

Graduate School Benefits

FAFSA

The FAFSA is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. You can fill out the FAFSA as early as October 1st the year before your academic program starts. For example, you can file your FAFSA as early as October 2019 for the 2020-2021 academic year. You can file your FAFSA here:

<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa>

For filing the FAFSA, you will need your demographic information, your federal tax information for the most recently ended tax year, up to ten schools for which you are considering applying to, and other applicable information. Filing the FAFSA takes approximately 15-45 minutes. You may save your progress and complete the application later, up to 45 days. After filing, your FAFSA is usually processed within 3-5 business days. Your FAFSA information will be sent directly to the schools you listed within the application. If you have questions about your financial aid package, contact your prospective school.

Graduate Program Application Fee Reduction/Waiver Request

Graduate program application fees can add up quickly. Some programs may consider reducing or waiving the application fee based on particular financial situations. You can personally contact each graduate admissions department that you want to apply to and explain your national service as an AmeriCorps VISTA member and the modest living stipend that you earn for your service. Then politely ask if they are able to reduce or waive the application fee based on your financial situation.

Some graduate programs may automatically waive their application fee for applicants who attend their in-person or virtual information sessions.

GRE Fee Reduction Request

Some graduate programs may require that you take the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE). Check with your prospective programs to see which test(s), if any, they require for application to their program or require for specific fellowships or other opportunities.

The voucher for the GRE fee reduction is a 50% reduction. **You have to submit your materials through the postal system, so be sure to do this early on.**

For the GRE fee, you can submit a GRE Fee Reduction Request Form to ETS. Read more about the request here https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/about/fees/reductions/. The fee waiver form is updated every year, so be sure to fill out the current one.

When filling out the fee reduction request form, you are **not** considered unemployed as a VISTA. You can fill out the FAFSA as early as October 1st the year before your graduate program starts. Your FAFSA may result in an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) of less than \$3,000. If so, you can check the appropriate box in your GRE Fee Reduction Request form.

Be sure to include your VISTA Employment Verification Letter (you can request one from Michele) AND your SAR Report from FAFSA.

You will receive an email with your voucher code over email. Be sure to save that number because you will need it when you sign up for your test.

Segal Education Award Match

Your program may match your Segal Education Award amount that you have earned. See a list of matching institutions here:

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/amicorps/segal-amicorps-education-award/matching-institutions>