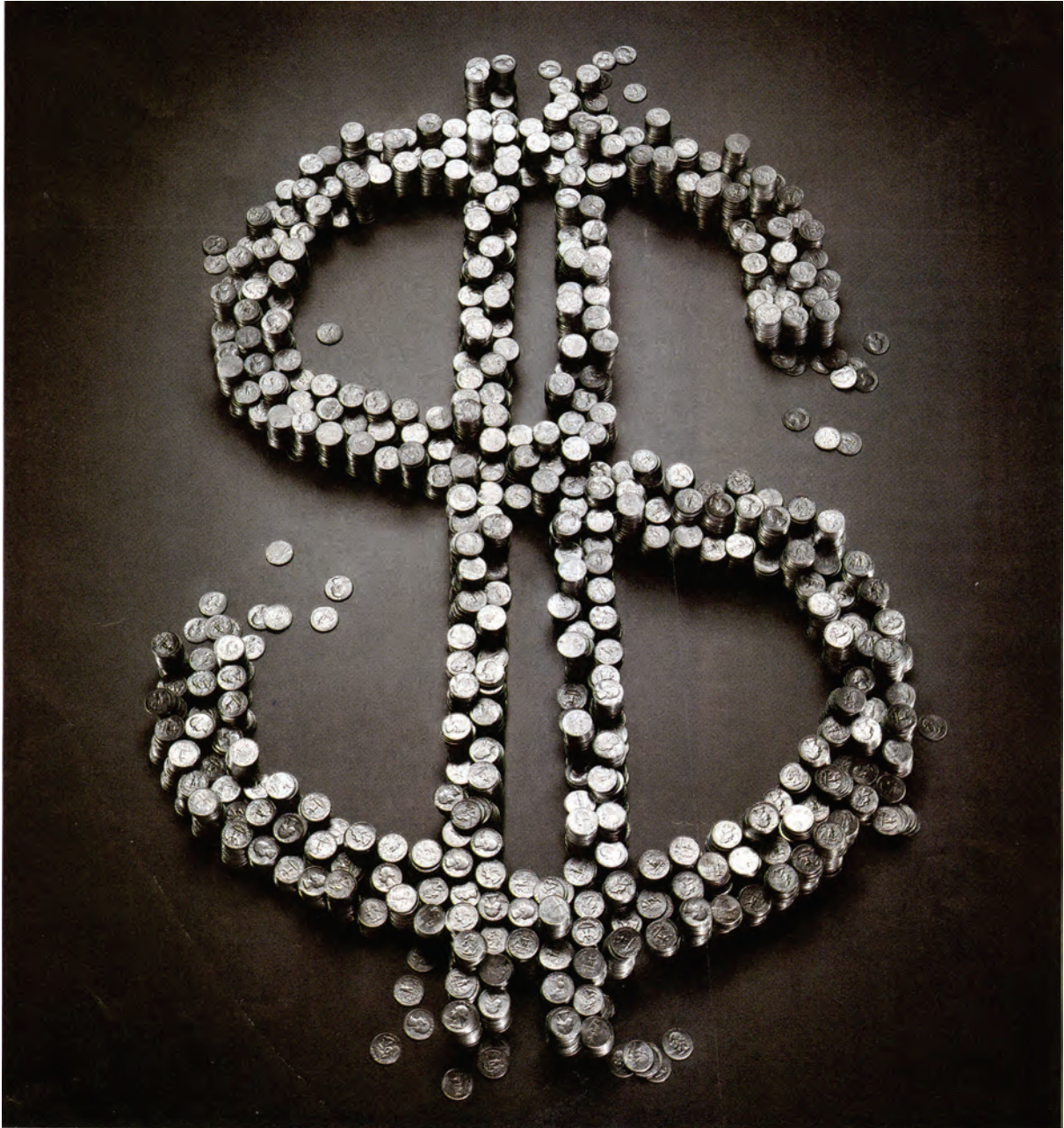


2012-2013 Financial Aid Booklet



Southern California College of Optometry

2575 Yorba Linda Blvd. • Fullerton, CA 92831-1699

Financial Aid Booklet

The SCCO Financial Aid Booklet contains a wealth of information about the financial aid process, and should be the first source you consult with any questions about financial aid. The Financial Aid Office reserves the right to periodically update or change the policies and information contained in the handbook.

