



COST OF ATTENDANCE & FINANCIAL AID 2008-2009
U.S. CITIZENS AND PERMANENT RESIDENTS

Cost of attendance (COA) is comprised of two types of costs - direct and indirect. Direct costs are reflected on bills payable to Columbia University – for example, tuition, fees, and housing if you live in University Apartment Housing. Indirect costs are not billed by Columbia University and include books, travel, and other personal expenses. Indirect costs may vary greatly, whereas direct costs are fixed. SIPA must set COA figures for each year. The figures below are based on full time attendance.

IMPORTANT - Financial aid can be awarded up to the cost of attendance, but may not exceed the cost of attendance.

	Summer 2009	Fall 2009	Spring 2010	Total
Tuition & Fees	19,098	19,337	19,785	58,220
Room/Board	4,950	6,600	8,250	19,800
Books	500	500	500	1,500
Personal & Others	2,064	2,752	3,441	8,257
Total	26,612	29,190	31,976	87,778

Note: final cost of attendance figures might be adjusted upward to reflect loan fees. All costs shown (except for Dormitory charges, tuition, and fees) are approximates based on the averages our students are paying for budget items listed above.

- . **DIRECT COSTS** . -

Tuition - An annual figure set by SIPA's Administration. For the 2009-10 academic year the figures is \$52,710.

- . **FEES AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY AND SIPA** . -

Health Services Fee - Each semester a student is billed a mandatory health services fee of \$395.

Medical Insurance - The cost of Columbia University Student Medical Insurance at a Basic Level is \$2,275. All students will be billed for Basic insurance charges, unless he/she submits an upgrade request or waiver by the relevant semester deadlines. For more information, consult the [Health Services Website](#) or call 212-854-2284.

University Facilities Fee - Each semester a student is billed a mandatory Facilities Fee of \$291 for summer and \$372 for fall and spring each. That fee enables the use of libraries and the Dodge Fitness Center.

Transcript Fee - A one time fee of \$95 that enables a student to receive copies of his/her transcript.

SIPA Computer Fee - Each semester a student is billed a mandatory \$ 250 fee that gives him/her access to software packages, SIPA's computer labs and printers.

SIPA Student Activity Fee - Each semester a student is billed a mandatory \$50 enabling him/her to participate in Student Activities at SIPA.

International Student Fee - Each semester International Students are charged a \$50 international student fee.

- . **INDIRECT COSTS** . -

These expenses are subjective and can vary for each student.

Room/Board - This figure is based on what our students spend on average for room/board in the previous academic year. The current figure is based on a student spending \$950/month on rent.

- . PREPARING YOUR FINANCES FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR . -

1. Read your award letter to find out what aid you have been awarded. A glossary of financial aid funds can be found on the next page.
2. Determine how much you need to pay from your own resources and start to budget.
3. Decide what aid you wish to accept. If you do not want to accept all or part of the financial aid that you have been awarded, please email our office at sipa_finaid@columbia.edu.
4. If you have chosen to accept loans, we recommend beginning the process as soon as possible. You will need to select a lender to process your student loan(s). Students have the right and ability to select the education loan provider of their choice, are not required to use any of these suggested lenders and will suffer no penalty for choosing a lender that is not included as a suggested lender. These steps should be completed a minimum of six weeks in advance in order to ensure the timely delivery of any loan funds that you would like to borrow.
5. Be prepared to cover the first three weeks of the semester on your own. Financial aid is disbursed one semester at a time and all financial aid funds are sent directly to Columbia University. Disbursement checks are issued approximately three weeks after classes begin, following the Add/Drop period. If you receive more financial aid than is necessary to pay your direct costs, the university will issue a check for the excess amount from which you will be able to reimburse yourself once the funds are received. This is to ensure that the student is actually enrolled and entitled to the funds.

*If you have additional questions about your financial aid process at any time, please send a message to sipa_finaid@columbia.edu.

