



## 2016-2017 VERIFICATION POLICY

**VERIFICATION—WHAT IS IT?** Verification is a process that compares the information on your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to federal income tax and other information used to document that your answers are correct.

**HOW IS A FILE SELECTED FOR VERIFICATION?** Certain applications are flagged by the federal aid processor for verification due to federal edit or random sampling. These applications are identified by an asterisk (\*) placed to the right of the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) on the Student Aid Report (SAR). Other applications may be selected by the WOU Financial Aid Office to clarify information.

**CAN I RECEIVE MY WOU AWARD NOTIFICATION BEFORE VERIFICATION IS COMPLETE?** *You will not receive financial aid if you are selected for verification and do not complete the verification process.* WOU financial aid award notifications are sent after the verification process is complete. Once verification is complete, you will be notified when your financial aid package is available. Your financial aid package shows the types and amounts of aid you can expect to receive from the federal and state aid programs.

**WHAT DOCUMENTS ARE REQUIRED AT WOU?** You need to provide the materials listed below to the Western Oregon University Financial Aid Office. After the financial aid counselor reviews the FAFSA record, verification worksheet and tax information, further documentation may be requested.

- A) VERIFICATION WORKSHEET** – This worksheet is provided by the WOU Financial Aid Office and needs to be completed and signed by you and at least one parent, if you are a dependent student for financial aid purposes.
- i) Based on your answers to questions on the worksheet, you may need to provide additional documentation. *Read the verification worksheet carefully and follow the steps to ensure that you provide all the necessary information to determine your financial aid eligibility.*
  - ii) Parent can mean “parent 1, parent 2 or both parents” on the FAFSA. Tax information from both parents in your household is required regardless of their tax filing status.
- B) 2015 FEDERAL TAX INFORMATION**
- i) **We can’t accept copies of your federal tax returns that you send to the IRS.**
  - ii) The fastest, most accurate method to provide your tax information to WOU is by using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool feature on the FAFSA ([www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov)). To use this feature, log in to your FAFSA record and follow the prompts given to link to the IRS website when you access your tax information questions. This feature is available to, and should be used by, students, spouses and parents (if spouse or parent information is required on the FAFSA). Questions about the IRS Data Retrieval Tool need to be addressed to the FAFSA processor at 1-800-4FED-AID.
  - iii) If you are unable to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool, you will have to order a **Tax Return Transcript** from the IRS and provide a copy of that document to our office. You may order a copy of your Tax Return Transcript using the *Get Transcript* feature at [www.irs.gov/transcript](http://www.irs.gov/transcript). If you cannot order your Tax Return Transcript online contact the IRS at 1-800-908-9946, or walk in to your local IRS Office to order a Tax Return Transcript.
- C) FILING EXTENSION – IRS Form 4868** If you have unusual circumstances that prevent you from filing your federal tax return by the April 15<sup>th</sup> deadline and you have been granted a filing extension from the IRS you must submit the following:
- i) Verification Worksheet.
  - ii) A copy of IRS Form 4868 (Application for Automatic Extension of Time to File U.S. Income Tax Return—automatic 6 month extension) Note: if you get a second extension this has to come from the IRS and we will need a copy of the approval.
  - iii) Copies of all W-2 forms or if self-employed, a signed statement with the anticipated amount of Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) and U.S. income taxes paid.
  - iv) **We will only package federal aid for the first term you will be attending** until your actual 2015 Federal Tax Return information has been submitted to our office in the form of either an IRS Tax Return Transcript or using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov). These corrections may result in a change in your financial aid eligibility. We cannot accept copies of your 1040 Federal Tax Return that you send to the IRS.

This document is available in alternative formats. Please give reasonable notice to the Financial Aid Office.

### WOU Financial Aid Office

345 North Monmouth Avenue • Monmouth, OR 97361 • Tel: 503-838-8475 • Fax: 503-838-8200 • [wou.edu/finaid](http://wou.edu/finaid) • [finaid@wou.edu](mailto:finaid@wou.edu)



## COMPLETING THE VERIFICATION PROCESS

**D) AMENDED TAX RETURN – IRS Form 1040X** If an individual filed a 1040 Amended IRS income tax return for tax year 2015, you must submit the following:

- i) A 2015 IRS Tax Return Transcript – request at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).
- ii) A signed copy of the 2015 Federal 1040X Form, “Amended U.S. Individual Income Tax Return,” that was filed with the IRS.
  - If filed an IRS e-file – will need a signed copy of the “IRS e-file Signature Authorization” page.
  - If filed by a Tax Preparer – the tax preparer needs to have the Firm’s name & Firm’s EIN # on the last page.
  - If filed by hand – need to have an IRS date stamped copy of the amended form to confirm that they received it.

