American Indian Student Aid Information

Non-Federal Types of Financial Aid:

American Indian Student Tuition Waiver- This waiver eliminates tuition costs charged to a qualifying student. It does not, however, waive any other charges. The application is available at UM’s Financial Aid Office homepage (www.umt.edu/finaid) in the documents and forms section. Complete the application only if you meet the following requirements:

- A Montana resident
- Have a minimum of ¼ blood quantum or are an enrolled member of a state-recognized or federally recognized Indian tribe located within the boundaries of the state of Montana.
  - Blood quantum or enrollment status can be documented with a Tribal enrollment card or other Tribal documentation like a certificate. If you do not have Tribal enrollment card, yet have ¼ blood quantum, documentation may be accepted such as parents’ enrollment card and birth certificates. If you are a new applicant please attach a copy of the documentation.
- Students who have already submitted and received the waiver do not need to apply again for the next academic year. However, an application needs to be submitted if attending summer semester. Documentation is only needed once.
- Have financial need determined by filing a FAFSA
- Must be making Satisfactory Academic Progress (see section below).

Tribal Higher Education Funding- Tribal Higher Education funding is administered by each Tribe based on their criteria and standards. Questions regarding deadlines and eligibility should be directed to the respective Tribal Higher Education Office. Contact information is available at American Indian Student Services homepage (www.umt.edu/aiss) in the Tribal Higher Ed section.

- Tribes require a Higher Education needs analysis form to be completed by UM’s Financial Aid Office; the form should be submitted to the Financial Aid Office at least two weeks prior to the tribal deadline.
- Loan eligibility will be determined after any Tribal Higher Education funding has been reported; at that time a request for loans must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office in writing.

Scholarships:

- For scholarships specifically for American Indian Students the American Indian Student Services website (www.umt.edu/aiss) provides information. Individual academic departments may also have scholarships available specifically to American Indian students. Refer to departmental websites for such information.
- Additional Scholarship Opportunities:
  - Incoming students will be reviewed for scholarships when they submit their admissions application. This includes consideration for the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE), Non-Resident and Montana Resident Scholarships.
  - The UM General Scholarship Application for current students becomes available by December 1st and is due by February 15th.
- UM’s Financial Aid Office Scholarship homepage (www.umt.edu/finaid/scholarships/) contains additional Scholarship information.

Types of Federal Financial Aid:

Jay Treaty- American Indian Students are not subject to the requirement to be US citizens and are eligible to fill out the FAFSA to receive federal aid due to the protection of the Jay Treaty.
Federal and State Grants- Students will be offered the maximum grant aid possible, based on their Expected Family Contribution (EFC) as determined by the FAFSA application. Some funds are limited, so applying early (before February 15th) is vital for receiving the largest possible award.

Loans- The types of loans available to you will depend on many variables. For more information about the individual types of loans available, visit UM's Financial Aid Office Loans homepage (www.umt.edu/finaid/types-of-aid/loans/)

Work-Study- Students who are awarded work-study will only receive the funding if they secure a work-study position. For those who do, payment comes in the form of a paycheck after work is performed. Students can apply for jobs by inquiring in individual departments or by using UM's electronic job board (www.umt.edu/career/StudentEmployment/).

Financial Aid Tips:

Important Dates:
- **February 15th** - UM FAFSA priority filing date. To file visit the Federal Student Aid FAFSA homepage (fafsa.ed.gov).
- **May 1st** - Due date for online acceptance of aid.
- **June 15th** - All requested documentation should be submitted to avoid delays in the disbursement of your autumn semester aid.
- **July 1st** - All student files must go through a process known as ‘Final Review’, the awards reflected on the initial estimated offer are pending final review is complete. Once this process is complete you will receive an email.
- **August 24th** - Aid begins to be disbursed for those students whose: files have been reviewed and have confirmed payment on their autumn semester bill.

Verification- Approximately 30% of all students that submit a FAFSA are selected by the US Department of Education for a process known as verification. Most students who are selected for verification are Pell Grant eligible or are from lower income family situations. Selected students will be asked by UM to provide additional documentation that will be compared to what was provided on the FAFSA. Doing so ensures that the information reported on the FAFSA is accurate and that students receive the correct amount of federal aid. More information is available at UM's Financial Aid Office Verification homepage (www.umt.edu/finaid/apply-for-aid/additional-requirements/verification/).
If selected for verification login to CyberBear (cyberbear.umt.edu) and go to Tab “Accept Award Offer” to see what needs to be provided. Links to the required forms or instructions will be attached to each specific requirement.
- Please be aware that completing verification is a manual process that can be time consuming and we ask that students be patient and allow time for the financial aid office to determine their award eligibility.
- To ensure that aid will be available prior to the start of each semester all documentation must be received by the deadline dates above.

Satisfactory Academic Progress - Students receiving federal financial aid are required to make timely and satisfactory progress towards the completion of their degree/certificate. Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA (undergraduates) and successfully complete at least 70% of the credits they attempt. If students withdraw, fail or get incomplete grades in a course it will decrease the percentage of completed credits and may affect a student’s eligibility to receive financial aid. Students that fail to make SAP may be placed on financial aid suspension and would have to submit an appeal to be considered for reinstatement of financial aid. Further information can be found at UM's Financial Aid Office Maintaining Eligibility homepage (www.umt.edu/finaid/maintaining-eligibility/).

Who to contact for help - If you have questions or would like more information, please visit us in Griz Central. Or contact Sarah Wade (sarah.wade@mso.umt.edu).