

Financing Options for Students and Parents 2017–18

Since 2001, grants have replaced student loans in the Princeton financial aid package for all aid recipients. No Princeton student is required to borrow to meet their determined financial need.

While this policy has made it possible for many students to graduate Princeton with little or no debt, some families may wish to take advantage of loans to help finance the cost of college. This guide is designed to help you understand your loan options and, if you decide to request a student or parent loan, find the best loan to meet your needs. The informational chart included at the end of this guide will help compare the terms and conditions of the loans discussed below.

It is the policy of the Undergraduate Financial Aid Office to help students minimize borrowing whenever possible, and to assist students and parents in selecting the best loan available once the decision to borrow has been made. Because loans are not required in the Princeton financial aid package, any student or parent who borrows does so on their own initiative.

We recommend that you contact us to discuss financing options before applying for a student or parent loan.

Student Loans

Student borrowing falls into two general categories.

1. Need-based loans: A financial aid counselor must determine your eligibility for need-based loans. Common reasons for requesting a need-based student loan include:

- to cover a shortfall in expected summer savings
- to replace all or part of the campus job portion of the aid package
- to pay for an extra expense, such as the purchase of a personal computer

Need-based student loans qualify for an interest subsidy during in-school periods. This means interest is not charged to the student, and is not added to the amount borrowed, while the student is enrolled. Interest charges begin after the student's enrollment ceases. The interest subsidy, generally low rates, and (in some cases) the lack of an origination fee make need-based student loans the most favorable borrowing option for those who qualify.

Princeton offers subsidized need-based loans only after federal eligibility has been exhausted.

Need-based student loans described in the chart at the end of this brochure include the following:

- Direct Subsidized Stafford Loan
- Princeton Subsidized Student Loan

2. Non-need-based loans: These loans replace the expected parental contribution and finance a portion of the family’s payment rather than meet demonstrated need in the aid package.

Students may request a non-need-based loan when a portion of the parental contribution is not available, or as part of an overall family financing plan to have the student assume educational debt. Because these loans are not need-based, students who applied for aid but did not qualify may also use the programs.

Non-need-based student loans do not offer an interest subsidy during enrollment periods. Interest must either be paid while the student is enrolled or added to the loan principal. It is therefore important for aid students to contact the aid office to determine their eligibility for more favorable need-based loans before requesting an unsubsidized loan.

Students are strongly encouraged to discuss their options with a financial aid counselor before borrowing.

Non-need-based student loans described in the chart at the end of this brochure include the following:

- Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan
- Alternative Student Loan

A note about alternative loans: These commercial loans (sometimes referred to as “private loans”) are credit-based and should be viewed as a last resort after all other borrowing options have been considered. Although terms and rates vary among private lenders, in many cases a federal student loan may provide the student with more beneficial terms and conditions than private loans. The benefits of federal loans may include a fixed lower annual percentage rate, fewer and lower fees, and more favorable repayment options. If you initiate an alternative student loan application, the Princeton University Financial Aid Office will contact you before certifying the loan to review other options that may be available to you. If a student or parent chooses to borrow an alternative loan, Princeton does not require the use of particular lenders or in any way limit their choice of lenders. Further, Princeton does not recommend lenders or maintain a “preferred lender” list.

Parent Loans

There are two primary long-term education loans available to Princeton parents, as well as a short-term monthly installment loan.

1. Princeton Parent Loan Program (PPL): This University program offers parents who qualify the opportunity to borrow their share of Princeton’s costs and make repayments over a maximum 14-year period. Both aid and non-aid families may apply, and a review of creditworthiness is required. A sample repayment schedule is shown on Table 1.

In recent years, the PPL has been a favorable financing option available exclusively to Princeton parents. You can compare PPL rates and terms with the PLUS Loans for parents on the chart at the end of this section.

Note: The exact interest rates (fixed and variable) are not set until July 15 and January 15. If after learning of the interest rates you choose not to proceed with the PPL, you may withdraw your application without penalty.

More information about the PPL can be found on the Web at www.princeton.edu/parentloans, or by calling 609-258-6401.

Table 1. PPL Sample 14-Year Repayment Schedule
(This example uses a 6.0% annual interest rate)

<i>Annual amount borrowed</i>	<i>Four-year total</i>	<i>Monthly payment</i>
\$10,000	\$40,000	\$319
\$15,000	\$60,000	\$479
\$20,000	\$80,000	\$639
\$25,000	\$100,000	\$799
\$30,000	\$120,000	\$959
\$35,000	\$140,000	\$1,118
\$40,000	\$160,000	\$1,278
\$50,000	\$200,000	\$1,597

2. Direct PLUS loan program: The Direct PLUS program is another option for both aid and non-aid families to finance the parental share of Princeton’s costs. In 2016–17, the PLUS loan interest rate was 6.31%, with an origination fee of 4.276%. The PLUS loan is credit-based. More information about the Direct PLUS Loan can be found on the Web at www.studentloans.gov.