Among other topics, the booklet provides information about how to apply for aid, the amount and types of aid students may qualify for, tuition payments and budgets. If, after reading the booklet, you have any remaining questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Financial Aid Office at 714/449-7448 or 7447.

Section 1: Applying for Financial Aid

- What is Financial Aid?
How Do I Apply?
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- Record Keeping

Section 2: Applying for Scholarships

- Scholarship Applications
- External Scholarship Opportunities

Section 3: Student Expense Budget

- Student Expense Budget
- SCCO Student Expense Budget for 2011-2012
- Living within the Budget
- Items Not Covered by the Student Expense Budget

Section 4: Your Financial Aid Award

- Award Letters/Eligibility Notifications
- Required Documentation
- Satisfactory Progress Requirement

Section 5: Loan Options

- Loan Options
- Entrance and Exit Loan Counseling
- Loan Programs Comparison Chart
- Credit Based Loans
- Private Educational Loan vs. Graduate PLUS Loan
- Student Loan History Information
- Loan Repayment

Section 6: Work-Study

- Federal Work-Study Program (FWS)
- College Work-Study Program (CWS)

Section 7: Tuition & Refunds

- Tuition Payments
- Tuition Refund Policy

Section 8: Miscellaneous Information

- SCCO Policy on Loan Periods
- Emergency Loan
- SCCO Confidentiality and Access Policy
- Penalties for Drug Convictions
- Helpful Contact Numbers and Web Sites
- Income Grid for LDS and SDS
- More Questions?

Section 1: Applying for Financial Aid

What is Financial Aid?

Financial aid includes all resources other than those of the students and their families, which are used to finance an optometric education. It includes:

- Scholarships and Grants, from SCCO or any other organization
- Federal/College Work-Study Funds
- Federal Direct, Perkins, HPSL, LDS and Grad PLUS loans
- Private or Institutional Educational Loans

How do I apply?

The Financial Aid office distributes a packet with all the necessary forms in March. In addition to the FAFSA needs analysis form, students will need to complete the SCCO Financial Aid Application and if selected for verification, an IRS Transcript (or a certification of non-filing).

First-time borrowers or entering students will also be required to provide a copy of their driver's license and Social Security card to the Financial Aid office.

Students applying for the HHS programs (HPSL, LDS or SDS) will also need to submit parental information with the parental 2011 federal tax form copies (or a certification of non-filing) and an additional needs analysis form, either the CSS Profile or Need Access.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

The FAFSA is the need analysis document that must be completed by all U.S. citizens and permanent residents who are applying for any federal aid (i.e., Federal Direct, Perkins, HPSL, LDS, Grad PLUS or Work Study). We collect only student information on this form.

You cannot file the FAFSA until after January 1 and we recommend that students complete the FAFSA with actual 1040 tax form data not estimated. You can check a box to have income data automatically filled by the IRS. SCCO utilizes a deadline date in late April for returning students and a deadline date in late May for incoming students.

To minimize delays, complete the FAFSA online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. To sign the FAFSA electronically, you must register for a PIN number at www.pin.ed.gov. The FAFSA requires you to indicate the name school to which you are applying for aid. Be sure to write/list "Southern California College of Optometry" and note our Title IV school code as 001230. Once your FAFSA has been processed, you will be notified via email. This email will provide instructions on how to view your Student Aid Report (SAR) and how to make any necessary corrections.

Record Keeping

Be thorough in completing and retaining copies of all financial aid forms! We cannot overemphasize the importance of maintaining thorough financial aid records. Students should keep a folder including:

- Student copies of all loan applications
- Student copies of all Promissory Notes and Entrance Loan Counseling Confirmations
- Copies of all correspondence from our office, Direct Loans, and servicing agencies.
- Student copies of award letters/notifications for all anticipated aid

Section 2: Applying for Scholarships

Scholarship Application

There are many scholarships listed at the SCCO website. Most are awarded at an event in September and 4th year students have an additional award event before graduation. For the Fall event the Student Affairs office will provide a list of awards that require a vitae or essay to be written in order to apply. A major institutional scholarship is the Dixon Scholarship which is based on grade point average. There is no application for this award.

External Scholarship Opportunities

We strongly recommend that you take advantage of external scholarship opportunities and services. The internet is a valuable tool to use to search for scholarships from organizations outside the college. We recommend that students also perform searches through local and state optometric associations. The Financial Aid office will send email notices of other scholarship opportunities.

