

## Conflicting Information Policy

Conflicting information occurs when information reported, either verbally or on any documentation submitted to any office at the University, does not match the information being reported on the FAFSA or supplemental forms/documents and the discrepancy affects eligibility or is of sufficient magnitude to materially affect the amount and types of aid a student is eligible to receive.

Federal regulations mandate that a school must have a system of identifying and resolving discrepancies in all FSA-related information received by any school office. A school must resolve discrepancies for all students, not just those selected for verification. Resolution includes determining what information is correct and documenting the school's finding in the student's file. **Conflicting information must be resolved before awarding/dispersing aid or making a professional judgment adjustment.** If conflicting information arises after a student's aid was originally dispersed, the school may remove any disbursements of aid from a student's account and require resolution of any conflicting information before dispersing any further aid. If this occurs, the student may be liable to the institution for any balance owed as a result of receiving aid that he/she wasn't eligible for based on the conflicting information.

**Common sources of conflicting information and possible resolutions can be, but are not limited to:**

### **Social Security number**

- Possible resolution: social security card

### **Date of Birth**

- Possible resolution: official birth certificate (scrapbook copies not accepted)

### **Name change**

- Possible resolution: court documentation showing name was legally changed and/or social security card

### **Dependency status**

- Possible resolutions: official birth certificate (scrapbook copies not accepted), court documentation showing orphan/ward of the court status, legal guardianship or legal emancipation, proof of income or support, proof of homelessness, DD-214, etc.

### **Marital status (student and/or parent)**

- Possible resolutions: marriage certificate, divorce decree, proof of separation, proof of maintenance of separate residences for more than 6 months of the tax year in question (copy of lease, mortgage statement, etc), and/or utility bills for more than 6 months of the tax year in question showing separate residences for the tax filer and/or the spouse.

***Note: If marital and/or tax filing status was correctly filed for the tax year on the FAFSA, but the marital status is different as of the date the FAFSA was completed, then marriage certificate, divorce decree, proof of separation, and/or proof of maintenance of separate residences from the date of separation on the FAFSA or for 6 months, whichever is greater.***

#### **Admissions status (and High School Completion)**

- Possible resolutions: proof of high school graduation, proof of completion of a Bachelor's degree, etc.

#### **Income and taxes paid**

- Possible resolutions: IRS tax transcript, IRS Wage and Income Statement, W-2 Form, Schedule C tax form, 1099-C form, Amended tax return, paystub, etc.

#### **Tax filing status**

- Possible resolutions: marriage certificate, divorce decree, proof of separation, proof of maintenance of separate residences for more than 6 months of the tax year in question (copy of lease, mortgage statement, etc), utility bills for more than 6 months of the tax year in question showing separate residences for the tax filer and/or the spouse, IRS 1040X form and IRS Tax Account Transcript showing amendment to filing status was made.

***Note: If marital and/or tax filing status was correctly filed for the tax year on the FAFSA, but the marital status is different as of the date the FAFSA was completed, then marriage certificate, divorce decree, proof of separation, and/or proof of maintenance of separate residences from the date of separation on the FAFSA or for 6 months, whichever is greater.***

A student may be asked to submit written documentation and/or additional information to clarify or correct conflicting information. This action may be in conjunction with the Verification process or a separate request.

***It is at the discretion of the Office of Financial Aid as to which documentation is necessary to reasonably resolve the conflicting information.***

Our office understands that financial aid may play a significant role in the financing of your education. We are committed to assisting you in attaining your educational goals by providing you with access to all available financial aid options for which you may be eligible. Your prompt response to this request for required information will ensure the accurate and timely processing of your financial aid.