

The FALL Tailgate

OCTOBER 1 WILL BE HERE BEFORE YOU KNOW IT

The 2026-2027 FREE Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the Illinois Alternative Application (RISE Act) will be available to complete October 1! Only one of these applications should be completed—the RISE Act application is solely for students who are not eligible to complete the FAFSA. Both applications will use 2024 household income—the FAFSA requires Federal Tax Income Consent otherwise the application will be rejected. Household income is entered manually in the RISE Act application.

Some NEIU students missed out on the Illinois Monetary Award Program (MAP) Grant this year (2025-2026) because they filed their financial aid application after June 5, 2025. The FAFSA or RISE Act should be completed early every year to maximize eligibility.

The 2026-2027 financial aid application provides student aid indexes for Fall, 2026, Spring, 2027 and Summer, 2027. Need help? We have workshops scheduled already!

El Centro Financial Aid Application Completion Workshops

3390 North Avondale Avenue, Chicago, IL 60618

Saturday, October 4, 10:00am until 2:00pm

Saturday, October 25, 10:00am until 2:00pm

Franks & FAFSA at the Nest, Main Campus

Friday, October 17, 11:00am until 2:00pm

Tuesday, October 21, 11:00am until 2:00pm

Wednesday, October 29, 11:00am until 2:00pm

Want to complete the FAFSA before October 1 through **beta testing**? To sign up, visit the <https://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/fafsa-support>

SCHOLARSHIP GAME PLAN: SET YOUR GOAL!

Scholarships aren't won by chance — they're won with a plan. Step one is knowing your **goal**. Ask yourself two questions? How much do I need? And When do I need it? Once you have your goal, plan how many and what type of scholarships you want to apply for.

- **\$5,000 goal** → Apply for 25 small scholarships (\$200–\$500).
- **\$5,000 goal** → Apply for 10 medium scholarships (\$500–\$1,000).
- **\$5,000 goal** —Apply for 3–5 large scholarships (\$5,000+).

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APPLY FOR INSTITUTIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS USING ACADEMIC WORKS!





THE FALL TAILGATE: Students → “Apply to three scholarships by Sept. 30.”

FREQUENTLY ASKED FINAID QUESTIONS

1. What is a tuition differential and why do some academic programs cost more than others?

There are four programs that have an additional percentage rate for coursework. The additional rate funds operational costs for College of Business & Technology, Counselor Education, Educational Leadership and Social Work.

2. How does the FINAID Book Advance work?

Students with a surplus of financial aid over tuition and fees will have a ‘credit’ balance with the University. Students with ‘credit’ balances receive an email from Follett Bookstore with instructions on how to use ‘credit’ to purchase books, supplies and technology. The last day to use Book Advance for Fall is September 5, 2025.

3. Does the NEST have a meal plan?

Not as of Fall, 2025. Students are encouraged to budget for groceries, make use of the Food Pantry and take turns with roommates in preparing meals.

4. Can there be additional NEST charges after the semester is paid off?

Yes. These charges can result from damages, guest policy violations or overages in utility expenses. Charges are added to University billing as they are determined.

5. Do withdrawals impact my financial aid eligibility?

Definitely. Minimum Standards of Academic Progress monitors cumulative GPA and completion rate—withdrawals impact completion. Complete withdrawals or zero grade points in a semester are an automatic suspension of financial aid eligibility.

6. If I do not have Federal Work Study, does that mean I cannot work on campus?

No, but first check with Student Employment to confirm there is no Federal Work Study eligibility. Once confirmed, ask the team about student aide positions available.

Check out our Contact Information

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE (FINANCIAL HOLDS)

Email: StudentPaymentServices@neiu.edu

Telephone: (773) 442-5165

CASHIERS

Telephone: (773) 442-5184

FINANCIAL AID

Email: Financial-Aid@neiu.edu

Telephone: (773) 442-5016

SCHOLARSHIPS

Email: Scholarships@neiu.edu

Telephone: (773) 442-4606

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

Email: Student-Employment@neiu.edu

Telephone: (773) 442-4696

STUDENT LOAN DEPARTMENT & CREDIT BALANCE REFUNDS

Telephone: (773) 442-5175

TOP 3 FALL Outcomes

1. Know how to login into NEI-*Upport* in order to register, view financial aid requirements, view awards, apply for scholarships, download documents, sign up for direct deposit and view University balance.
2. Understand Cost of Attendance—distinguish between direct and indirect cost, Student Aid Index and Borrowing History.
3. Understand opportunities available through Student Employment and Career Services.