

## FINANCIAL AID ASSISTANCE

We thought having answers to popular scholarship and financial aid questions might be helpful, so we pulled together the following commentary. If you feel at all uncomfortable answering such questions please provide the prospective student with the toll free number to the Admission Office (1-888-468-2576 [888-go-valpo]). We can connect the student directly with his or her admission counselor or the Financial Aid Office staff!

## VALPARAISO UNIVERSITY MERIT/NEED-BASED FINANCIAL AID TALKING POINTS

TOPIC: APPLY FOR ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP, FAFSA, AID ESTIMATOR "My daughter recently applied for admission to Valpo. How does she apply for an academic scholarship?" When your daughter applied for admission to Valpo, she automatically applied for merit-based scholarships. Once the admission committee makes the decision to admit your daughter, her application will be forwarded automatically to the Scholarship Committee. Merit-based scholarship decisions are usually made within 7-10 days of admittance.

Your daughter's entire financial aid package will include merit and need-based aid. Therefore, we strongly encourage her to file the FAFSA for need-based consideration. You will find that Valpo's need-based program is more generous than the federal formula. If you would like an early indication of how much additional aid you may qualify for, complete the [aid estimator](#) and we'll return an estimate of your complete financial aid package.

TOPIC: FULL-TUITION SCHOLARSHIPS (FOUNDERS) "Are full-tuition scholarships available at Valparaiso University?" VU's full tuition Founders Scholarship is awarded to select freshmen who demonstrate exceptional academic achievement, as well as a commitment to leadership and service to both church and society. Recipients must be an exceptional fit for Valparaiso University in all aspects of life - academically, spiritually, socially and extra-curricular.

Founders applicants are invited to apply for this award in December and phone/on-campus interviews occur in February. Scholarship recipients are notified in March.

TOPIC: MUSIC SCHOLARSHIPS "Are music scholarships available at Valparaiso University?" Valpo offers Music Merit scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 (renewable) to students in a variety of performance areas, with preference given to students who will be music majors. To apply for this scholarship, admitted students must complete the music audition application.

TOPIC: PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP "How can I qualify for a Presidential Scholarship?" Valpo offers generous academic scholarships to qualified students. We evaluate our pool of applicants and award scholarships based on test scores and recalculated GPA. The advantage with our program is that a low test score or a low GPA doesn't necessarily disqualify you for scholarship consideration if the other factor is high.

TOPIC: REEVALUATING SCHOLARSHIP OR AID PACKAGE "I deserve a bigger scholarship/better financial aid award. How do I appeal?" Send your new test score/GPA/financial information to your admission counselor and he/she will share it with the Scholarship Committee or Financial Aid staff for consideration. While there is no automatic increase for improved grades or GPA, Valpo's Scholarship Committee considers all new information when reevaluating aid packages. If you've not done so, we strongly encourage you to file the FAFSA so that you are considered for additional need-based funds. You will find that Valpo's need-based program is more generous than the federal formula. If you would like an early indication of how much additional aid you may qualify for, complete the aid estimator ([www.valpo.edu/finaid/earlyestimator.htm](http://www.valpo.edu/finaid/earlyestimator.htm)) and we'll return an estimate of your complete financial aid package.

TOPIC: LUTHERAN AWARDS "My older sibling received a Lutheran Heritage Award. Why didn't I?" VU is refocusing financial aid funds in order to strengthen the academic and need-based awards. The fact that you are Lutheran is considered in the overall scholarship decision and in the awarding of need-based aid. You are encouraged to apply for need-based aid by filing the FAFSA, as we are committed to awarding need-based aid to FAFSA filers demonstrating financial need. It's important to note that Valpo's need-based program is more generous than the federal formula. As a result, more middle to upper middle income families may qualify.

*NOTE* : We do offer two Lutheran Leadership scholarships in the amount of \$16,000 each (one ELCA recipient and one LCMS recipient). In addition, we offer the Martin Luther Award (for children of a full-time professional, rostered Lutheran church worker), Award for Excellence (nominated in junior year by Lutheran high school principal), and the Allen Scholarship (for students preparing for church work fields).

