Mark your calendar! You can submit your 2015-2016 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) beginning January 1, 2015. For students who are residents of the state of Indiana, the deadline is March 10th.

Completing your FAFSA online is the quickest and most accurate way to apply for financial aid. Submitting a FAFSA comes with no strings attached. The application is free and available online at www.FAFSA.gov.

If you filed a FAFSA for the current school year, make sure it includes your current email address. Otherwise, you may not receive important information from the Department of Education regarding your ability to submit a Renewal FAFSA for the 2015-2016 school year. Since the Renewal FAFSA includes many of the answers that you provided on your prior year application, you will have fewer questions to complete. If you are unsure of the email address on file with the Department of Education, review your 2014-2015 FAFSA at www.FAFSA.gov.

For tax filers: The IRS Data Retrieval is the best option for filing the FAFSA. If you file the FAFSA before your taxes are available to do the IRS Data Retrieval, you may go back later and do the retrieval. The instructions are as follows:

Go to www.FAFSA.gov, log in.

Click on “Make FAFSA Corrections”.

Navigate to “Financial Information Section”.

Click on the ISR Data Retrieval Tool. Enter the required information to transfer IRS income tax data to your FAFSA.

It is NOT recommended to use this tool if any of the following applies to you or your parent(s):
- Married, filing Separate
- Amended Taxes
- Puerto Rican or Foreign Tax return

**RHIT School Code:**

001830

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**Loan Counseling for Graduating Seniors**

If you are a senior planning to graduate this May, please mark your calendar for the Senior Loan Counseling sessions.

These sessions will provide you with information on how to pay back your loans, how to contact your lender, and consolidation options. The dates for the loan counseling sessions are:

- **Tuesday, May 5** 10:50 - 11:40am
- **Wednesday, May 6** 5:00 - 6:00pm
- **Thursday, May 7** 12:40 - 1:30pm

All sessions will be held in the Kahn Room.
**Obstacles are those things you see when you take your eyes off the goal!**

***Federal Student Aid ID to replace FAFSA PIN***

In spring 2015, the Department of Education will implement a new login process for students and parents to access FAFSA on the Web, NSLDS Student Access, and Studentloans.gov. With this change, it will eliminate the need for individuals to enter personal identifiers (Social Security number, name and date of birth) when accessing the Federal Student Aid’s system. This change is critical to comply with new security requirements. DOE is working to ensure that the transition from the FSA PIN to the FSA ID is as seamless as possible for students and families. Existing users will be able to link their PIN information to the FSA ID.

***State Of Indiana Aid***

Students who received state financial aid for the first time during the 2013-2014 academic year or thereafter will be required to meet certain credit completion requirements to renew state financial aid awards in subsequent years. The student must complete at least 36 credit hours in an academic year to be eligible for state of Indiana aid. If the student completes at least 45+ credit hours in an academic year then the student will receive a higher amount of state of Indiana aid. Students who graduate from an eligible Indiana high school with an Academic Honors or Technical Honors diploma may be eligible to add an additional financial aid incentive of $800 to the base Frank O’Bannon Grant in their first year of state aid eligibility. Graduating from high school with one of these diploma designations does not guarantee financial aid. A student must meet the requirements of the Frank O’Bannon Grant program in order to receive this financial aid incentive. In order to receive the Academic Honors Incentive after the first year of state aid, a student must have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. A student who first received state of Indiana financial aid prior to the 2013-2014 academic year may be eligible to receive the grandfathered Academic Honors Incentive.

***Math Problem***

The first 10 undergraduate students that correctly answer the challenge question will win a $50.00 scholarship. You will need to email the answer to Melinda Middleton at middleto@rose-hulman.edu. Winners will be notified by email.

Two candles have equal lengths. One candle is consumed (uniformly) in five hours, the other in six hours. If they are both lit at the same time, how many hours after lighting will one be twice as long as the other?

Challenge was written by Professor Emeritus Herb Bailey.
It is very important that a student has a completed FERPA form on file with Rose-Hulman. The Financial Aid Office will look at the form to determine what information can be released via email or phone to the person inquiring about a student’s financial aid. If you are unsure if you have filed a FERPA form, please go to Banner Web, then Student tab, then Web4proxy, then View Current FERPA Status. You may look at your current FERPA or edit the FERPA. If you have any questions, please contact the Financial Aid Office.

Don’t Forget your Education Tax Credit

The American Opportunity Credit, approved for education expenses paid through December 2017, allows eligible taxpayers to claim up to $2,500 credit per student per year on their federal tax returns. Families with incomes up to $90,000 ($180,000 for joint filers) may claim the credit for the students who are enrolled in their first four years of college. Books and course materials are included among the eligible expenses.

The Lifetime Learning Credit allows families to claim up to $2,000 credit for qualified education expenses paid for students enrolled in eligible educational institutions. Families with incomes of up to $63,000 ($127,000 for joint filers) qualify, and it is available for all years of post-secondary education; however, taxpayers cannot claim both the American Opportunity Credit and the Lifetime Learning Credit for the same student in one year. (The Lifetime Learning Credit may be particularly helpful to graduate students, students who are taking only one course, or students who are not pursuing a degree.)

American Opportunity and Lifetime Learning Credits are claimed on Form 8863 (attached to form 1040 or 1040A). For details, visit the IRS website: [http://www.irs.gov/uac/Tax-Benefits-for-Education-Information-Center](http://www.irs.gov/uac/Tax-Benefits-for-Education-Information-Center)

Veterans Affairs

The Financial Aid Office is now the place that will be certifying VA benefits. If you are a VA benefit recipient, please contact Candice Sutliff in the Financial Aid Office. Each term all VA students must fill out a Veteran’s Certification Form and turn it in to Ms. Sutliff. Your certification will not be sent in until our office receives the Certification Form. It is very important that you keep the VA certifying officials informed of any changes.
Repeated Coursework

Federal regulations limit the number of times undergraduate students can receive financial aid for repeated coursework. The general rule is students may only receive financial aid for repeating a course one time after previously passing the same class with a grade of “D” or better.

Consider the following examples:

Fall 2014 – A student takes a class and receives a grade of “C”: course is eligible for aid.
Spring 2015 – The student repeats the same class: course is eligible for aid.
Fall 2015 – The student registers for the same course once again to try for a better grade: course is INELIGIBLE for aid.

In this example, if the student registered for 12 credit hours for fall 2015 and three of those credits represented an ineligible repeated course, then the student’s financial aid eligibility would be based on nine credit hours for that term; thus, the student would be considered a three quarter time student. This is true regardless of the reason (want or need) for repeating the course.

How do I find my Loan History?

The Department of Education has a website called the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS). NSLDS provides a centralized, integrated view of Title IV (federal) loans and grants that are tracked through their entire cycle. It displays information on loan amounts, outstanding balances, loan statutes and disbursements. The login for the NSLDS site requires your social security number, the first two letters of your last name, your date of birth and your FAFSA PIN. (This will be changing in late spring of next year.) Once you are in your account, you will be able to view each of your federal student loans individually. You can see information regarding the original loan amount, outstanding balance, interest rate, lender, servicer and guarantor. This is the best way to determine how much you have borrowed in federal loans and who you will need to contact regarding repayment.

The website address is: www.nslds.ed.gov/nslds_SA/