

Need Help With Your Federal Tax Return?

The Loyola University New Orleans [College of Law](#) is again offering the [Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program](#) this year to provide free tax preparation assistance for people with low to moderate incomes.

The sessions, designed by the Internal Revenue Service, begin Monday, Jan. 23, and continue through Thursday, April 12. The tax preparation sessions are Saturdays from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., and Mondays and Thursdays from 5 – 7 p.m. The VITA office is located at Loyola University New Orleans College of Law, Broadway Activities Center, 501 Pine St., Room 202. No sessions will be held on Saturday, Feb. 18 or Monday, Feb. 20 due to the Mardi Gras holiday and Saturday, April 7 or Monday, April 9 due to the Easter holiday.

Those attending tax preparation sessions should bring identification, Social Security cards for each member of their household, tax returns and all other tax documents, including W-2 forms, 1099 forms and Social Security statements.

Completing the 2012-13 FAFSA

Officials in the Office of Federal Student Aid and the Internal Revenue Service have worked together to develop a process to simplify the steps that families must take each year to complete the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \("FAFSA"\)](#)

Federal Student Aid staff have redesigned the "FAFSA on the Web" site to simplify the application process for applicants. Learn more about completing the FAFSA at <http://www.loyno.edu/financialaid/completing-fafsa>

New for 2012-2013

The "IRS Data Retrieval" process for the 2012-2013 academic year will be available *on February 1, 2012*

- Electronically filed tax return information will be available online from the IRS site in 1-2 weeks after the return has been filed,
- Data from paper tax returns will be available in 6-8 weeks.

This process will be available for families filing their initial FAFSA applications. Families who file their initial FAFSA with "estimated income" can go use this process to update their original FAFSA data once their tax forms have been completed.

The benefit (to families) of utilizing the IRS Data Retrieval Process is that it will greatly simplify and expedite the verification process. You will no longer have to submit complete copies of your federal tax returns to our office before we can finalize your federal aid eligibility

Learn more at <http://www.loyno.edu/financialaid/irs-data-retrieval-process>

Need Help With the FAFSA?

Check our website for tools to help you complete the FAFSA - <http://www.loyno.edu/financialaid/completing-fafsa>



American Opportunity Tax Credit

Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), more parents and students will qualify for a tax credit, the American Opportunity Tax Credit, to pay for college expenses.

The American Opportunity Tax Credit modifies the existing Hope Credit for tax years 2009 and 2010 under ARRA. The credit was extended to apply for tax years 2011 and 2012 by the Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2010. The new credit makes the Hope Credit available to a broader range of taxpayers, including many with higher incomes and those who owe no tax. It also adds required course materials to the list of qualifying expenses and allows the credit to be claimed for four post-secondary education years instead of two. Many of those eligible will qualify for the maximum annual credit of \$2,500 per student.

The full credit is available to individuals whose modified adjusted gross income is \$80,000 or less, or \$160,000 or less for married couples filing a joint return. The credit is phased out for taxpayers with incomes above these levels. These income limits are higher than under the existing Hope and Lifetime Learning Credits.

Learn more at

<http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=211309,00.html>

Learn More About the IRS Data Retrieval Tool

The Department of Education randomly selects a certain percentage of applications each year for schools to verify that the data provided on the FAFSA application is accurate.

The benefit (to families) of utilizing the IRS Data Retrieval Process is that it will greatly simplify and expedite the verification process. You will no longer have to submit complete copies of your federal tax returns to our office before we can finalize your federal aid eligibility.

The "IRS Data Retrieval" process for the 2012-2013 academic year is tentatively scheduled to be available starting February 1, 2012

- Electronically filed tax return information will be available online from the IRS site in 1-2 weeks after the return has been filed,
- Data from paper tax returns will be available in 6-8 weeks.

All **2012-2013 FAFSA On The Web** applicants, and the parents of dependent applicants, who indicate that they have filed their federal tax returns prior to completing their FAFSA and who are otherwise eligible will be directed to use the FAFSA-IRS Data Retrieval process to complete their FAFSA more easily and accurately.

Applicants who chose not to use the FAFSA-IRS Data Retrieval process, or who retrieve IRS data but subsequently change it, will be informed that they will need to explain to their institutions why information they provided is more accurate than the information that would have been obtained directly from the IRS. They will need to [provide information obtained directly from the IRS](#).

