

Military Benefits and Institutional Aid Policy

Effective 2009-2010

Due to the post 9/11 GI Bill, veterans are now eligible for more significant benefits than in the past. According to federal regulations, beginning with the 2009-10 academic year, federal military benefits are no longer included as estimated financial assistance (a resource) when calculating eligibility for federal forms of financial aid. However, due to the significant amount of benefits some student veterans are receiving, Messiah University will include any benefits of which we are aware when awarding and adjusting institutional grants and scholarships (including all institutional merit-based scholarships).

Military Benefits and the Messiah University Grant

When a student who is the recipient of a Messiah University Grant has received total gift aid, including military benefits, that exceed the student's calculated financial need, the Messiah University Grant will be reduced until the total amount of gift aid equals the student's financial need, or until the Messiah University Grant has been eliminated from the student's financial aid package.

Military Benefits and Total Gift Aid

Students who receive military benefits in combination with non-need-based forms of institutional gift aid will be allowed to keep institutional gift aid up to the point at which the total amount of gift aid equals the student's total cost of attendance budget.

When the institutional gift aid, in combination with the military benefits, exceeds the student's total cost of attendance budget, institutional gift aid, including merit-based scholarships, will be adjusted so that the student's total gift aid equals the student's total cost of attendance budget.

It is within this policy to have a student's total gift aid exceed the student's calculated financial need when military benefits are included if the only type of institutional aid is a non-need-based form.

Other Forms of Aid

Because military benefits are not to be included as estimated financial assistance in the aid package for federal aid, the amount of other forms of need-based aid (including but not necessarily limited to subsidized Stafford Loans or Federal Work Study) may exceed need when totaling a student's need-based aid. However, these forms of aid may be adjusted to preserve the student's eligibility for need-based institutional aid. Nothing in this policy should be interpreted to mean that adjustments to other forms of aid will not be necessary to resolve overawards in these situations.