

EDUCATION REPORT

Foreign Students at U.S. Colleges Have Several Ways to Get Financial Aid

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I'm Gwen Outen with the VOA Special English Education Report.

We continue our reports for students around the world who want to attend a college or university in the United States. This week, we answer questions from two listeners. Richard Lin from China wants to know how to get a scholarship to an American college. Amarkhuu Ayulguisaikhan of Mongolia wants to know the differences among different kinds of financial aid. They are assistantships, grants, scholarships and fellowships.

An assistantship is a job a student does. In exchange, the student receives money or attends classes for free. Graduate students usually get assistantships. The student works about twenty hours a week helping a professor. The student may teach classes, help grade papers and tests, or do research in a laboratory.

A grant is a gift of money to pay for some or all of the costs of college. Unlike loans, grants do not have to be re-paid. Private groups or organizations generally give grants to students who need the money.

Scholarships and fellowships also do not have to be re-paid. A scholarship is financial aid to undergraduate students; a fellowship is the same kind of aid for graduate students. Generally, scholarships and fellowships go to students with special abilities or athletic skills. Some scholarships are based on financial need. Others go to students who live in a certain area.

For example, the University of Missouri in Columbia has two financial aid programs for international students only. The Global Tiger Scholarship is supported by the group representing former university students. In return for scholarship money, the international student agrees to help the group during the school year. The other international scholarship or fellowship at the University of Missouri is called the grant-in-aid program. It provides money to students who need the help, get good grades and take part in university activities.

To get these scholarships, students must complete forms found on the university's Web site. The address is missouri.edu. Information about scholarships from other colleges and universities is listed on their own Web sites.

For general information about how to get financial aid, go to a Web site called FinAid. The address is finaid.org.

This VOA Special English Education Report was written by Nancy Steinbach. This is Gwen Outen.

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