**Financial Aid Office (FAO)**

**Terms and Conditions 2014-15**

We are pleased to offer financial aid to help with your cost of attendance at Columbia International University (CIU). The amounts and types of your aid are listed on your Award Letter.

Your award may include scholarships, grants, loans, or work from federal, state, and institutional programs, as well as funds from sources outside CIU that were known at the time your award was made. The information in this bulletin is intended to describe the terms and conditions of your award, outline policies and procedures, and explain the process for delivery of funds. In some cases, individualized comments will appear on your Award Letter.

**Please read the material carefully so you will understand what is expected of you.**

**Award Information**

**Financial Aid Eligibility:** The amount of aid offered to you meets as much of your eligibility for financial aid as resources permit. Your eligibility is the difference between the cost for you to attend CIU and what you and your family should be able to pay. The information used in the calculation of your Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) was reported by you and your family on the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA).

**Types of Aid:** An award will usually include one or more types of aid in order to meet all or as much of your financial aid eligibility as possible. If you are an undergraduate studentworking on your first degree and your application was received by the priority deadline, your aid package may include some aid from scholarship and/or grant funds, as well as an offer of loan or work funds. Graduate students**,** certificate students, and students seeking a second bachelor’s degree typically receive only loans. All aid received, *except Federal Work-Study* (see the next section), will be credited to your student account during the beginning of each semester if you have completed all the necessary paperwork for receiving these funds.

**Federal Work-Study (FWS) Employment:** FWS is a need-based aid program designed to help students earn part of their educational expenses through part-time employment while attending school. *Please note that FWS will not be applied to your student* *account, and you should not include this funding when determining the amount that you will owe to CIU.* If you are eligible for this work program, the award amount shown on your Award Letter is the maximum that you can earn through this work program; however, it must be earned. CIU cannot guarantee a campus job to all students. All jobs must be applied for each year.

**South Carolina Scholarship Programs**: The SC Commission on Higher Education administers the State’s scholarship programs. You may access information and eligibility criteria for the Palmetto Fellows, LIFE, and HOPE scholarships at <http://www.che.sc.gov/New_Web/GoingToCollege/FinAsst.htm>.

**South Carolina Tuition Grant:** The SC Tuition Grant (SCTG) is made available to full-time undergraduate South Carolina residents attending private institutions in the state of South Carolina. It is based upon need and merit. Funds for this program are appropriated by the South Carolina General Assembly. To be considered for the SCTG, the FAFSA must be submitted by June 30 each year, and the student must meet SC state eligibility requirements. For more information please access the SC Tuition Grant website at <http://www.sctuitiongrants.com/>.

**CIU Scholarships and Grants**: Priority consideration will be given to students who applied for financial aid by February 28 (new undergraduate students) or April 15 (returning undergraduate students and all graduate/seminary students). A list of CIU Scholarships and Grants can be found on our website at <http://www.ciu.edu/become-student/financial-aid>. Questions regarding a particular scholarship or grant should be directed to the Office of Financial Aid Office (FAO). All scholarships and grants are contingent upon continuous enrollment.

A**ward Conditions:** You must be enrolled full-time in a degree-seeking or certificate program to be eligible for CIUand state aid. You must be enrolled at least half-time each semester in a degree or certificate program in order to be eligible for

Federal Direct Loans. However, if eligible for the Federal Pell Grant, you can receive these funds for less than half-time enrollment. Your award for the 2014-15 academic year may be used only for educational and living expenses during that period. The academic year consists of fall, spring, and summer semesters.

**Continuation of Aid:** You need to reapply for financial aid each year after January 1 by completing the FAFSA. If you are not completing a FAFSA you must contact the Financial Aid Office.

**Direct Loan Program**

Federal Direct Loans and Direct PLUS Loans are the largest sources of financial aid for CIU students. You may find more information at www.studentloans.gov and http://www.ciu.edu/become-student/financial-aid/federal-state-aid.

**Loan Process for New Borrowers**: If a Federal Direct Loan has been included in the Award Letter, the student must complete Loan Entrance Counseling. Once this counseling requirement has been completed, the student must electronically sign a Master Promissory Note (MPN) from the US Department of Education. These forms are available at [www.studentloans.gov](http://www.studentloans.gov). The student will receive a Loan Disclosure Statement from the government indicating disbursement dates and amounts. Once eligibility for the loan has been verified, the funds will deposit directly into student’s account at CIU. Please note that you must be enrolled at least half-time in a degree-seeking program each semester to be eligible for loans. Loans are not available for the winter session.

**Loan Process for Previous Borrowers**: If the student has previously borrowed a Federal Direct Loan and accepts loans for the upcoming year, the loans may be processed automatically. However, if the US Department of Education is missing either the Loan Entrance Counseling or the MPN, the student will need to complete the required forms prior to loan processing. The student will receive a Loan Disclosure Statement from the government indicating disbursement dates and amounts. Once eligibility for the loan has been verified, the funds will deposit directly into student’s account at CIU.

**Federal Direct ParentPLUS Loan**: These loans are available to parents of dependent students enrolled in an undergraduate program of study. Parents must pass a credit check to be eligible. The maximum loan amount per academic year is the estimated cost of attendance at CIU minus other student financial aid.

