

# 2008 - 2009 Information About Your Financial Aid Award



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## Your Financial Aid Award

Funding your education is critical to achieving your goals in life. The Student Financial Services Office at BHSU is designed to help you (and your parents) design an overall plan to pay for your education. We are here to be your resource and to help you negotiate the many rules, deadlines, and requirements placed on student aid funds.

The financial aid programs at Black Hills State University have been established by the alumni and friends of the school, federal and state governments, and the University. The aid that is available can be divided into three categories: gift aid, employment, or loans. Gift aid consists of scholarships and grants. Employment is provided through federal or college supported job opportunities. Loans are federally or privately funded and made available through Black Hills State and participating lenders, savings & loans and credit unions.

You must accept or reject the award or any portion of the award offered to you on the award letter. In addition, complete other requested information as directed then sign, date and return all documents to BHSU's Student Financial Services Office. This also applies to any revised award letter sent to you.

Your accepted financial aid in the form of gift assistance will be available to apply toward your institutional charges and other costs of education. With your acceptance, any aid able to be disbursed directly to your University student account will be applied to your account prior to fee payment each semester.

*\*Changes in current federal or state laws, funding levels and regulations or in institutional policy may revise this information.*

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## General Information/Eligibility

You have been offered the award (s) found on your financial aid award letter because you have met, or will meet, the following criteria:

- Have financial need (except for some loan programs)
- Have a high school diploma or a General Education Development certificate
- Have been admitted and enrolled at BHSU as a regular student in an eligible degree-granting program
- Academically eligible as a continuing student
- Making satisfactory academic progress, in accordance with the BHSU Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (enclosed)
- Plan to enroll in at least 6 credit hours each semester for which you have been awarded as an undergraduate student. (Some exception for the Federal Pell Grant- See Federal Pell Grant under Gift Assistance). You have been awarded based upon full-time status. Graduate students must be enrolled in at least 4.5 credit hours per semester to qualify for Stafford Loans.
- Have a valid Social Security Number
- Not in default on any Federal education loans, or owe a repayment on any Federal education grant
- Be registered for Selective Service, if required.

Your award is based on enrollment in regular, semester, on-campus and Rapid City classes. You do not have to be enrolled as a full-time student to qualify for financial aid. However, some Federal Aid Programs (Pell Grant, Stafford, PLUS and Perkins Loan) and the Leveraging Educational Assistance Program have additional restrictions for students enrolled less-than full-time. If it becomes necessary for you to withdraw from the University, it is imperative that you follow the procedures outlined in the Student Handbook. Further information is available in our office.

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## Gift Assistance

Outside Gift Aid – If you expect to receive scholarship or grant assistance not included on your award notification, you must report it either on your award letter or call the Student Financial Services Office with the information. This allows us to properly apply estimated credit toward your University student account until the granting agency or donor payment is received. Most scholarships or gift aid expects you to be full-time to receive the award. Also, an adjustment may need to be made to your financial aid to avoid an overaward in accordance with federal regulations.

Institutional Scholarships, Awards and Grants – All BHSU gifts are credited to the student's account prior to fee payment each semester upon you being full-time. To allow for any institutional gift aid to be applied to your account you must accept, sign and return your award letter. Institutional gift assistance may be cancelled by the awarding department if you fail to meet the eligibility requirements and if so, you will need to make payment of any financial obligation created by the reduction in aid. The BHSU Scholarship Listing and General Application is available on our website at [www.BHSU.edu](http://www.BHSU.edu).

Federal Pell Grant – The amount shown on your award notice is an estimate of your Federal Pell Grant. Eligible students are paid this award through Black Hills State University; the U.S. Department of Education determines your eligibility and provides the funding. Disbursement of a Federal Pell Grant is made prior to fee payment each semester. (Students with less than 6 credits per semester may still be eligible upon being in a degree-or certificate-granting program.) Pell Grants are available to first-time undergraduates.

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant – Provided by the Federal Government for distribution by BHSU if you have exceptional financial need (determined by a low expected family contribution) while allocated funds are available. When awarded FSEOG and accepted through your signed award letter, it will be credited to your student account prior to fee payment. SEOG grants are available for first-time undergraduates.

**Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG)** – The award amount shown on your award notice is an estimate of your AC Grant. Requirements to receive this additional federal grant are: a student must be eligible to receive a federal Pell Grant, US citizen, complete the required challenging courses in high school, graduate from high school on or after 2005, have unmet need and clarify on the FAFSA you meet the requirements. Disbursement of an AC Grant is made prior to fee payment each semester; ACG is only available for full-time students. For further requirements, refer to [www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov](http://www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov).

**National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent (SMART) Grant** – The award amount shown on your award notice is an estimate of your SMART grant. This grant is given to students who pursue college majors in high demand in the global economy, such as science, mathematics, technology, engineering, and critical foreign languages. Disbursement of the SMART grant is made prior to fee payment each semester. SMART is only available to Pell Grant recipients, must be full-time, US citizen, and have unmet need. For further requirements, refer to [www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov](http://www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov).

**TEACH Grant** – The Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program was established to benefit current and prospective teachers. This new grant is available as of the 2008-09 school year. Award amount up to \$4,000 per academic year, with aggregate amounts of \$16,000 for students on their first undergraduate or post-baccalaureate (non-degree) program, and \$8,000 for graduate students. The award, when combined with other aid, cannot exceed the cost of attendance and student must have at least a 3.25 GPA for each payment period along with other requirements such as an Agreement to serve/promise to pay. For further requirements, refer to [www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov](http://www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov).

**Leveraging Educational Assistance Program (LEAP)** – Limited funding provided by the State of South Dakota matching Federal funding to eligible South Dakota students (not funded by SD Legislature in 2007-2008). Students from states other than South Dakota should check with their state's education departments for any state assistance offered, or visit website <http://www.ed.gov> and key in "state higher education agencies".

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## Federal Perkins Loan

Federal Perkins Loan – An exceptional need-based, long-term, low interest (5%) loan provided by Black Hills State University and federal contributions. It does not require a separate application; however, borrowers do have to sign a master promissory note and rights and responsibilities statement. BHSU is your lender. The promissory note and the rights and responsibilities will be mailed to you with your award letter. If you accept the Perkins loan, please complete and sign these documents and return them with your award letter. If you already have a master promissory note on file at BHSU, you will not receive another one. Once the Student Financial Services Office receives all documents and the Entrance Counseling requirement is met for first-time borrowers at BHSU, the Perkins Loan disbursement will be applied as a credit to your student account prior to fee payment each semester. Repayment begins 9 months after you graduate, drop below 6 credit hours, or leave school.

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## Work Assistance

**Federal Work-Study (FWS)** – A federally funded employment program matched by institutional, agency and private organization funding. The amount of your FWS award is the amount you are eligible to earn during the academic year. The wage rate will vary from \$6.55 to \$10.00 per hour. Positions exist in virtually every department on campus, as well as some off-campus locations. If awarded Federal Work-Study and you accept it on your award letter:

1. You will receive a Student Employment Authorization Form and other required paperwork after July 1, 2008. A work-study job listing will be available on the financial aid website after July 1, 2008.
2. Review the student information on the Student Employment Authorization Form carefully.
3. If you have already been requested for hire for a specific FWS position, proceed to #5.
4. Contact the employer for an application and interview. Departments may begin interviewing for their open positions as soon as students receive the Student Employment Authorization Form. Don't wait until the last minute to apply for the positions in which you're interested!
5. After securing your position, you and your employer must complete and sign the Student Employment Authorization Form, then return it to the Student Financial Services Office in Woodburn Hall room 115.
6. I-9 and W-4 forms are required for BHSU payroll before you begin work. You will complete these forms at the SFS office in Woodburn 115.

Each pay cycle runs from the 22nd of the month through the 21st of the following month. Hours worked are reported on web time entry. Your earnings are paid on the last day of the month. As an employee of BHSU through Federal Work-Study, you are expected to maintain professional work standards in your position to continue employment under the program.