- . USEFUL DOCUMENTS AND LINKS . -

SIPA's Financial Aid checklist - A step by step, start to finish guide to applying for and securing your financial aid award. *N.B.: Financial aid paperwork is processed annually and you will need to repeat the process each year to some degree, starting with the submission of your FAFSA.

http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources_services/financial_aid/forms/Financial%20Aid%20Checklist%20U.S..pdf

Columbia University's Student Financial Services website - Provides a description of financing options available to Graduate Students at Columbia University as well as the accompanying details on their terms and conditions. http://www.columbia.edu/cu/sfs/docs/Grad_Fin_Aid/Federal/index.html

- . **GLOSSARY OF FINANCIAL AID FUNDS AND OPTIONS** . -

- . **FEDERAL OR STATE AID PROGRAMS** . -

Federal Stafford Loans - They come in two types: (I) Subsidized Stafford Loan- the interest accrued is paid by the government as long as enrollment status is at least halftime; (II) Unsubsidized Stafford- where The interest begins to accrue at the time of disbursement and the student has the option of paying that interest each financial quarter or having any unpaid interest capitalized and added to the principal of the loan. For both types of Stafford, repayment of principal begins six months after graduation or when the student's enrollment drops to less than half-time status. Processing fees may be deducted from the amount borrowed depending on the lender chosen to process the loan. (*)

Stafford Loan Program Annual Limits
(Amounts Divided between 2 Semesters: Fall and Spring)

	Subsidized (Must Qualify)	Unsubsidized	Total for One Year	Interest Rate
Graduate	\$8,500	\$12,000	\$20,500	6.8% (Fixed)

Students offered Federal Stafford Loans may borrow up to the eligible amount(s) indicated on his/her award letter for the academic year. To receive Stafford Loans awarded, students must: (i) submit the Federal Stafford Loan Request form, (ii) e-sign the Master Promissory Note at the designated lender's web site, and (iii) complete the Stafford Loan Entrance Interview online. These steps should be completed a minimum of six weeks in advance in order to ensure the timely delivery of any federal loan funds that are borrowed. Students who have previously borrowed from the Stafford Loan program may choose to borrow with the same lender as in previous years. However, students have the right and ability to select the education loan provider of their choice, are not required to use any of the suggested lenders and will suffer no penalty for choosing a lender that is not included as a suggested lender.

Steps Detailed Above:

(i) Federal Stafford Request Form:

http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources_services/financial_aid/forms/SIPA_Stafford_Loan_Request.pdf

(ii) Federal Stafford Master Promissory Note:

http://www.columbia.edu/cu/sfs/docs/Grad_Fin_Aid/Federal/Stafford.html

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/sfs/pdfs/Top20Lenders.pdf>

(iii) Stafford Loan Entrance Interview:

http://www.columbia.edu/cu/sfs/docs/Financial_Aid/Entrance_and_Exit_Interviews.html#N1001F

Federal Graduate PLUS Loan - Graduate students may apply for this loan in their own name. Students may borrow up to the full cost of education (at an 8.5% fixed rate of interest), less other financial aid received including Federal Stafford loans. To receive Federal Graduate PLUS Loan funds, students must submit and e-sign a Master Promissory Note at the designated lender's web site or with a paper application. The loan goes into repayment 30-60 days after the second disbursement. Processing fees may be deducted from the amount borrowed depending on the lender chosen to process the loan. Pre-approval is required for a PLUS loan each school year. (*) www.columbia.edu/cu/sfs/docs/Grad_Fin_Aid/Federal/Plus_Loans.html

Federal Perkins Loan - These loans are administered by Columbia University and awarded to eligible students with exceptional need as defined by the Department of Education. The interest on this loan is fixed at 5% and repayment begins 9 months after graduation. No interest accumulates on this loan while the student is in school. Funding for the Federal Perkins loan is limited and they are awarded to students with the most financial need. If eligible, this fund will be included on your award letter. Qualified students must complete and sign a Master Promissory Note. MPNs can be signed during orientation, by visiting Student Financial Services (205 Kent Hall), or downloading the form and mailing it to the address provided on the form with an ink signature. Do not complete this step unless the award is in your letter:

http://www.columbia.edu/cu/sfs/pdfs/Federal_Perkins_Loan_Master_Promissory_Note.pdf

Federal Work-Study - This program is federally funded and awarded to students who qualify. Funds earned are provided to the student to spend on school related expenses. Students who have been awarded Federal Work-Study as part of the Financial Aid package can find positions in most administrative and academic departments on the ColumbiaTrak work-study listings here: http://www.cce.columbia.edu/students/find_a_job/

(*) A Master Promissory note is signed for this loan. This means you will only have to fill out one promissory note with your lender that will remain valid for 10 years.

