

To assist your search for alternative (private) loans, below are sample questions to ask lenders. These questions should help you choose a lender that best fits your educational needs.

Do you lend to students at Western Oregon University?

If applying at a credit union, do I have to be a member?

What are your repayment terms?

- Up to 12 years
- Up to 15 years
- Up to 20 years
- Up to 25 years

Do you have repayment incentives?

- Do you have interest rate reductions with payment automatically withdrawn from a bank account? What are they?
- Do you have interest rate reductions for on-time monthly payments? How many consecutive months?
- Do you defer principal and interest during school year or pay only interest during school or pay principal and interest immediately?
- Do you have flexible repayment options? What are they?
- Do you have deferment and forbearance options? What are they?

What are the loan amounts?

- Do you have an annual minimum?
- What is your aggregate maximum?

What is the interest rate?

- Is it fixed or variable?

How is the interest rate calculated?

Are there any fees?

- How are fees assessed?
- Can I get a loan without any fees?

How much will this loan cost in total?

Am I required to maintain satisfactory academic progress?

Do I need to have a credit worthy co-signer?

- None, with approved credit
- Yes, depending on credit rating

If I'm approved without a cosigner, can my interest be lowered if I get a cosigner?

Are there cosigner release benefits?

Will my alternative educational loan be sold to another lender at any time?

What will my monthly payments be?

- Can they vary based on loan amount and interest of loan?

Additional tips:

- What kind of upfront discounts do they offer?
- What can you afford? Are you someone who makes every payment on-time? You may be eligible for additional discounts.
- Get a sense of the lender's customer service. You may be with them a long time and a lender that is easier to work with will make it more enjoyable.
- Beware of loan scams that focus on students

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