**Off-Campus Employment** – Students are assisted in locating part-time off-campus positions during the school year and over the summer by campus personnel. This service attempts to match your abilities, interests and schedules with employers' needs. All part-time and full-time students may use these services located in the BHSU Career Center, Student Union on BHSU campus, or call 605-642-6219.

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## Federal Stafford Loan (Subsidized & Unsubsidized)

Your maximum Federal Stafford Loan and /or Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loan Eligibility has been determined by the Financial Aid Office as the maximum eligibility for your grade level listed on the FAFSA. Maximum loan amounts are: freshmen - \$3500; \*sophomores (32 credit hours) - \$4500; juniors (64 credit hours) and seniors - \$5500. Interest rate is a fixed 6.0% for the Subsidized Stafford Loan; 6.8% for the Unsubsidized Loan.

You may choose to borrow less than your maximum awarded loan amount; if so, write in the lesser amount on your award letter. For determining annual loan limits, BHSU's scheduled academic year runs from the summer semester to the following spring semester.

*\*If you are in an associate degree program, your loan maximum may not exceed the sophomore loan maximum regardless of the number of credit hours you have completed.*

**Subsidized** – Are financial need-based loans made available to you by lenders, certified by the school and guaranteed by a Federal Student Loan Guaranty Agency. Interest is subsidized (paid) while you are in school, at least half-time, by the U.S. Government.

**Unsubsidized** - Are not based on financial need (though you must apply for need-based aid first) and you must pay the interest while you are in school or request a deferment of interest and allow it to capitalize on the principal during in-school and grace periods.

If you are considered an independent student for Federal Financial Aid, you may have been awarded up to the maximum your estimated educational budget allows through the Independent Extended Unsubsidized maximum limits. This allows an independent student to borrow up to an additional \$4000 in Unsubsidized Federal Stafford Loan as a freshman – total \$7500, or sophomore - \$8500, and for a junior or senior to borrow up to an additional \$5000 for a total of \$10,500.

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Due to this high amount of potential annual indebtedness with the Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loan availability, be sure to borrow only what you absolutely will need to cover your direct and indirect costs. Remember, the interest is not paid by the government for the Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loan while you are in school.

If you want to apply for a Federal Stafford Loan, you should review all loan information found in this packet, select a lender and include it on your signed white copy and return the 2008-2009 Financial Aid Award letter to our office. You will need to complete a promissory note for your Federal Stafford Loan(s) by mail/electronically if you are borrowing a Stafford Loan for the first time, or you are changing lenders. **First-time borrowers at BHSU are required to complete an Entrance Counseling session (see sections “Helpful Hints About Your Stafford Loan” and “Entrance Loan Counseling”).**

Graduate students must also be at least half-time per semester in order to qualify for Stafford Loans. Maximum amounts vary based on the student’s budget, other aid and expected family contributions. Possible loan to borrow is \$8,500 subsidized and an additional unsubsidized of \$12,000.

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## PLUS Loan and Alternative Loans

**Parent Loan For Undergraduate Students (PLUS)** If you are a dependent student, your parents may borrow a PLUS loan from a recommended lender or your family lender. PLUS is a non-need based loan. The loan maximum is figured individually, based on your total cost of education minus any financial aid eligibility. Interest is fixed at 8.5%. Repayment begins 60 days after disbursement. Call the BHSU Student Financial Services Office at 1-800-255-2478 for information. Parents may apply for pre-approval and/or apply for the loan at [www.BHSU.edu](http://www.BHSU.edu) on the financial aid page, “Loans”, “Federal PLUS Loan”. The student must fill out the FAFSA to be eligible for the PLUS loan.

**Other Educational Loan Programs** – There are many alternative educational loan programs that exist for students. A partial listing of programs and lenders is available from the BHSU Student Financial Services Office at 1-800-255-BHSU or go to Outside Resources listed under Financial Aid at [www.BHSU.edu](http://www.BHSU.edu). Those that we list offer certain benefits to you as a student borrower through the same lender as your Federal Stafford Loan. Some of the loans are available for students who are less than half-time.