**Federal Direct Grad PLUS Loan**: These loans are available to graduate and seminary students enrolled in a program of study. Borrowers must pass a credit check to be eligible. The maximum loan amount per academic year is the estimated cost of attendance at CIU minus other student financial aid.

**Outside Scholarships and Additional Financial Aid**

**Employment:** You may work during the summer and the academic year to provide additional resources. Your earnings will not affect your aid eligibility for the current year, although the income may be used to measure your projected contribution from work in subsequent years. CIU posts student employment opportunities on CIU Online.

**Outside Scholarships:** Students may research outside scholarships through employers, civic organizations, community foundations, and search engines such as fastweb.com.

**Additional Financial Aid:** If you receive additional financial aid from an outside source, which has not been included as part of your award, you must notify the FAO immediately and in writing. Additional aid which should be reported includes scholarships, loans, fellowships, tuition remission, vocational rehabilitation, veteran’s benefits, and other educational benefits. Because your eligibility for financial aid is based on the resources you expect to have for your educational expenses, any additional financial aid must be considered. If you notify the FAO by July 1, adjustments will be made so that the fall semester funds will be delivered on time.

**Award Adjustments:** Federal regulations and institutional policy specify that a student may not receive more aid than is determined by the FAFSA to be the student’s eligibility. Additional aid from other sources must be used to reduce your eligibility and may not replace all or a part of the expected family contribution. Although additional scholarships may not always increase your total aid, it is to your benefit to apply for and receive scholarship funds because your loan or work study obligation may be reduced.

**Payment of Outside Scholarships:** If you are awarded a scholarship or other aid from an organization other than CIU, it is likely that the donor or organization will send the money to CIU for credit to your student account. Please refer the donor or organization to the FAO if there are questions about the payment of your funds.

**Payment Options**

Students may access a copy of their student account on CIU Online. The payment deadline is the first day of class each semester.

**Status Changes**

**Reconsideration of Financial Aid Eligibility**: Your eligibility for financial aid is determined based on your family’s financial circumstances in 2013. If these financial circumstances have changed significantly for 2014, your eligibility for financial aid for the 2014-2015 academic year may be re-evaluated. Special conditions taken under consideration for significant financial changes include loss of employment by a parent or spouse, death of a parent or spouse, loss of benefits, large medical expenses, private school tuition, and divorce or separation. Keep in mind that increased aid can be offered only if funds are available and if you have not received maximum support from specific programs. Contact the Financial Aid Office for more details if needed.

**Change of Status**: Your financial aid award is based on information reported to us about your program of study, state residency, dependency status, educational benefits and whether you will live on or off campus during the school year. If the information is incorrect, you must notify the Financial Aid Office of the changes. If a change in your status results in reduced eligibility for aid, you may be required to repay all or a portion of funds already disbursed to you.

**Enrollment Status**: Your award is based on the enrollment assumptions listed on the Award Letter. Any change in your course load may require an adjustment. Please notify the Financial Aid Office if your enrollment plans change. CIU offers scholarship or grants based on expected full-time enrollment. Undergraduate students must take 12 or more credit hours and Graduate and Seminary students must take 9 credit hours per fall and spring semester to meet that condition. A change in enrollment status after funds are disbursed (and before the end of the tuition refund period) may require repayment of all or a portion of your award.

**Withdrawal from CIU**: If you withdraw (or take a leave of absence) from CIU or drop to less than half-time status during the period of your award or if your registration is canceled, all or a portion of the funds you received must be repaid. The return of funds will be prorated according to your date of withdrawal, course load reduction, or canceled registration. If you withdraw, take a leave of absence, become less than half-time, or cancel enrollment during the first semester of an award, your second semester aid will be canceled. You must request that Financial Aid Office reactivate your financial aid for the spring semester if funding allows. If you have a loan during the enrolled period, or had a loan for a previous enrollment period, you must complete loan exit counseling at the time of withdrawal. You may come to the Financial Aid Office before withdrawal or a change of status to discuss the effects of your decision and to learn more about your rights and responsibilities as a student borrower.

**Moving Off Campus**: Traditional Undergraduate students under the age of 23 that are granted permission to move off campus will lose up to 50% of their CIU aid.

**Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy**

**Federal Financial Aid**

Satisfactory academic progress is defined as the process of adequately proceeding toward the completion of a degree. The Financial Aid Office is required by federal regulations to monitor and determine if students are meeting the satisfactory academic progress requirements. If you should have any questions about our policy, we encourage you to contact Financial Aid at 803-807-5036. In order for a CIU student to retain eligibility for federal financial assistance, the student must meet both qualitative and quantitative requirements set out in the full policy available at <http://www.ciu.edu/become-student/financial-aid>.

**Institutional Financial Aid**

Institutional aid is defined as CIU scholarships and grants awarded by the Financial Aid Office. Each scholarship and grant has a minimum GPA requirement. Institutional aid is also dependent upon the student meeting CIU community standards. In order for a CIU student to retain eligibility for institutional aid, the student must meet the criteria listed in our Institutional Satisfactory Academic Progress policy at <http://www.ciu.edu/become-student/financial-aid>.