### **E) FOREIGN TAX RETURN FILERS**

Foreign tax return filers should submit a transcript of their return from the government through which the original tax return was filed. All figures should be converted to U.S. dollars using the exchange rate in effect as of the day the FAFSA was completed.

### **F) VERIFICATION DEADLINES**

**If you are selected for verification, all required documentation must be completed before any federal aid is offered or disbursed or before a Federal Direct Loan and/or Federal PLUS Loan will be originated.** If you do not provide the required verification materials, your financial aid file will remain in an incomplete status and you will not receive financial aid. Some financial aid types have limited funding. If the funding is exhausted prior to completion of your verification, you will not receive those aid types.

The verification process must be completed within 120 days after your last day of enrollment or mid-September, 2017 (as of the printing deadline for this document, the actual date was not yet published by the U.S. Department of Education; check with the WOU Financial Aid Office if you need the actual date), whichever is earlier, to be eligible to receive the Federal Pell Grant. For all other aid types, the verification process must be completed before the last day of enrollment. The WOU Financial Aid Office must originate all Direct Loans by the last date of enrollment. The WOU Financial Aid Office does not originate loans until the verification process is complete.

### **G) CORRECTING FAFSA INFORMATION**

If corrections are required based on verification changes, the WOU Financial Aid Office will make the corrections by electronic communication to the federal aid processor. When the federal processor has made the correction, the WOU Financial Aid Office will receive an Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR). The federal processor will notify you of these corrections.

### **H) NOTIFICATION OF AWARD CHANGE**

If the verification process results in a change of a financial aid package previously offered or disbursed, you will be notified of the change via email to your WOU email account once the verification is completed.

## **SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

### **I) JOINT TAX RETURN FOR SEPARATED, DIVORCED OR WIDOWED INDIVIDUALS**

If a filer completed a joint tax return but is now single because of a divorce, separation, or death of spouse, you must turn in a Tax Return Transcript and all **W-2 forms for all income showing on the Tax Return Transcript**; the IRS Data Retrieval Tool will be insufficient in these situations.

### **J) NON-FILERS**

If a parent, student or spouse states that they did not and will not file a tax return, but it appears from the income that a tax return should have been filed, this is considered conflicting information. Documentation may be requested to confirm that the individual did not file and was not required to file. Documentation may include a memo on letterhead from an accountant documenting, in plain English, that the individual was not required to file.

### **K) OTHER VERIFICATION ITEMS**

The FAFSA processor may select your FAFSA for additional verification items beyond those described in this document (e.g., high school completion status, identity verification, etc.). If necessary, the WOU Financial Aid Office will request documentation from you for those items. The deadlines for all verification items described in this document are the same.

The Financial Aid Office has the option to require any additional Verification Materials needed to verify information on the 2016-2017 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

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**WOU Financial Aid Office**

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Student Name (print)

WOU Student ID

2016 – 2017 VERIFICATION WORKSHEET

DEPENDENT

Below you will be given instructions on what steps you will need to complete. We can't process federal aid until the correct steps have been marked and/or completed. For more detailed information on filling out this form please refer to 2016-2017 Verification Policy at <http://www.wou.edu/finaid/managing-my-aid/document-library-forms/>

**Step 1: Household Size.** Complete the box below then go to step 2.

List all members in the household [yourself, parent(s), stepparent, sibling(s)] then list their ages, relationship to you and if they are in a college/university or will attend a college/university at least half-time and/or will be enrolled in a degree, diploma, or certificate program between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017. If you need more space, attach a separate page.

- A) Yourself
- B) Your parent(s) (including stepparent) whose information you used while completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). NOTE: You still have to include parent(s)/stepparent even if you live on your own.
- C) Your sibling(s) [including stepsibling(s)]. NOTE: You will list the sibling(s) even if they do not live with your parent(s). However, if your parent(s) do not provide more than half of the sibling's support from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017, then you do not list that sibling.
- D) Include other people if they now live with your parent(s), and your parent(s) provide more than half of their support and will continue to provide more than half of their support from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017.

Full name	Age	Relationship	College/University
A)		Yourself	Western Oregon University
B)		Parent 1	N/A
B)		Parent 2	N/A
C/D)			
C/D)			
C/D)			
C/D)			
C/D)			

**Step 2: Food Stamps.** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Choose one.

Did any person in your household receive SNAP benefits in 2014 or 2015?