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## Financial Aid Educational Budget

An estimated educational budget for a student includes: tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, personal/miscellaneous, and transportation costs. We set up the original award for a student based upon: the average of 16 credit hours per semester, double room, basic board plan if on campus, and a reasonable estimated cost of room and board if living off campus or with parents, and estimated books and supplies, personal, and transportation costs. Budgets vary based upon living arrangements, the residency status of students, enrolled courses and other variables.

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## Estimated Family Contribution

The family contribution calculated is an estimate of the family’s ability to contribute toward education expenses. For dependent students, this may include a contribution from the parents as well as the student. This contribution shown is based on 2007 income and assets, with the assumption that 2008 figures will be similar. Therefore, the expected contribution is the amount the family/student is expected to contribute over the nine month academic year.

If the family is unable to meet the estimated family contribution (from current income and savings) and cover the expected university cost with aid that has been awarded, an alternative may need to be investigated.

**Reminder:** *Is there any outside funding not included on the award notice? If so, you must inform the Student Financial Services Office of any resource outside of the family which may reduce the calculated unmet need and therefore reduce your out-of-pocket costs or reduce awarded work or loan.*

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## Changes Which May Require Revisions To Financial Aid Awards

Reasons for reduction, cancellation or even repayment of previously disbursed aid may include, but are not limited to, the following: a change in residency status; change in living arrangements; award changes due to verification and/or as a result of updated information; receiving aid not previously shown on your award letter; you drop credit hours; or any other reason unknown to our office at the time of disbursement. Reduction or cancellation of aid is done in the following order: loans, work-study and then grants. Unless you are a National Science Scholars Program scholarship recipient, the Pell Grant is not reduced or cancelled. Failure to notify our office of information that could affect your aid awards may jeopardize continuation of eligibility or necessitate repayment of previously disbursed aid. In some cases, we may even have to report you to the U.S. Department of Education Office of the Inspector General, and to local law enforcement agencies, for appropriate action.

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## Awarded Aid And Not Enrolled

If you are awarded aid for the full academic year (fall & spring semesters) and you do not enroll for the fall semester, your aid for both the fall and spring semesters will be cancelled. You will not be notified of this cancellation. If you do not enroll for the fall semester, but you plan to attend Black Hills State during the spring semester, it is imperative that you notify our office of your planned enrollment in writing immediately.

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## Award Letter

Review, complete and return one copy of your enclosed 2008-2009 BHSU Financial Aid Award Letter to the Student Financial Services Office within three weeks. Make sure you write in the amount of the Stafford loan you are accepting.

Upon accepting a Federal Subsidized or Unsubsidized Stafford Loan, you need to select a lender; please refer to "Choosing a Lender for Your Federal Stafford Loan(s)". First-time borrowers of the Federal Stafford Loan may fill out the MPN on-line at [www.BHSU.edu](http://www.BHSU.edu), using your Department of Education pin number as your e-signature, or by printing out the form. Otherwise, a Master Promissory Note (MPN) will be sent to you if you do not already have one on record with the lender/guarantee agency. To assist you with completing the MPN, please refer to "How to Complete your Master Promissory Note for Federal Stafford Loans".

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## Payment Of Charges

If you have pre-registered for the fall or spring semester, your billing information will be available to you online approximately one month prior to the start of each term. Your electronic bill (eBill) is accessible through WebAdvisor (<https://wa-bhsu.state.sd.us/webadvisor/>) by clicking on SDePay. Payment for tuition & fees and on campus room & board (if applicable) is due by the third day of the term and may also be done electronically through SDePay. Paper checks will still be accepted at the Cashier windows or through the mail, but credit card payments may only be done electronically.

Our vendor accepts MasterCard, Discover, and American Express (sorry, no VISA). They do assess a 2.75% service charge for credit card payments but offer an eCheck option at no additional cost. If your financial aid has not been applied to your bill by the due date (third day of the semester), completing a Deferred Payment Agreement will prevent your classes from being cancelled. Contact a Financial Aid Representative for information on Deferments.