Section 3: Student Expense Budget

Student Expense Budget

The cost of an optometric education includes tuition and fees, room and board, books, and personal expenses. Each year, the SCCO Financial Aid office develops a Standard Budget that estimates an individual student's educational expenses. These budgets govern the total amount of aid (the sum of scholarships, grants, loans, and work-study) that can be covered by financial aid to a student in any given year.

Federal law defines the types of expenses that can be included in the Standard Budget that make the student's attendance possible. The federal government requires the institution to use reasonable and realistic figures for student expense budgets that allows for a relatively modest student lifestyle. This means that, among other things, students who receive any kind of financial aid are expected to find shared housing that does not exceed the amount for rent and utilities that is allocated in the student expense budget.

Please remember that your Standard Budget is meant to cover the entire 9 or 12 months you are enrolled at SCCO. Refunds from loans are distributed at the beginning of each quarter; therefore, you must budget accordingly. Below are the amounts used for 2011-12.

SCCO Standard Budget for 2011-12

Tuition	\$30,615	*3 rd and 4 th year students are on a 12-month budget and have an additional 3-months of living expenses. ** NBEO fees are once in 3 rd year and twice in 4 th year.
Student Association Fee	\$105	
Campus Store Charges	\$988 to 1,372	
Equipment	\$1,470 to \$2,897	
Books	\$582 to \$1,039	
Rent and Utilities*	\$8,550 (1,650 per month)	
Personal Expenses*	\$4,050 (\$450 per	

	month)	
Transportation*	\$2,250 (\$250 per month)	
NBEO fees**	\$625 each section	
Graduation Fee	\$100	

Living within the Budget

If you will be using financial aid to finance the cost of your attendance at SCCO, it is critical that you understand that we cannot increase your budget to permit you to borrow more except for the following items:

- Medical insurance or health care not covered by insurance
- Unusual car repairs
- Childcare expenses
- Transportation cost of one trip home by the most economical means
- Travel costs to clinical rotation assignments and national boards

Staying within the student expense budget will keep your debt as low as possible, thus preserving your options for employment and other opportunities after you leave SCCO. Be sure to understand the various elements of your budget – for instance, if you decide to spend a little more on rent than is allocated, you will need to plan to save in other areas, such as transportation or miscellaneous expenses.

Items Not Covered by the Student Expense Budget

Federal law governs allowable costs that may be included in the student expense budget. The cost of attendance is an estimate of that student's educational expenses for the period of enrollment. There are many expense items that some students might assume can be included in the student expense budget that are not permitted. Some of the most common items that are not included in the student expense budget are:

- automobile lease or purchase
- automobile insurance
- financial support of a spouse or other dependents
- interview and/or professional wardrobes
- consumer credit card debt

Section 4: Your Financial Aid Award Award Letters/Eligibility Notices

The Award Letter is used to select loan types, and loan amounts that students are accepting, declining, or modifying. This form is also used to report any awards the student will receive from other sources (i.e. WICHE, work study and outside scholarships).

Required Documentation

The Financial Aid office will notify you of required documentation that we have not received by email. You must make sure that we receive the required documentation as soon as possible to avoid delays in processing loan applications. We are unable to process federal loan applications until we have received all requested documents.

Satisfactory Progress Requirement

All students at SCCO who receive financial aid must meet certain academic standards to continue receiving financial aid each semester. Regulations require the institution to certify that each financial aid recipient is making “satisfactory progress.” Satisfactory progress means being in good academic standing, as defined in the college catalog. Any student who is on academic probation receives formal notification of that fact.

Section 5: Loan Options Loan Programs

There are seven loan programs available at SCCO: Federal Perkins, Federal Direct Unsubsidized, Federal Graduate PLUS, HHS HPSL, HHS LDS and the two institutional loan programs, Harris and Kanai. In addition there are private educational loan programs. The amount you have requested or may borrow from each loan program is indicated on your Award Letter. Please note that you should always borrow only the amount you actually need. Many students live well beneath the maximum amounts. As debt levels increase, we encourage students to think hard about the choices they make with regard to housing, food consumption, and other personal expenses. We encourage you to consider whether you can develop a personal budget that is less than the SCCO Standard Budget.

Entrance and Exit Loan Counseling

Federal regulations require that students who borrow Federal Direct Loans complete on line entrance and exit loan counseling. This counseling informs students of their rights and responsibilities with regard to borrowing under various loan programs. Even if you have received federal loans prior to matriculating to SCCO, you must still complete the entrance loan counseling session again.

