

You're thinking about investing in your future and pursuing a degree, but the prospect of applying for financial aid is daunting. Here's a quick overview of what to expect, designed to help you navigate the process with confidence. First, you need to find out if you're eligible for federal financial aid, such as grants, loans, and work-study opportunities. You do this by filling out a free application for federal student aid, commonly known as the FAFSA at fafsa.ed.gov. The FAFSA requires you to provide your tax and other household information in order to evaluate your family's financial strength. When you submit, your school will use this information to determine which aid programs you may qualify to receive. Second, use the internet to search for local and private scholarships and grants that you might qualify for. Some free sites can help match your interests or eligibility requirements for all types of resources across the country. You can also check with your employer to see if they offer full or partial tuition reimbursement. Third, set up a meeting with the financial aid office of the school you're considering. Talk to them about the financial aid programs they offer, any additional scholarships or grants they may have, how to apply, and what your options are. For members of the military, you may have additional financial options available. Some schools, like CTU, have an entire team dedicated to supporting military service members, both active duty and veterans, that is available to help you review all of your options. Your financial aid representative will work with you to create your plan for funding your education. Grants and scholarships alone may not cover the full cost of your education. You may also want to look at borrowing federal direct Stafford loans, which usually have lower interest rates and do not require a credit check or cosigner. Need based loans, like the direct subsidized Stafford and federal Perkins loans, don't accrue interest while you're in school, but parent plus and unsubsidized Stafford loans do. If you still need additional funding, you may also look into private education loans from the bank or credit union. You should be sure that you understand the terms and conditions of any loan you may consider. We strongly encourage you to compare loan terms and conditions of lending institutions. As always, it is your right as a borrower to work with the lender of your choice. To get started, if you can find out what the approximate total cost of your education would be, check out CTU's net price calculator online. Answer a few simple questions and you can have a ballpark estimated cost in about 8 minutes. Click below to start plotting your course.