TAP Award - (Tuition Assistance Program) A need based Grant Funded by the New York State Higher Education Service Corporation. Available to New York Residents only (must reside in New York State for 12 consecutive months). For more information, visit: <http://www.hesc.com> or call 888-697-4372. Students, who are not residents of New York State, may want to contact their [state agency](#) for possible scholarship opportunities.

Veteran's Benefits - Various Department of Veterans Affairs programs provide educational benefits for sons, daughters, and spouses of deceased or permanently disabled veterans as well as for veterans and in-service personnel who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces after January 1, 1955. For more information, visit: http://www.columbia.edu/cu/sfs/docs/Grad_Fin_Aid/Federal/Veterans.html or call 212-854-2515.

Payment Plan - For additional information regarding the TuitionPay Payment Plan, please visit: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/sfs/docs/billing/payment-options.html#N10131>.

- . **PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL FUNDING PROGRAMS** . -

Private Educational Funding - Students may borrow up to the full cost of attendance, less other financial aid received including federal loans and outside awards. To receive Private Loan funds, students must submit and e-sign a Master Promissory Note at the designated lender's web site or with a paper application. The financial aid office must certify all loans online or paper based on eligibility. Private loans are disbursed to the school in the form of paper checks and need to be endorsed by the borrower. Students have the right and ability to select the education loan provider of their choice, are not required to use any of these suggested lenders and will suffer no penalty for choosing a lender that is not included as a suggested lender. For additional information, please visit: http://www.columbia.edu/cu/sfs/docs/Grad_Fin_Aid/Private_Loans/index.html

- . **INSTITUTIONALLY BASED AID** . -

SIPA's Philosophy - As there is no interview as part of our procedure for Admission, we are limited to only offering incoming first year students scholarships.

Scholarships - If you applied for a fellowship, you will be notified of these awards within your admission letter. If nothing is mentioned within the admissions letter it means that no fellowship was granted. Also keep in mind that many SIPA students have been successful at securing external fellowship support toward their costs of attending graduate school. Many of these scholarships are described in the SIPA "Directory of External Fellowship Opportunities". If you are awarded an external fellowship, it is your responsibility to notify the SIPA financial aid office in writing.

- . **EVERYTHING ELSE** . -

Other Sources of Funding - Although SIPA does offer institutional based funding, the cost of attendance is significant so students should plan carefully. Very few SIPA awards cover full tuition so students are encouraged to seek other sources of funding. Many SIPA students are successful at securing external fellowship support. Some of these scholarships are described in the SIPA Database of External Grants and Fellowships. If you are awarded an external fellowship please know that it is your responsibility to notify the SIPA financial aid office in writing. The SIPA Database of External Grants and Fellowships is accessible via this link: <http://sipa.columbia.edu/fellowships>

Other avenues of financial assistance for both domestic and international students can be found by doing some financial aid "homework." Admitted students may want to research scholarship and fellowship opportunities distributed by former schools attended or former employers. Networking is always a good way to conduct research for funding.

It is advisable not to limit your search to the school or type of program that you are pursuing. You should conduct a broad search related to factors such as your background, interest, gender, hobbies, etc. In addition, organizations to which you belong sometimes give funding to members seeking educational funding assistance. Persistence pays so be consistent in your search. It is advisable that you set aside a specific time either weekly or biweekly to search for funding opportunities.

Third Party Billing - If someone else will be paying any portion of your bill directly to Columbia University, you need to notify us and to complete a Third Party Billing Agreement. Please explore the following link for more information: <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/sfs/docs/billing/Sponsored-Students/index.html>