Graduating SCCO students must complete the exit loan counseling session online. There will also be an exit meeting as part of Capstone Day. Upon request, the Financial Aid office staff provides individual counseling on topics including loan repayment, debt management, and deferments or forbearances.

Loan Comparison Chart

The following is a chart that students may find helpful in gaining a general understanding of these loans.

	Perkins Loan, Harris and Kanai Loans	HPSL and LDS	Unsubsidized Stafford Loan	Grad PLUS Loan	Private Educational Loan
Interest Rates	5% fixed rate	5% fixed rate	6.8% fixed rate	7.9% fixed rate	Based on credit
Eligibility	Based on financial need	Based on financial need of student and parent	No income restrictions	No income restrictions	No income restrictions for most programs
Annual Loan Limits	Based on availability, up to \$8,000 a year (maximum of \$60,000, including undergraduate loans)	Based on funds available, up to \$2,500 plus tuition with no maximum.	Up to \$40,500 for first and second year students; Up to \$47,167 for third and fourth year students.	Cost of attendance less any financial aid awarded	Cost of attendance less any financial aid awarded
In-School Interest	Paid by federal government or SCCO	Paid by federal government	Borrower Responsibility	Borrower Responsibility	Borrower Responsibility

Grace Period	Interest paid by federal government during nine-month grace period	Interest paid by federal government during twelve month grace period	Six-month grace period, during which interest will accrue	No grace period - Graduate students may defer payments while enrolled & request 6 month forbearance after graduation, during which interest continues to accrue.	Varies by lender and program
Repayment Terms	Repayment begins after grace period \$40 minimum monthly repayment Repay your school or its agent Up to 10 years to repay, depending on amount owed	Repayment begins after grace period \$40 minimum monthly repayment for HPSL; \$15 for LDS Repay your school or its agent Up to 10 years to repay, depending on amount owed	Repayment begins after grace period \$50 minimum monthly repayment Repay your school or its agent Up to 10 years to repay, depending on amount owed	1st payment due within 60 days after loan is fully disbursed \$50 minimum monthly repayment 10-25 year maximum repayment term (based on total loan balance)	Varies by Lender

Credit Based Loans

As a general rule, students should only consider obtaining a Grad PLUS or private loan only after maxing out on Federal loans that are not credit based. The Grad PLUS and private education loans are credit based so it is important to maintain your credit rating up to and throughout your optometric career. If you are late in paying any of your bills (e.g., credit cards, rent, phone bill, or medical bill) you may be disqualified from receiving private educational loans. The Financial Aid office strongly recommends that you review your credit status. The Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) requires each of the nationwide consumer reporting companies – Equifax, Experian, and

Trans Union – to provide you with a free copy of your credit report, at your request, once every 12 months. They provide free annual credit reports only through www.annualcreditreport.com.

For general information about credit, and credit scores go to: www.myfico.com

Private Educational Loan vs. Grad PLUS Loan

Both the Grad PLUS Loan and a private educational loan have their relative benefits and drawbacks. The decision on which loan program to utilize may come down to your individual preference and comfort level with the interest rate environment. This is the same question home owners need to consider when they are looking at a fixed versus variable rate mortgage. Most lenders offer private loan interest rates based on either the most current 3 month LIBOR rate plus an index or the Prime Lending Rate. However, past performance is not a guarantee for how future interest rates will move in the future.

If you would prefer a fixed interest rate loan that will not go up, then a fixed rate Federal Grad PLUS loan may be what you choose. If you feel that a variable rate will run consistent with a lower rate trend, then a variable rate private educational loan may be best for you. The interest rate is one component to consider. You should also consider other attributes of the loans.

	Federal Graduate PLUS	Private Educational
Borrower	Loan is made to you (the graduate/professional student), an endorser may be required.	Loan is made to you; however, a creditworthy co-borrower may be required.
Credit Requirements	Credit approval based on federal standards, not credit score. Endorser option if you do not meet credit requirements	Credit approval based on credit score and history
Loan Limits	Cost of education minus aid	Cost of education minus aid
Origination Fee	4.0%*	Varies, some lenders offer zero fee loans
Interest Rate	Federal Grad PLUS interest rate is fixed at 7.9%	Variable interest rate based on LIBOR, up to a maximum of 18% (the rate may change quarterly).

