal finances. Ready to start your budget but need help? Contact Kelly Lauderdale in the Office of Student Financial Services. lauderkd@plu.edu

Looking for a Job?

2018-19 State Work Study funds are still available. If you are a WA resident with CWSP or SWSP eligibility, off-campus employers in the state work study program are still looking for part time help. Click on the [Find a Job](#) on the student employment center homepage for a listing of current positions. Positions with a state work study employer can be a great opportunity in your career or academic interest area. Positions are available in private, for-profit businesses, local & state government, and non-profits. For assistance, contact the Student Employment Center.

If you are already working off campus with an employer whose work is not religious or political in nature, check out if your employer qualifies for a partial reimbursement of the wages they pay you with SWS funds at www.wsac.wa.gov.

Do you know your Loan Debt?

If you’ve been paying attention to your Banner Self Service this year, you may have noticed that your student loan borrowing history at PLU is being provided to you on an ongoing basis. As of July 1, 2018, as a result of the *WA Student Loan Transparency Act*, any time a student loan is offered, increased or reduced, students will receive an update on how that loan change will affect their monthly loan payment in repayment and/or the total cost to pay off the loan. These notifications will not include the Federal Parent PLUS Loan, since that debt is not owned by the student. Additionally, the cost estimates associated with any private/alternative loans will depend on the spread between the 6% average interest rate used in our calculation as compared to the actual rate your lender has applied to your loan (which is known only to you).

The intent of this information is to keep students aware of their debt level as it occurs, the anticipated cost estimate to repay these loans, and if prudent, make different borrowing decisions in light of this information. Current 2018-19 interest rates:

Undergraduate:

Federal Nursing: 5% Federal Direct: 5.045%

Graduate:

Federal Direct 6.595% Grad PLUS: 7.595%



FINANCIAL AID UPDATES



2019-20 FAFSA FILING TIPS

The Basics:

- URL: www.fafsa.gov
- PLU school code: 003785
- Priority filing date: Dec. 1, 2018
- Tax Year requested: 2017
- Availability: Now!

The following are common errors that have caused delays in the processing of FAFSA applications, or have erroneously increased the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and reduced aid eligibility.

1. **Strive for a complete and accurate FAFSA on your initial submission.** Corrections made to an already filed FAFSA may result in your application being selected for verification, requiring more paperwork on your part, more paper shuffling on our part and a possible delay in getting your aid award finalized or disbursed. Review your answers one final time before you hit the “submit” button. The priority filing deadline for continuing students is not until December 1, so you have plenty of time to get it right on your initial submission.
2. **Use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT)** to ensure the accuracy of your income tax information on your FAFSA. Since 2017 is the tax year being reported on the 2019-20 FAFSA, tax returns will have already been filed months ago. The DRT will be available to the vast majority of applicants, the exceptions being tax filers who amended their 2017 tax return and married couples who filed separate returns.
3. **Do not alter the information transferred via the DRT unless:**
 - a. An IRA distribution was reported on the 1040, but was rolled over into another IRA account, or
 - b. IRS tax filing status was “Married, filing jointly”, but you need to remove the information of the parent not in the household.
4. **Did you provide the same answer twice?** If both the student and parents are providing their information, be sure parental data is submitted in the parent’s section

and not again in the student’s section - which will likely increase the EFC dramatically.

4. **Making Corrections versus Updates:** If ANY data element was reported in error, it should be corrected as quickly as possible. An error occurs when it was **already incorrect** when first reported on the FAFSA. For instance, home equity or a retirement fund (which are never reported on the FAFSA), was reported in parents’ assets. Go to fafsa.gov and click on “Make Corrections” and correct these errors. If ANY data element was correct when the FAFSA was initially submitted, but has since changed, it is considered an update. For instance, you reduced your savings account since filing the FAFSA because you used a portion of it to purchase a car. You cannot update your FAFSA for such a change. *Corrections* in household size and number in college can be made, but *updates* are allowed only if your FAFSA is selected for verification.
5. **Submit your WASFA online** if you are a Washington resident who is undocumented, at www.readyssetgrad.org. Login as a “Returning User” or click on “Start a New WASFA” if 2019-20 is your first application. Application should be submitted as soon after Oct. 1 as possible.

Are you subject to a

“Financial HOLD”?

If your student account is past due, it will be placed on a “financial hold.” Basic university privileges will be denied until the account is current, including the right to register, receive copies of official **and** unofficial transcripts or diploma, or cash checks. Reasons for a Financial Hold may include the following:

- Financial aid has not been accepted so cannot be not paid.
- Tuition Management Systems Payment Plan Delinquent (no payment or late payments, etc.)
- Student Account Delinquent (no payment, late payments, etc.)
- Master Promissory Note or entrance counseling not completed for loan program(s).
- Verification not completed.
- Private loan application incomplete or not returned to lender.
- Financial aid based on full time enrollment and you are under-enrolled.

There are over twenty other types of Student Holds that are placed on PLU student accounts and records for reasons other than those pertaining to financial aid listed above. All of them have consequences. For a complete list of Student Holds, the responsible office and their contact information, see the [Student Financial Services website](#).

USEFUL WEBSITES



Student Employment:	www.plu.edu/studentemployment/
Student Financial Services:	www.plu.edu/student-financial-services/
FAFSA on the Web:	www.fafsa.gov/
Banner Web:	https://banweb.plu.edu/
Washington Student Achievement Council:	www.wsac.wa.gov/
U.S. Department of Education:	www.studentaid.gov/
Outside Scholarships Search:	www.thewashboard.org/
Independent Colleges of Washington	www.icwashington.org
National Student Loan Data System:	www.nslds.ed.gov/
Nursing Loan Entrance Counseling:	https://ipromise.campuspartners.com/
Perkins & Nursing Loan Exit Counseling:	www.mycampusloan.com/
Federal Stafford/Direct Loan:	www.studentloans.gov/

CONTACT INFORMATION

STUDENT FINANCIAL SERVICES

Monday - Friday	8AM to 5PM	Hauge 102
Phone Numbers	(800) 678-3243	
	(253) 535-7161	
E-mail	sfs@plu.edu	
FAX Number	(253) 535-8406	

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

Monday - Friday	9AM to 5PM	Ramstad 112
Phone Number	(253) 535-7459	
E-mail	stuemp@plu.edu	



the **WashBoard.org**
Smarter Scholarship Matches

“Apply for scholarships available only to students attending Washington schools on the E-Harmony of Scholarship Search engines – www.thewashboard.org”



Each year the **Independent College of Washington (ICW)** offers scholarships to students attending an ICW member school. Represent PLU as you compete against students from other independent colleges in the state of Washington! ICW scholarships will be announced in February with a mid-March application deadline. Look for the announcement on our homepage next spring.