Table 2. Parent Loan Comparison

<i>Parent loan type</i>	<i>2016-17</i>		<i>2015-16</i>		<i>2014-15</i>	
	<i>Interest rate</i>	<i>Fees</i>	<i>Interest rate</i>	<i>Fees</i>	<i>Interest rate</i>	<i>Fees</i>
Princeton Parent Loan*						
Fixed rate	4.99%	None	4.99%	None	4.30%	None
6-month variable fall	2.30%	None	1.80%	None	1.20%	None
6-month variable spring	2.70%	None	2.20%	None	1.20%	None
Direct PLUS Loan						
Fixed rate	6.31%	4.276%	6.84%	4.272%	7.21%	4.292%

* The interest rate for the 2017–18 Princeton Parent Loan will be determined on or about July 15, 2017. The spring 2018 variable rate for the Princeton Parent Loan will be determined on or about January 15, 2018.

3. Princeton Monthly Payment Plan: This University monthly installment loan is a short-term financing option allowing parents to make 12 monthly payments with interest, rather than two semester payments at no interest charge. The 2017–18 interest rate is 2.75%.

Lenders

1. Princeton University acts as lender for the following loans:

- Princeton Subsidized Student Loan
- Princeton Parent Loan program
- Princeton Monthly Payment Plan

Princeton does not charge application fees for any of these loans. Current terms and rates are listed on the attached chart. Loans made by Princeton to students or parents are not sold to other financial institutions; as such, repayment is made to Princeton. Loans made by Princeton cannot be consolidated with loans obtained from other financial institutions. Application for Princeton loans is made directly through Princeton's Undergraduate Financial Aid Office, or the Princeton Parent Loan Office. Educational Computer Systems, Inc. has been contracted by Princeton University to assist in the administration of the student loans listed above; however, the University remains the loan holder at all times.

2. The federal Direct Loan Program acts as lender for the following loans:

- Direct Subsidized Stafford Loan
- Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan
- Direct PLUS loan for parents

Interest rates and fees for the Direct Loan Program are determined by the federal government. Princeton students and parents may learn more about the Direct Loan application process by contacting the Office of Undergraduate Financial Aid.

3. Alternative student loans (sometimes referred to as "private loans") are offered by private banks and lending institutions. Lenders are required to provide a full disclosure of the terms of these loans, including how interest rates are determined. In addition, alternative loan marketing materials should encourage students to consider more favorable loan options such as the federal student and parent loans before borrowing. As stated before, a federal student loan may provide the student with more beneficial terms and conditions than private loans, including a fixed, lower annual percentage rate, lower fees, and more favorable repayment options. Princeton strongly recommends you speak with an aid counselor before applying for an alternative loan.

Additional information on all of the loans mentioned in this publication is available in the Undergraduate Financial Aid Office.

Undergraduate Financial Aid

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Table 3. Student Loans

<i>Student loan type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Interest rates</i>	<i>Costs</i>	<i>Borrowing limits</i>	<i>Repayment period</i>
Need-Based:					
Direct Subsidized Stafford Loan	Federally subsidized need-based student loan	In 2016–17: 3.76% fixed interest charged after enrollment ceases	In 2016–17: 1.069% origination fee at disbursement	1st yr: \$3,500 2nd yr: \$4,500 3rd yr: \$5,500 4th yr: \$5,500 Total undergraduate: \$23,000	Begins 6 months after borrower leaves school, maximum 10-year repayment term
Princeton Subsidized Student Loan	University subsidized need-based student loan	Fixed: 5% charged during repayment	No fees	Determined by financial aid office	Begins 9 months after borrower leaves school, maximum 10-year repayment term
Non-Need-Based:					
Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan	Federal student loan not based on need, no in-school subsidy	In 2016–17: 3.76% fixed	In 2016–17: 1.069% origination fee at disbursement	1st yr: \$5,500 ** 2nd yr: \$6,500 3rd yr: \$7,500 4th yr: \$7,500 Total undergraduate: \$31,000	Begins 6 months after borrower leaves school, maximum 10-year repayment term
Alternative Loans	Credit-based, private loans for students. No in-school subsidy or needs test.	Variable: tied to a market index (Prime, Libor, etc.) plus up to 10 points. Typical range is 4% to 18%.	Fees range from 0–11% of the loan principal.	Cost of education minus student aid	Typically begins 6 months after borrower leaves school, maximum 10-year repayment term

** Unsubsidized Stafford limits are reduced by any subsidized Stafford. The maximums reflect the total annual Stafford — both subsidized and unsubsidized. The terms described above are informational only. Check with specific lenders to confirm current rates and terms. 2017–18 Stafford Loan rates will be determined in June 2017.

Table 4. Parent Loans

<i>Parent loan type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Interest rates</i>	<i>Costs</i>	<i>Borrowing limits</i>	<i>Repayment period</i>
Princeton Parent Loan	University parent loan. Apply online: www.princeton.edu/parentloans	In 2016-17: 4.99% fixed rate or 2.7% variable rate	No fees	Cost of education minus student aid	Begins during enrollment, maximum 14-year repayment term
Direct PLUS Loan	Federal parent loan. Apply online: studentloans.gov	In 2016-17: 6.31 fixed	In 2016-17: 4.276% origination fee at disbursement	Cost of education minus student aid	Begins during enrollment, maximum 10-year repayment term
Princeton Monthly Payment Plan	University installment payment loan. Apply online: www.princeton.edu/studentaccounts	Fixed: 2.75%	No fees	Cost of education minus student aid	Begins during enrollment, maximum 12-month repayment term

*The terms described are informational only. Rates and terms may change. 2017-18 interest rates and fees will be determined by July 31, 2017.