		May be based on your credit and/or co-borrower
Federal Consolidation	Eligible for Federal Consolidation programs	Not Eligible Federal Consolidation programs
Deferment/Forbearance Options	Federal deferment and forbearance options exist	Forbearance may be available; is generally less flexible than Federal loan deferments
Repayment Options	Up to 25 years, standard principal and interest, interest only, graduated and extended repayment options	Up to 20 years, options for interest only during early years of repayment
Death/Disability	Grad PLUS loans can be discharged upon death of borrower. Loan can also be discharged if a borrower becomes totally and permanently disabled	Most private educational loans are NOT insured against death or disability

Student Loan History Information

You can locate your prior and current federal loan history by visiting the National Student Loan Data Systems (NSLDS) at: www.nsls.ed.gov. To access your records at this site, you will need to provide the last two letters of your last name, your social security number, your date of birth, and your FAFSA PIN number.

Loan Repayment

Students preparing for graduation should also prepare to begin repayment on their loans. The first step is to review the student copies of the loan applications and promissory notes to ascertain the beginning payment dates and amounts. Most loans are scheduled for a 10 year repayment period.

The student is responsible for notifying lenders of their current address. Failure to do could lead to confusion and even default. The burden is on the borrower to notify the lender of any changes in your name, address or ability to repay. Keep contact during the grace period.

For students who have not begun working or are pursuing a residency and find the beginning monthly repayment amount too high, you can utilize the different repayment options such as an

extended (25 years), consolidation (30 years) or an income based repayment plan. Most loan servicers are interested and willing to work out different payment schedules with borrowers, but can only do so if they know the your circumstances. As always, the Financial Aid office is available to provide guidance to its students and alumni.

Section 6: Work-Study

Federal Work-Study Program (FWS)

The Federal Work-Study Program is an employment program for U.S. citizens and permanent residents that uses funds that are a combination of federal and institutional aid. FWS is a need-based award that provides part-time jobs on campus. The current starting wage is \$9.00 per hour for regular work-study and \$11.00 per hour for teaching or research assistant positions. Tutors earn \$12.00 per hour. You may not work more than 20 hours per week on the average during periods of enrollment.

College Work-Study Program (CWS)

There are limited College Work Study job opportunities for students who do not qualify for the FWS program. CWS is funded through the college or research grants but the wage scale is the same.

Section 7: Tuition & Refunds

Tuition Payments

Tuition is charged four times a year for 3rd and 4th year students and three times a year for 1st and 2nd year students. The total tuition charge will be the same for all classes. If you applied for the Direct Unsubsidized and other campus-based loans the disbursements will be applied to your tuition account quarterly.

Students are responsible for paying any student tuition balance that will not been covered by financial aid funds. Payments must be submitted to the college Fiscal or Financial Aid office by its established deadline to avoid the \$25.00 late payment fee and monthly interest charges.

WICHE funds are not received until January or later so payment in full of the first quarter and partial payment of the second quarter is required. Spring Quarter tuition is covered by WICHE funds.

If financial aid funding creates a credit balance after being applied to the quarterly tuition charge, students have the option of having their refund directly deposited into their personal checking accounts or receiving a check. Direct deposit of refunds often results in a quicker receipt of funds since there is no need to create a physical check. To arrange for direct deposit of your loan refund complete and submit a Student Direct Deposit Request form with a voided check.

Important Note: A student may not proceed from one academic year to the next without having fully paid the previous year's tuition and fees,

Tuition Refund Policy

For official withdrawals, tuition refunds will be pro-rated at intervals of two (70%), three (50%), four (30%), and five (10%) weeks from the date the quarter begins. Refer to the SCCO Catalog for the federal regulations on Return of Title IV funds that applies when a student withdraws prior to completing 60% of the quarter.

Section 8: Miscellaneous Policy on Loan Periods

The definition of a "loan period" and the tuition charge due dates and disbursements within that period may not always correspond to the academic year. At SCCO, the loan period is considered to be 9 months for the first and second year students and 12 months for the third and fourth year students. We use the academic term on measurement of three or four quarters. The Department of Education defines an academic year based on the calendar dates from July 1 to June 30 as an award year, therefore campus-based funds like Perkins and HPSL cannot be paid until after July 1. We use the "scheduled academic year" (SAY) and designate the summer months as a "header" or a part of the academic year that comes before the Fall term. FWS earned during the Summer Quarter are applied to the academic year following the summer. Loan disbursements coincide with the dates the Controller sets for tuition payments.