If your financial aid is not sufficient to cover your entire balance, the difference must be paid by the due date to avoid class cancellation or late charges. Questions regarding financial aid or payment will be answered in the Student Financial Services Office. Late payment charges are assessed according to South Dakota Board of Regents Policy [http://www.sdbor.edu/policy/5\\_FinanceBusiness/documents/5-5.pdf](http://www.sdbor.edu/policy/5_FinanceBusiness/documents/5-5.pdf).

For Financial Aid questions, please call 605-642-6145 or email [bhsufinancial@bhsu.edu](mailto:bhsufinancial@bhsu.edu). For Cashier or Payment questions, please call 605-642-6531 or email [BHSU-ARCR@bhsu.edu](mailto:BHSU-ARCR@bhsu.edu).

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## Steps to Obtaining Your Stafford Loan Eligibility

1. Accept the loan(s) award on your award letter. Write the amount you want to borrow on your award letter.
2. Select a lender and provide the lender name on your award letter.
3. Return your signed financial aid award letter to the Student Financial Services Office at BHSU.
4. If you selected a lender from the most commonly selected BHSU lenders or one that has the loans guaranteed through EAC (Education Assistance Corporation), your loan will be processed electronically to EAC from BHSU. EAC will send you a preprinted Master Promissory Note that must be completed (if one has not already been completed) and returned to EAC for guarantee.

Or

If you have selected a non-EAC lender, the Student Financial Services Office will send you a Master Promissory Note (MPN), if you have not already completed one. Complete this MPN and return it to BHSU's Student Financial Services Office.

5. Upon the start of the enrollment period, if you have completed the above steps in a timely manner, you will have funds available in the form of a lender disbursement check or electronically applied to your account.

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## Choosing A Lender For Your Federal Stafford Loan(s)

If you have previously borrowed a Federal Stafford Loan, we recommend that you continue to borrow through the same lender. Check your loan records for the lender name and information or contact our office for assistance. If you have never borrowed a Federal Stafford Loan, we have listed lenders most commonly selected by BHSU students. These lenders use Education Assistance Corporation (EAC) to guarantee and disburse their loans and Black Hills State University electronically processes loan applications through EAC. This results in optimal service to you, from application through repayment. The lenders below are also committed to providing funds for Federal Stafford Loans to eligible BHSU students. No previous banking relationship is required, except for credit unions. These lenders also offer special programs to Stafford Loan borrowers, such as interest rate discounts for timely repayment and fee reductions. Since these vary per lender and are subject to change, we recommend that you review the benefits when completing the Stafford Master Promissory Note to compare their benefits and services.



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# FINANCIAL AID SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY

In order to receive Federal Student Aid, the U.S. Department of Education requires that students maintain satisfactory academic progress toward the completion of their degree. Federal Student Aid includes Federal Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), Federal Work-Study, Federal Perkins Loan, Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership Grant (LEAP), Federal Stafford Loan (Subsidized and Unsubsidized), and Federal PLUS Loan. Also, other Federal Agencies may require students to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress for their aid programs. The academic record of those who have not received Federal Student Aid in the past may impact future eligibility. Failure to meet the following standards will result in financial aid suspension of eligibility for Federal Student Aid.

## QUALITATIVE MEASURES

Undergraduate Students:

An undergraduate student must meet minimum academic progression standards as established by the South Dakota Board of Regents. These standards are based on the student's cumulative grade point average and system term grade point average. The system term grade point average is based on credits earned from the six Board of Regents universities during a given term. The cumulative grade point average includes all credits earned (transfer plus system credit). All remedial and audited coursework is excluded from this calculation. Making satisfactory academic progression is as follows:

1. A student with a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or better is considered to be in good academic standing.
2. If a student's cumulative grade point average falls below 2.0 in any academic term (i.e. fall, spring, summer), the student is placed on academic probation the following term.
3. While on academic probation, the student must earn a system term grade point average of 2.0 or better.
4. When a student on academic probation achieves a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or better, the student is returned to good academic standing.
5. A student on academic probation who fails to maintain a system term grade point average of 2.0 or better is placed on academic suspension for a minimum period of two academic terms.