Some Families Will Not Be Able to Use This Tool

- A married independent applicant and spouse who filed separate tax returns;
- When the parents of a dependent student filed separate tax returns.
- An applicant or applicant's parent who have had a change in marital status after the end of the tax year on December 31, 2011.
- The applicant, or parent or spouse, as applicable, who have filed an amended tax return.

will not be able to use the "DRT". These families should [contact our office](#) for more information. Learn more at <http://www.loyno.edu/financialaid/irs-data-retrieval-process/>

Projected Changes to Federal Aid Programs for 2012-2013

On December 23, 2011, President Obama signed into law the **Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012** (Public Law 112-74). The new law significantly impacts the Federal student aid programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA). Here are some of the major changes:

- Auto-Zero EFC Income Threshold – the law amended HEA section 479(c) to reduce the income threshold for an automatic zero expected family contribution (EFC) from \$30,000 to \$23,000 for the 2012-2013 award year for both dependent and independent students.
- Maximum EFC to Receive a Pell Grant - Public Law 112-74 amended HEA section 401(b)(4) to change the minimum Federal Pell Grant award calculation. This change in the calculation of the minimum award amount results in 4995 being the maximum EFC enabling a student to be eligible to receive a 2012-2013 Federal Pell Grant.
- Grace Period Interest Subsidy - Public Law 112-74 amended HEA section 428(a)(3)(A)(i)(I) to temporarily eliminate the interest subsidy provided on Direct Subsidized Loans during the six month grace period provided to students when they are no longer enrolled on at least a half-time basis. **This change will be effective for new Direct Stafford Loans for which the first disbursement is made on or after July 1, 2012, and before July 1, 2014**
- Federal Pell Grant Duration of Eligibility - Public Law 112-74 amended HEA section 401(c)(5) to reduce the duration of a student's eligibility to receive a Federal Pell Grant from 18 semesters (or its equivalent) to 12 semesters (or its equivalent). **This provision applies to all Federal Pell Grant eligible students** effective with the 2012-13 award year. The calculation of the duration of a student's eligibility will include all years of the student's receipt of Federal Pell Grant funding. This change in the duration of students' Federal Pell Grant eligibility is not limited only to students who received their first Federal Pell Grant on or after the 2008-2009 award year, as the HEA previously provided when the duration of eligibility was 18 semesters.

We will be posting additional information, as it becomes available at <http://www.loyno.edu/financialaid/federal-student-loan-changes-2012-2013>



Learn more about this important debate at <http://www.loyno.edu/financialaid/debt-ceiling-debate>

On-Campus Resources Promote Student Success

- **Academic Resource Center** - <http://www.loyno.edu/arc>
- **Career Development Center** - <http://studentaffairs.loyno.edu/careers>
- **Disability Services** - <http://www.loyno.edu/arc/disability-services>
- **First Year Experience** <http://academicaffairs.loyno.edu/fye/>
- **Free Tutoring Services** <http://www.loyno.edu/fye/resources/academic.html#free-tutoring>
- **University Counseling Center** <http://studentaffairs.loyno.edu/counseling>
- **University Ministry** <http://mm.loyno.edu/university-ministry>
- **Writing Across the Curriculum** <http://www.loyno.edu/wac/>



Tax Credits and the 1098-T Form

The Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 allows a tax credit to be claimed for out-of-pocket payments made to Loyola University New Orleans for the tax year for tuition and certain fees. The IRS requires that we provide the 1098-T statement to you for your use in completing IRS Form 8863. A detailed listing of charges, payments, grants and scholarships is available at our website through your LORA account. We recommend that you refer to that information to assist in determining the amount of credit which may be claimed on your behalf. This information must not be construed as tax advice. The amounts and calculations used to determine the credit are the decision of the taxpayer after consideration of relevant IRS regulations, Form 8863, and, perhaps, the advice of a tax consultant.

For more information, go to <http://finance.loyno.edu/student-finance/tax-credit-and-1098-t> .

KEEP IN TOUCH



You can also



Louisiana families should also check out



New Orleans: Proud to call it home.



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New Orleans, LA 70118

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www.loyno.edu/financialaid/



Office/Program

Student Finance Office

Bursar's Office

Career Development

Dining Services

Residence Life

TOPS Scholarships

Federal Student Aid

National Student Loan
Data System

Important Web Sites

Web Address

<http://finance.loyno.edu/student-finance>

<http://finance.loyno.edu/bursar>

<http://studentaffairs.loyno.edu/careers>

<http://sdxcampusservices.com/loyno/>

<http://studentaffairs.loyno.edu/residential-life>

<http://www.osfa.state.la.us/>

<http://studentaid.ed.gov/>

http://www.nslds.ed.gov/nslds_SA/