

# UW System: Encourages students to fill out the FAFSA to secure federal financial aid

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MADISON, Wis. – University of Wisconsin System President Jay Rothman today announced the launch of a new social media campaign to encourage students and parents to fill out the FAFSA, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

The FAFSA filing period for the 2023-24 academic year begins Saturday, Oct. 1, and Rothman said the application is critical for students to secure aid that will help them pay tuition and other costs for college.

He also said the new Wisconsin Tuition Promise, which will ensure that students from families earning less than \$62,000 annually can attend the UW System tuition free, will be available only to eligible students who file the FAFSA.

“Filling out the FAFSA is as important as applying for admission,” Rothman said. “Too many Wisconsin students are leaving aid on the table and limiting educational opportunities by not taking this critical first step.”

The UW System is creating a new FAFSA website with resources and more information, including help on how to fill out the FAFSA, contact information for UW System financial aid offices, and dates and locations for in-person and virtual assistance events from College Goal Wisconsin, a volunteer program that promotes FAFSA completion involving universities, colleges, high schools, businesses, and others.

Find the website at <https://uwhelp.wisconsin.edu/pay-for-college/fafsa/>.

About \$3.75 billion in federal Pell Grant aid goes unawarded each year nationally

because students don't fill out the FAFSA, according to an estimate using data from the Office of Federal Student Aid.

Only about 50 percent of Wisconsin high school seniors file, ranking it 38<sup>th</sup> in the FAFSA completion rate.

The UW System campaign will use social media to encourage students and parents to fill out and file the FAFSA and to direct them to the new website. It will also use strategically targeted radio ads to reach parents of eligible students.

"A UW System education is both affordable and accessible," Rothman said. "Federal financial aid can make it even more affordable."

Federal financial aid is distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. Students and parents who apply early have a better chance of receiving aid, including grant aid that does not have to be repaid. Students must also file a FAFSA to be eligible for the Wisconsin Grant Program and other state aid