A review takes place at the end of every term (summer, fall, spring). A student placed on academic suspension is also placed on financial aid suspension. Being reinstated academically does not guarantee financial aid reinstatement. The student must separately appeal the financial aid suspension as outlined below (Appeal of Financial Aid Suspension).

Graduate Students:

A graduate student must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0.

## QUANTITATIVE MEASURES

In order to maintain satisfactory progress toward the completion of their degree, all students must successfully complete 67% of cumulative attempted credit hours. Attempted credit hours include all hours that would appear on a student's academic transcript at the end of any given term, including withdrawals, incompletes, repeated courses, remedial coursework, transfer hours and hours attempted at any time when not receiving Federal Student Aid. Audited coursework is not included. Hours that may have been part of a successful academic amnesty appeal will still be included. Successfully completed hours for both graduate and undergraduate students include grades of A, B, C, D and S. A grade of EX for undergraduates students is also considered successful completion. All other grades would not be considered successful completion. Evaluation of this quantitative standard will be measured once per year, generally at the end of the spring term.

## MAXIMUM ATTEMPTED CREDIT HOURS

The U.S. Department of Education has established a limit on the number of credit hours a student can attempt and still remain eligible for Federal Student Aid. This limit is based on 150% of the credit hours needed to complete the degree for which the student is pursuing.

Type of Degree	Maximum Credit Hours Attempted
Two-Year Associate	96
Four-Year Bachelor	192
Two-Year Master	53

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## **APPEAL OF FINANCIAL AID SUSPENSION**

Students who have had their eligibility for Federal Student Aid suspended may complete an appeal form to explain mitigating circumstances. There is no guarantee for approving a financial aid eligibility appeal. Such appeals will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. An appeal form is available in the BHSU Student Financial Services Office or on their website. To ensure a timely review, students should make an appeal at least one month in advance of the start of the term for which they wish to receive aid. Being reinstated academically does not guarantee financial aid reinstatement. Based upon the circumstances of an approved appeal, the Appeal Committee reserves the right to place conditions which the student must meet in order to be considered for financial aid on a probationary basis for subsequent terms.

## **REINSTATEMENT OF FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY**

Students who have lost their Federal Aid eligibility, but have subsequently met the qualitative and/or quantitative standards as stated above, will have their aid eligibility reinstated. Reinstatement will be considered effective with the next term of attendance.

## **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS AND NON-FEDERAL AID**

There are also non-federal sources of financial assistance (institutional, local, private, state), which may require students to meet satisfactory academic progress standards. Students who apply for non-federal forms of aid are advised to review their academic standards in order to determine or ensure continued eligibility. BHSU's institutional aid has the same Financial Aid Suspension guidelines as stated above.

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## **REFUND AND REPAYMENT POLICY**

Students who withdraw from college may be entitled to a partial refund of tuition and other fees. Refunds to students who received financial aid will be applied to the financial aid program(s) from which the students received assistance. In addition to this, students who receive cash disbursements of Title IV funds (Federal Perkins Loan, Federal Pell Grant, Federal SEOG, ACG, SMART Grant, TEACH Grant, and LEAP), and subsequently withdraw before the end of the semester, may be required to repay a percentage of the funds disbursed. See the University Catalog and Website for the withdrawal procedure and for the refund and repayment schedules.

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## **Questions? Who to Contact?**

If questions arise about programs, services or procedures, please contact the office that may be able to best help you with your concern. Refer to the list below for specific BHSU office numbers. Office hours are 7:00 am to 5:00 pm (Mountain Time).

BHSU Toll Free	1-800-255-2478
Admissions	605-642-6343
Financial Aid	605-642-6145
Cashier/Student Accounts	605-642-6531
Food Service	605-642-6292
Housing/Residence Halls	605-642-6464
Registrar	605-642-6092
Scholarships	605-642-6145
Student Activities	605-642-6062
Veteran's Office	605-642-6113
BHSU Home Page	<a href="http://www.BHSU.edu">www.BHSU.edu</a>