

As we welcome you to Berry, it's important to recognize how many moving pieces fall into place to make your journey successful. We thought it would be helpful to share these FAQs as you join the Berry family.

**If you're a new entering student, make sure you complete these essential steps** (which are covered in detail in this document):

- If you're a Georgia resident, apply for state aid.
- Ensure documents are not missing in your file.
- If you filed the FAFSA, accept or decline loans and complete loan counseling.
- Pay tuition or set up a payment plan by July 8.

## **STATE AID**

### **1. How do I know whether I am eligible for state aid?**

If you live in Georgia, you may qualify for state-funded aid programs. The Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) provides a useful resource for students to track their state aid eligibility through their GAfutures account at [My High School HOPE GPA](#). Also, make sure that your high school submits your final transcript to GSFC to determine final HOPE or Zell Miller scholarship eligibility.

**Homeschooled students** may learn about their specific application and qualification process for state aid here: [completer of an accredited home study program](#) or [completer of an unaccredited home study program](#). Please note that any HOPE or Zell Miller scholarship included in your financial aid offer is tentative and contingent upon completion of the application and qualification process with [GAfutures.org](#).

In order to offer any state aid, GSFC will need to have some type of application on file. We recommend filing the 2024–25 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at [studentaid.gov](#). Alternately, you can complete the [Georgia Student Finance Application \(GSFAPP\)](#) at [GAfutures.org](#).

Your HOPE or Zell Miller Scholarship (depending on your qualifications and other eligibility requirements) will be updated in your Berry financial aid offer after GSFC confirms your final eligibility (upon graduation from high school) and as soon as the Office of Financial Aid reviews this information.

You may find more information about state aid by visiting [GAfutures.org](#).

## COMPLETING THE FINANCIAL AID PROCESS

### 2. Where do I find to-date financial aid offer information?

It's available in the Berry financial aid portal at [financialaid.berry.edu](http://financialaid.berry.edu). After logging in to the financial aid portal, go to the "Menu" tab in the top left corner and select "Financial Aid Offer" to view your to-date offer.

### 3. How do I know if anything is missing in my file and preventing the offered aid from being confirmed or disbursed?

Follow the steps in FAQ 2. However, this time, there's no need to access the "Menu" tab. Simply view the missing items from the "Your Documents" section of the main page. Questions about these documents? Select the hyperlink for each item and a detailed description of the item will appear.

If your FAFSA was selected for verification, you'll find details on the documents needed by the Office of Financial Aid to complete this process. Your financial aid offer will remain tentative until your verification review is complete. Your financial aid offer may be modified by the outcome of the verification process and whenever you submit new information as part of the FAFSA.

### 4. How do I submit/upload documents to the Office of Financial Aid?

Great question! If you have made it this far, and are viewing any documents you may be missing on the home page of [financialaid.berry.edu](http://financialaid.berry.edu), you will notice a hyperlink that says "Incoming Students – Financial Aid Document Upload Portal." This link will take you to the portal where you should see the missing items you need to upload.

**Note:** if "Your Documents" include a verification requirement — in addition to the submission of any other required items — you and your parent listed on the FAFSA must visit the Office of Financial Aid in person with an original government-issued ID. We look forward to helping you complete this step during your SOAR time on campus. The office is open from 8 a.m.–5 p.m. in Hermann Hall 105.

Once your documents are ready to upload, select “Upload Link” next to the missing item, then select the file that you have saved to your computer. This allows secure submission of documents for processing.

[Need help? Check out our instructional video for more information.](#)

## **5. How do I accept or decline loans?**

A very important step! If you submitted a FAFSA, it’s likely that you will be offered Federal Direct Loans. It’s important for us to note that you do not have to take out these loans and they are not automatically accepted for you! If you do choose to take them, you’ll need to formally accept the loans through your financial aid page. If you choose not to take them, you’ll need to formally decline them.

To accept or decline your loan offer, log in to [financialaid.berry.edu](http://financialaid.berry.edu) (this place should feel like home by now). Go to the “Menu” tab in the top left corner and you’ll see the option to “Accept/Decline Loans.” You can review all of your grants, scholarships and loans here.

To accept/decline your Federal Direct Loans, you’ll notice a small gray scroll bar underneath all awards. Move this scroll bar to the right and a drop-down will appear on the rows with the loans. Change the status as you wish, then select “Submit.”

The announced fixed interest rate for Federal Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans during the 2024–25 academic year is 6.53%. For Federal Direct Subsidized loans, the interest does not accrue while you are enrolled at least part-time in college, as the interest is federally subsidized.

***Note: if you are accepting your loans, there are still two items you need to complete. Continue reading for more information.***

[Need help? Check out our instructional video for more information.](#)

## **6. How do I complete the counseling and required documents corresponding to the accepted loans?**

Berry will need two items in order to disburse the Federal Direct Loans to your student account: the Federal Direct Loan Entrance Counseling and

the Federal Direct Loan Master Promissory Note (MPN). Both items can be completed by logging in with your FSA ID at [studentaid.org](http://studentaid.org). Hover over “Loans and Grants” at the top, select and complete the Loan Entrance Counseling and the MPN (both listed in a column to your left). Make sure Berry College is added to receive the results!

## PAYING YOUR BALANCE

### 7. How do I see my balance for the fall?

Once all of your financial aid has been disbursed to your student account, you can view an accurate balance through the Student Account Center.

