

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: When will my students loans go into repayment?

A: *Repayment begins 6 months from your last date of attendance. This period is called a grace period.*

Q: What is the interest rate on my student loans?

A: *Stafford loans have a variable rate, currently set at 2.75%. Though the current rate is 2.75%, loans prior to now may be at a different rate. View loan details via your student aid dashboard located at studentaid.gov (refer to Exit Counseling email). If you have a Perkins loan, the interest rate is a fixed rate of 5%.*

Q: Can I consolidate my student loans? If so, where and how?

A: *You can consolidate all of your federal loans into one loan. This may or may not reduce your monthly obligation depending on the repayment plan you chose and the amount of your student loan debt. The consolidation process is started at studentaid.gov. Once you sign in, simply choose “Consolidate My Loans”, found under the “Manage Loans” tab, and follow the prompts on screen.*

Q: When should I apply for a consolidation loan?

A: *The consolidation application process will offer you the option to immediately process or wait until closer to the end of your grace period. Processing immediately will result in you losing some of your grace period as repayment will begin as soon as the consolidation is processed. Your consolidation will take between 45-60 days to process. So, if you select the option to wait during the application process, the US Department of Education will begin to process your consolidation about two months before your grace period is scheduled to end.*

Q: I am going on to grad school. Can I defer my undergrad loans until I finish grad school? If so, can I consolidate the grad and undergrad loans when I am finished?

A: *Yes! Your student loans can be deferred as long as you are enrolled at least half time (6 hours). Once you complete grad school, you may consolidate all of your student loans at once, provided they are all federal loans (Stafford, Perkins).*

Q: Can I consolidate my non-federal Alternative loans (private loans) with my Stafford loans so that I could have one payment?

A: *No. You will have to contact your non-federal loan lender to make arrangements for consolidation, if available.*

Q: I am a teacher. Is there a benefit for cancellation on the federal Stafford loan for me?

A: *Yes! You must teach full-time for five consecutive years in a Title I school. Additionally, if you are in secondary math, secondary science or special education, your cancellation benefit may be greater. Access this link for more information - <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/teacher>. **Contact your lender to apply!***

Q: If I move, how will the lender be notified? Does the school contact the lender?

A: *Once you graduate it is up to you to notify your lender of any changes in address, telephone number or any other pertinent contact information. It is imperative to the health of your credit score that you maintain a good, open relationship with your lender. Failure to do so will result in a defaulted student loan that will ruin your credit.*

Q: What do I do if I can't make my student loan payments?

A: *Call your lender!!! You may qualify for a forbearance, economic hardship or a deferment until you can handle the payments. They are willing to work for you and with you if you call.*