

Frequently Asked Questions about the GSU Promise Scholarship

How much money will the GSU Promise Scholarship be worth to me?

The total amount of the scholarship is not fixed, and may vary by student. To determine the amount of the scholarship, GSU will add up the total cost of your tuition and fees and subtract the amount you are awarded by Pell and MAP award grants. The remaining balance will be paid by the university as your GSU Promise Scholarship. Award recipients will also receive a book stipend for up to (4) four semesters.

I also meet the requirements for the DDP Honors Scholarship. Can I apply for both?

Yes. DDP students who are Pell-eligible, have a 3.5 or above GPA, and are members of their community college Honors Program or Phi Theta Kappa Chapter are welcome and encouraged to apply for both the GSU Promise and DDP Honors Scholarships. However, applicants can only receive one or the other.

To apply for both scholarships, applicants must submit both the GSU Promise Scholarship application form and the DDP Honors Scholarship application form. However, applicants can use the exact same essay, recommendation forms, and transcripts for both. Recommenders do NOT have to complete separate GSU Promise and DDP Honors Recommendation Forms.

How do I know if GSU received my FAFSA results and if I am Pell-eligible?

All scholarship applicants (except for Dreamer students) must complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) before November 1*, every year of enrollment. When you submit a FAFSA, you are applying for federal loans, grants, and work-study funding. The U.S. Federal Department of Education uses the information provided on the FAFSA to determine your eligibility for federal financial assistance. The State of Illinois also uses the FAFSA to determine your eligibility for state aid programs like the Monetary Award Program (MAP Grant). After you complete the FAFSA, the results will indicate if you are eligible for the Federal Pell Grant. You CANNOT receive this scholarship unless your completed and verified FAFSA results are sent to GSU and indicate that you are Pell-eligible.

The FAFSA is free! There are no fees to process the FAFSA, whether you apply online or on paper. The easiest way to complete and submit a FAFSA is online at www.fafsa.gov. Your FAFSA results are electronically sent to GSU if you provide the Governors State Federal School Code on your FAFSA. The Federal School Code for Governors State University is 009145. For questions about your FAFSA or other financial aid issues, please contact the GSU Office of Financial Aid directly at 708.534.4480.

*If your FAFSA is not completed by November 1, you can still apply for the scholarship. However, there may be a delay in processing your scholarship application. Moreover, you CANNOT officially be awarded this scholarship unless GSU has received your completed and verified FAFSA results.

Will I get a Pell refund like I did at the community college?

This will vary depending on the financial aid situation of each student. Tuition and fees at universities are much higher than at the community college, and your Pell and MAP award grants will most likely not cover the cost of tuition and fees. GSU has the lowest tuition of any public or private university in Illinois, but the Federal Pell Grant will still not cover the full cost of tuition for full-time students. Remember, to receive the GSU Promise Scholarship, your Pell and MAP awards will be applied first to cover tuition and fees. The remainder that you owe will be paid by the scholarship. Recipients will also receive a book stipend to be used at the GSU bookstore each semester they receive the scholarship.

I saw a flyer saying that the GSU Promise Scholarship will allow me to graduate debt-free. I don't understand that. How will I pay for my living expenses?

Depending upon your personal situation, you may have to find other funding sources or take out a loan to cover expenses, such as childcare or transportation. However, you will not need to borrow money to cover tuition and fees, and the book stipend will cover most, if not all, of your book expenses.

I know that I have to be Pell-eligible to apply for the GSU Promise Scholarship, but do I have to retain eligibility after I start at GSU?

Yes. You must be Pell-eligible when you apply, when you enroll for the first semester, and when you re-enroll for every semester at GSU. This scholarship is good for four semesters, but you must demonstrate Pell eligibility each semester you enroll.

Why is Pell-eligibility a requirement for the GSU Promise Scholarship?

This scholarship was designed to ensure that highly qualified DDP students will have the opportunity to complete their bachelor's degrees at GSU, regardless of their income level. We want to be sure that students with lower incomes do not lose the opportunity to finish their bachelor's degrees simply because of their financial situation.

I am a Dreamer/DACA student. I cannot complete the FAFSA or receive the Federal Pell Grant. Can I apply for the GSU Promise Scholarship?

GSU is dedicated to supporting DDP students in their educational pursuits, regardless of citizenship status. Dreamer students should still apply. Although this scholarship would not cover tuition and fees for Dreamer students, they are eligible to receive the book stipend portion of the scholarship for up to (4) semesters.