Log in to the VikingWeb student portal at [vikingweb.berry.edu](http://vikingweb.berry.edu). Select the “Finances” tab at the top, then select the hyperlinked “Student Account Center.” Select “Go” under the student option on the far right and you can view your current balance in a gray chart on the far left.

### 8. How do I submit a payment?

Visit [mycollegepaymentplan.com/berry](http://mycollegepaymentplan.com/berry). When setting up a payment plan, there is a \$55 fee applied each semester a payment plan is used. For more information, please plan to attend the Paying for Berry breakout session hosted by Student Financial Services during SOAR.

*Note: if you are setting up a payment plan, it must be in place before **July 8** in order to meet the **July 10** payment deadline.*

### 9. My parents would like to utilize a loan. How do they apply for the Parent Plus Loan?

Your parent can also utilize a loan from the Department of Education. They will need a Federal Student Aid ID. (They can create an ID during this process.) They can log in to [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov) and select “PLUS Loans: Grad PLUS and Parent PLUS” by hovering over the “Loans and Grants” tab.

As in the case of the student opting for Federal Direct Loans, the parent will also need to complete a Master Promissory Note (MPN). It can be found at [studentaid.gov](http://studentaid.gov) by hovering over “Loans and Grants” and selecting “Master Promissory Note (MPN)” and “I’m a Parent of an Undergraduate Student.”

The fixed interest rate for Federal Direct PLUS loans during the academic year 2024–25 is 9.08%.

**10. Why are my loans not showing on my account?**

Please refer to FAQs 5 and 6. It's possible you have not completed the Master Promissory Note (MPN) or Entrance Counseling, or you may not have accepted your loans in VikingWeb! All three steps are needed before the loans will subtract from your balance. Need assistance? Please call our office: 706.236.1714.

**11. Are there any other borrowing options for students and parents?**

For an overview of available educational loans, including loans from private lenders, please visit our [educational loans](#) site.

**12. I received an outside scholarship for educational expenses at Berry College. Where do I send the payment or check?**

Berry College  
P.O. Box 490129  
Mount Berry, Georgia 30149-0129

Please include the student name and Berry student ID # to ensure we apply it to the correct account.

**13. Who can assist me with Veteran Affairs Educational Benefits questions?**

For certification questions, contact Alice Shiflett, VA certifying official in the Office of the Registrar, by phone (706.236.2190) or email ([ashiflett@berry.edu](mailto:ashiflett@berry.edu)).

For financial aid and VA benefits questions, contact the Office of Financial Aid by phone (706.236.1714) or email ([financialaid@berry.edu](mailto:financialaid@berry.edu)).

**WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT**

**14. Why is FERPA important in the communication of financial aid related matters?**

When you reach the age of 18 or enroll in college, your FERPA rights transfer

from parent(s) to you, meaning that Berry offices can communicate only with you unless you tell us otherwise. In order for the Office of Financial Aid to communicate with relatives or family members on your behalf, you will need to grant FERPA permissions in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. You may grant or update FERPA permissions by completing the Release of Information Form available in the “Student” tab of VikingWeb (under the “Security” section).

**15. I need verification of my enrollment at Berry College.  
When will my enrollment verification be available?**

Your enrollment verification becomes available the first week of each semester. You may request your verification of enrollment in VikingWeb.

**16. How do I renew my financial aid one year to the next?**

Berry scholarships and grants are renewed if you maintain a Berry cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or higher. In order to continue qualification for the Berry College Grant from Alumni & Friends and for Federal Grants and Loans, you must submit a FAFSA each year.

HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarship recipients must maintain a [GAfutures.org](http://GAfutures.org)-calculated GPA of 3.0 and 3.3, respectively. HOPE and Zell Miller funds are available until the student has attempted 127 credit hours. Berry College scholarships and grants are limited to 8 semesters.

**17. What is Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)?**

In addition to achieving academic progress (Berry cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or higher), students must meet [Financial Aid SAP](#) each semester. The three components of this policy follow:

- a. The student must earn 67% of all career attempted credit hours.
- b. The student must maintain an SAP cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or higher.
- c. The student is eligible for federal aid for no more than 150% of the credit hours required to earn their degree.

State scholarships are available until the student has attempted 127 credit hours.

Berry College scholarships and grants are limited to 8 semesters.

**18. Do I need a FAFSA each year?**

We do encourage the renewal of your FAFSA for the following academic year of enrollment no later than February 15. The FAFSA may qualify you for need-based aid as well as federal student and parent loans. Visit [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov) for more information about filing the 2025–26 FAFSA as early as October 1.

**19. How do I access additional Berry scholarship opportunities?**

You may learn about additional aid opportunities by meeting with a financial aid counselor on campus. Your financial aid counselor will help you explore additional resources and opportunities that may assist in affording your Berry journey. You may also learn about additional scholarships by attending the Financial Aid Opportunities sessions hosted by the Office of Financial Aid early in the spring semester. Finally, as you make progress in your major and engage in student life activities, you may qualify for endowed scholarships based on financial need and/or your talents and academic qualifications. We encourage you to stay engaged with our office, your academic advisor, LifeWorks supervisor, mentors and faculty in your department.

**20. Can I speak with a financial aid counselor?**

Absolutely! The Office of Financial Aid is open Monday–Friday (8 a.m.–5p.m.). Please call 706.236.1714 or email us at [financialaid@berry.edu](mailto:financialaid@berry.edu) to schedule an appointment with a financial aid counselor.