Emergency Loans

SCCO has an emergency loan called the Dr. Charles A. Abel Emergency Loan that provides interest free loans up to the amount of \$900 and for a period of up to 90 days. For loans held longer than 90 days, a \$25 late fee will be charged and the balance transferred to the borrower's campus store account. Application forms can be obtained from the Financial Aid Office.

SCCO Confidentiality and Access Policy

All records and conversations between an aid applicant, his-her family and the financial aid staff are confidential and entitled to the protection ordinarily given a counseling relationship. No information concerning a student's financial aid records may be released to anyone outside the Financial Aid office without permission of the student or the financial aid administrator, as circumstances may dictate. The financial aid administrator shall determine whose permission is required and will consider the professional ethics surrounding each request for information. All records will be maintained in the Financial Aid office for a period of four years.

The HEOA 34CFR 668.41(c) and 34 CFR part 99 requires SCCO to provide the following annual notice to all enrolled students.

- The student has the right to review their records, to request amendment of records, to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information, and to file complaints with the Department of Education;
- The procedure for reviewing or requesting an amendment of your financial aid records is by oral or written request directly to one of the financial aid administrators.

Penalties for Drug Convictions

The HEOA amendment for 34 CFR 668.40 requires SCCO to provide each student this written notice of federal student financial aid penalties for drug law violations. Under the Higher Education Act, a student may become ineligible for federal aid. Federal aid at SCCO includes Federal Direct and GP PLUS loans, Federal Perkins Loans and Federal Work Study.

For possession of illegal drugs, you are ineligible from the date of conviction (not arrest):

- First Offense: 1 year from the date of conviction
- Second Offense: 2 years from the date of conviction
- Third or Subsequent Offenses: Indefinite ineligibility from the date of conviction

For the sale of illegal drugs, you are ineligible from the date of conviction (not arrest):

- First Offense: 2 years from the date of conviction
- Second and Subsequent Offenses: Indefinite ineligibility from the date of conviction

Do all drug convictions count?

No, do not count any conviction that was reversed, set aside, or removed from your record. Also, do not count any conviction that occurred before you turned 18, unless you were prosecuted as an adult.

How to Regain Eligibility

A student can regain eligibility for federal student aid funds by successfully completing a drug rehabilitation program. A student will regain eligibility on the date of successful completion of the program. To be sufficient to reinstate financial aid eligibility, the program must:

- Include at least 2 unannounced drug tests, AND
- Be recognized as a Federal, State or local government agency program

Student Aid Eligibility Drug Convictions Section on the FAFSA Form

Question #23 asks if you have been convicted from the possession or sale of illegal drugs for an offense that occurred while you were receiving federal aid. Failure to answer this question will automatically disqualify the student from receiving Federal aid. For help answering this question, call 1-800/433-3243.

Conviction During Enrollment

According to the U.S. Department of Education, if a student is convicted of a drug offense after receiving Federal aid, he or she must notify the Financial Aid Office immediately and that student will be ineligible for further aid and be required to pay back all of the aid received after the conviction.

Helpful Contact Numbers and Web Sites

www.fafsa.ed.gov	Complete a FAFSA online. Make corrections.
www.pin.ed.gov	Obtain a PIN number for your electronic signature
www.ombudsman.ed.gov	Contact a student aid ombudsman for questions or concerns that cannot be handled through usual methods (1-877/557-2575)
www.nsls.ed.gov	Access the government database for your loan and grant data using your PIN.
www.finaid.org	Loan and scholarship information, calculators, and Q and A's

Income Grid for HHS Programs: LDS and SDS

The following income figures will determine what constitutes a low-income family for purposes of identifying the disadvantaged students for LDS and SDS for the 2012-2013 academic year based on the 2011 tax year. The chart applies to both the student and parent's family.

Size of Family	Income Level
1	\$22,340
2	\$30,260
3	\$38,180
4	\$46,100
5	\$54,020
6	\$61,940
7	\$69,860
8	\$77,780

More Questions

You may contact the Financial Aid office by telephone (714/447-7448) or in person in the Administration Building D, from 8-5 pm, Monday through Friday. You can also email us at either bbreffle@scco.edu and tsato@scco.edu.

The current college catalog can be accessed at www.scco.edu and includes information about the College's: 1) academic program, 2) instructional facilities, 3) accreditation, and 4) physical access for handicapped students or any special programs for handicapped students.