- No. Go to step 3.
- Yes. Go to step 3.

**Step 3: Child Support Paid.** Choose one.

Did any person in your household pay child support in 2015?

- No. Go to step 4.
- Yes. Complete the section below (attach additional paper if necessary) and then go to step 4.

Child Support Paid				
Amount of child support paid in 2015	Name of person who paid child support	Name of person to whom child support was paid	Name of child for whom support was paid	Age of Child
\$				
\$				
\$				



Student Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

WOU Student ID \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 4**

STUDENT Completes this section (CHOOSE ONE OPTION)	PARENT Completes this section (CHOOSE ONE OPTION)
<input type="checkbox"/> I am not required to file a 2015 Federal Tax Return <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I did not work in 2015 – go to <b>step 5</b></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> I am not required to file a 2015 Federal Tax Return <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I did not work in 2015 – go to <b>step 5</b></li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> I am not required to file a 2015 Federal Tax Return <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I worked in 2015</li> <li>I have attached my W-2s and/or Schedule C - go to <b>step 5</b></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> I am not required to file a 2015 Federal Tax Return <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I worked in 2015</li> <li>I have attached my W-2s and/or Schedule C- go to <b>step 5</b></li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> I have filed a 2015 Federal Tax Return (1040, 1040A/EZ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I completed the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) at <a href="http://www.fafsa.gov">www.fafsa.gov</a>. Date completed: _____ - go to <b>step 5</b></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> I have filed a 2015 Federal Tax Return (1040, 1040A/EZ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I completed the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) at <a href="http://www.fafsa.gov">www.fafsa.gov</a>. Date completed: _____ - go to <b>step 5</b></li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> I have filed a 2015 Federal Tax Return (1040, 1040A/EZ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I have attached a copy of the 2015 Tax Return Transcript - go to <b>step 5</b></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> I have filed a 2015 Federal Tax Return (1040, 1040A/EZ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I have attached a copy of the 2015 Tax Return Transcript - go to <b>step 5</b></li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> I have filed a 2015 Amended Federal Tax Return (1040X) (see enclosed instructions – section D) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I have attached a copy of the 2015 Tax Return Transcript from the IRS (see enclosed instructions – section D, ii)</li> <li>I have attached a signed copy of my 2015 Amended Federal Tax Return (1040X) – go to <b>step 5</b></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> I have filed a 2015 Amended Federal Tax Return (1040X) (see enclosed instructions – section D) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I have attached a copy of the 2015 Tax Return Transcript from the IRS (see enclosed instructions – section D, ii)</li> <li>I have attached a signed copy of my 2015 Amended Federal Tax Return (1040X) – go to <b>step 5</b></li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> I have filed my 2015 Federal Tax Extension (4868) (see enclosed instructions – section C) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I have attached a copy of my 2015 Federal Tax Extension (4868)</li> <li>I have attached my W-2s and/or if Self-Employed, a signed statement of anticipated AGI and US Income Taxes paid</li> <li>We will only package federal aid for the first term you will be attending. See enclosed instructions, section C for additional details – go to <b>step 5</b></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> I have filed my 2015 Federal Tax Extension (4868) (see enclosed instructions – section C) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I have attached a copy of my 2015 Federal Tax Extension (4868)</li> <li>I have attached my W-2s and/or if Self-Employed, a signed statement of anticipated AGI and US Income Taxes paid</li> <li>We will only package federal aid for the first term you will be attending. See enclosed instructions, section C for additional details – go to <b>step 5</b></li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> I am a Victim of Identity Theft <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call the IRS Identity Protection Specialized Unit (IPSU) at 1-800-908-4490 and request Transcript Database View (TRDBV) form and submit a copy to us along with a statement signed and dated by the tax filer indicating that they were a victim of IRS tax-related identity theft and that the IRS is aware of – go to <b>step 5</b></li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> I am a Victim of Identity Theft <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call the IRS Identity Protection Specialized Unit (IPSU) at 1-800-908-4490 and request Transcript Database View (TRDBV) form and submit a copy to us along with a statement signed and dated by the tax filer indicating that they were a victim of IRS tax-related identity theft and that the IRS is aware of – go to <b>step 5</b></li> </ul>

**Step 5: Certification and signatures.** By signing this worksheet, I certify that all the information reported on it is complete and correct. I (student) and a parent (listed on the FAFSA) must sign this worksheet and attach the required documents or it will be returned, which will result in a delay in the processing of the student's financial aid.

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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