

**2019-2020 FINANCIAL AID PROCESS AND INFORMATION
HAMILTON CAMPUS**

FEDERAL DIRECT STUDENT LOAN INFORMATION

Make sure you are eligible before applying. You must

- Be a U.S. citizen, a Permanent Resident or a Green Card holder.
- Be in good standing with any prior student loans. Students in default on prior student loans are not eligible for additional loans.
- Have been accepted into a Masters-level degree program. (Visiting, provisionally-accepted, and D.MIN students are NOT eligible.)
- Have earned a Bachelor's degree or have successfully completed at least 3 years full-time undergraduate or graduate credits (generally 72 credits or more)

TYPES OF DIRECT FEDERAL STUDENT LOANS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

Unsubsidized Direct Loan 6.60% Interest Rate (Determined annually by the Department of Education on July 1st) and 1.062% Lender Fee (Deducted from the loan amount)

Available to students who have completed both the FAFSA and GCTS form. To be eligible, a student must attend at least half-time (**4 or more credits per semester**) and be accepted in a qualifying degree-seeking program. (See eligibility criteria above).

Interest begins as soon as the loan is disbursed. Student may choose to pay the interest monthly or let it accumulate on top of the principle amount. Make this choice when completing the required online Loan Master Promissory Note (MPN).

Repayment is triggered by graduation, withdrawing from school, or dropping below half-time. A six-month grace period begins on the last day of classes that the student attended on a half or full-time basis. At the end of the grace period, the student borrower is required to begin making payments.

For more information on unsubsidized direct federal student loans, go to:
<http://studentaid.ed.gov/types/loans/subsidized-and-unsubsidized>.

GradPlus Direct Loan 7.60% Interest Rate (Determined annually by the Department of Education on July 1st) and 4.248% Lender Fee (Deducted from the loan amount)

To borrow through this loan program, the student must be eligible for federal aid (as described above) and pass a basic credit check which is performed by the federal Department of Education. Students may borrow up to the cost of attendance minus any other financial aid or assistance. For more information, go to:
<http://studentaid.ed.gov/types/loans/plus>.

HOW TO APPLY

1. *Complete the Federal Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) online.*
The Department of Education designs and processes the FAFSA. The Department will notify the Financial Aid Office at

GCTS when your application is complete. See **Application Due Date and Procedure** section below for helpful details on completing your FAFSA.

2. **Complete the GCTS Financial Aid Application.** Submit it to the Financial Aid Office by email, fax or mail. (finaidinfo@gordonconwell.edu or fax to 978-646-4601 or mail to 130 Essex St. Hamilton, MA 01982)
3. **Provide any other required documentation as requested by the Financial Aid Office.**
Responding quickly to requests will help the Financial Aid Office process your application or award as quickly as possible. After the Financial Aid Office staff reviews your application and determines your Federal Student loan eligibility amount, they will email a Financial Aid Award Letter to you.
4. **Review your award letter.**
Determine whether you wish to accept the award in full, accept a smaller amount, or decline the loan. Complete your Award Acceptance Statement (page two of your award letter). Indicate the amount you wish to borrow on your Award Acceptance Statement, then sign, date, and return it to the Financial Aid Office.
5. **E-sign a Master Promissory Note (MPN) and complete the Loan Counseling Tutorial if you are a new borrower at GCTS.**
Find both at www.studentloans.gov.

Please note that the Financial Aid Office must receive all required documentation from you before or during the semester in which you wish to receive a loan. **Loans cannot be made for prior semesters.**

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) – To comply with federal regulations for student loans, GCTS must ensure that each student is making Satisfactory Academic Progress before funds can be disbursed. Satisfactory Academic Progress is defined as: 1) maintaining the minimum GPA required for the student's degree program, and 2) successfully completing at least 67% of all courses attempted.

APPLICATION DUE DATE AND PROCEDURE

- **Application Due Date** – To ensure that your student loan funds are available to pay tuition costs when due, we recommend that you complete your Financial Aid Application by July 15th. However, we will review applications and process loan requests on an ongoing basis throughout the academic year.
- **Application Procedure** – No action will be taken on an application until the Financial Aid Office has received all requested information and the student has been accepted for admission to a **degree program**. Complete the following steps to apply for financial aid:

STEP 1 - Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. If you completed a FAFSA previously, you will need your FSA ID and password with the U.S. Department of Education, allowing you to access a Renewal FAFSA on the web. **The FAFSA CODE for GCTS is G09747.**

If you have not completed the FAFSA electronically before, you will set up a FSA ID and password at <http://studentaid.ed.gov/fafsa>. If you need to file a paper FAFSA because you cannot access the web, you can obtain the form from the U.S. Department of Education. Contact them at 800-433-3243.

STEP 2 -Complete the **2019-2020 Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary Financial Aid Application –Hamilton.**

Renewal of Aid – Your financial aid award and eligibility is valid for one academic year only. Students must reapply with a new FAFSA and Financial Aid Application (Steps 1 and 2 above) for each academic year.

REQUIREMENTS FOR LOAN DISBURSEMENT

Mandatory Direct Unsubsidized Loan Entrance Counseling and Direct Unsubsidized Loan MPN

First time borrowers at GCTS must complete both the Direct Unsubsidized Loan Entrance Counseling Tutorial and Direct

Unsubsidized Loan MPN at www.studentloans.gov. You will need your FAFSA ID and password to access your account.

Loan Disbursement – After the student has returned a signed Award Acceptance Letter and completed the MPN and Loan Entrance Counseling requirements, a loan can be disbursed. A loan for the academic year would usually be divided evenly between fall and spring semesters. The first half would be applied to fall semester charges and the second to the Spring Semester. Loans are disbursed 2-3 weeks after the semester begins.

To make sure that your loan is disbursed on time, please complete your online FAFSA and complete and return your GCTS Financial Aid Application form to the Financial Aid Office by July 15th for the fall semester. If you are starting in the spring semester, please complete these steps by January 15th. Loan requests made can be considered and processed after these dates for students enrolled at least half-time, but loan disbursements will happen later in the semester.

SUMMER LOANS

Summer Loan Requests – If students are considering summer study, they are encouraged to plan for the entire year *in advance* to stretch their fall/spring aid to help with summer tuition costs.

If you need to explore the possibility of a summer loan after the academic year has begun, please contact the Financial Aid office after April 15th to see what eligibility you may have remaining for the current academic year. If there is remaining eligibility, the summer loan can be considered a trailer to the school year and count toward that year's limit.

If no eligibility remains, you may complete the Financial Aid application (FAFSA and GCTS form) for the next academic year. The summer loan would then be included toward the loan limit for the upcoming academic year.

Please note: You must be enrolled in at least 4 credits in a Full Summer Semester to receive a Summer Loan. You may only receive a Summer Loan for the summer term in which you are enrolled.

DEBT POLICY

Total Educational Indebtedness Policy - A student nearing or exceeding \$40,000 in student debt will be required to submit a letter for review by the Financial Aid Debt Committee. The letter must address a student's current debt level, projected debt while at GCTS, and repayment plans.

IN-SCHOOL DEFERMENT

Educational Loan Deferment Forms – If you are attending GCTS as a half-time or full-time student during the fall or spring semester, your lender will be notified that you are a student and eligible for an in-school deferment. However, this notification is **NOT** made during summer sessions. If your lender needs an in-school deferment form during the summer, contact the Registration Office for assistance. It is the student's responsibility to request the necessary form(s) from their lender(s) and to ask the Registration Office at their campus to complete and submit them.