TOPIC: MULTICULTURAL SCHOLARSHIPS, FAFSA "Why didn't I receive a multicultural scholarship or award?" The fact that you are a multicultural student was considered in the overall aid decision and awarding of need-based aid. You are encouraged to apply for need-based aid by filing the FAFSA, as we are committed to awarding need-based aid to FAFSA filers demonstrating financial need. It's important to note that Valpo's need-based program is more generous than the federal formula.

TOPIC: FAFSA, COMPETITIVE POOL, BEST FIT (VALUE) "Competitive University X awarded my son a \$15,000 scholarship and Valpo awarded him \$9,000. Why should he attend VU when other universities find him more 'valuable?'" It sounds like your son is an outstanding student and has an excellent opportunity for selecting the university of his choice. Of course, we would love to see him enroll at VU. Please keep in mind that the merit-based scholarship is only one piece of your son's financial aid package. We strongly encourage you to file the FAFSA so that he may be considered for additional need-based funds. You will find that Valpo's need-based program is more generous than the federal formula and better able to assist middle to upper middle income families.

Also, Valpo's applicant pool this year is very competitive, with a significant number of students having GPAs between 3.8 and 4.0 (and exceptionally high test scores). We are proud of this trend here at Valpo because it solidifies what we know to be true about the quality of our applicants and the education they expect to receive here.

It's also important to keep in mind that your son should consider attending the best "fit" school for him - in terms of academic, leadership, social, spiritual, service opportunities, etc. At Valpo, we view your son's education as a significant investment in his future and want him to receive maximum benefits wherever he attends, especially at Valpo.

TOPIC: FINANCING A VALPO EDUCATION AFTER AID, VALUE "I received my financial aid package and it is not as much as I hoped to receive. How do I finance the difference?" [Respond first using a series of questions which provide clarification.]

- Have you reviewed the information from your FAFSA on your Student Aid Report to be sure it is accurate?
- Have any personal or financial circumstances that affect your ability to pay for college changed since you filed the FAFSA?
- As you completed the FAFSA, were you aware of any of financial circumstances affecting your ability to pay for college that weren't reported there (such as elementary/secondary tuition, etc.)?

It's important that you view your education, whether at Valpo or another institution, as an investment in your future. At Valpo, you can complete your education in only four years (as opposed to many public institutions which take longer). This means that you'll pay for only four years of tuition and be in the workforce and making money faster than most. In fact, 95% of Valpo graduates find employment or attend graduate school within six months after they leave the University. And Valpo students have a very low student loan default rate compared to the 4-year national average, indicating that our alumni are able to secure financially-sound employment following graduation. Your specific finance options include:\*

A) Valpo Payment Plan - dividing payments equally and paying three times per semester. B) AMS Tuition Pay Plan - spreads your balance across 12 months with the assistance of a financing firm which has partnered with Valpo. C) PLUS Loan (Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students) - A federal loan taken by the parent for the student with a typically low interest rate. D) Private Alternative Loans - A loan borrowed in the student's name and requiring a credit-worthy co-signer.

FAFSA Filing In order to be considered for financial aid, you must file the FAFSA (paper or online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)).

Filing the FAFSA is especially important for Valpo students because we award need-based aid more generously than the federal formula. As a result, more middle to upper middle income families may qualify.

For Indiana grant consideration and preference for Valpo aid, file no later than March 1, 2008.

When All Else Fails .

- Emphasize the quality of Valpo's applicant pool. (i.e. Valpo's scholarship program is very competitive, as many Valpo applicants have a GPA between 3.8 and 4.0.)
- If you're not sure how to respond, tell the student/parent that financial aid decisions are made by Valpo's Scholarship Committee. All information pertaining to aid packages will be considered and evaluated by that committee.
- Never apologize. Exude confidence in the product (Valpo's superior education / high achieving student population) and the system (Scholarship Committee decisions).
- Utilize Valpo's financial aid counseling staff as a resource for information.