Important Changes to the FAFSA Process

- The US Department of Education has streamlined the financial aid application process to make it simpler and more accurate.
- Applicants and parents who indicate they “will file” a federal tax return will receive an email communication or letter in the mail, directing them to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) to update their income information once they have filed their 2015 federal income tax return.
- Applicants selected for the verification process will be required to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool OR they may choose to request a Tax Return Transcript from the IRS which can be submitted to Student Financial Services.

NOTE: Student Financial Services highly suggests that you use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool from the start if eligible. Even though it sounds like it may delay your application, it will be a quicker method than requesting an IRS Tax Return Transcript.

What is the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT)?

The IRS Data Retrieval Tool (IRS DRT) allows you and, if applicable, your parent(s) to upload data from your federal tax returns from the IRS into your FAFSA. It may be used during the initial filing or when subsequent corrections are made to your 2016-2017 FAFSA. This option will streamline and expedite the processing of your financial aid. The IRS DRT will be available beginning February 19, 2016.

Be aware of the time frame between when you file your return and when the IRS DRT will be available. Prior to using the DRT, you must wait 2 weeks after your taxes are submitted to the IRS and 8 weeks if filing by mail before you can access your tax record with the IRS DRT.

In What Cases Will I NOT Be Able to Use the DRT?

You will not be able to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool (DRT) if any of the following are true:
- Marital status changed after December 31, 2015.
- Filed "Married Filing Separately."
- Filed an amended return.
- Filed a foreign tax return.
- Filed a tax return using a Tax ID Number (TIN).
- The home address on the FAFSA does not match the address on the tax return.
- Applicants who are have not and are not required to file a 2014 Federal Tax Return.
- For applicants that cannot use the online IRS Data Retrieval Tool, a Tax Return Transcript must be requested directly from the IRS. We have provided instructions below on how to request a tax transcript.
I Did Not Use the IRS DRT When I Filed My 2016-2017 FAFSA. Can I Go Back and Update My FAFSA Now That I Have Filed My Tax Return?

YES. Follow the instructions on the next page.

NOTE: Do not make any adjustments to the tax information once it has been transferred to the FAFSA. If any information is incorrect, please contact Student Financial Services.

I Was Selected For Verification. Can I Submit Photocopies Of Tax Returns To Satisfy Verification Requirements?

NO. Beginning with the 2012-2013 award year, institutions can no longer accept copies of federal income tax returns to satisfy federal financial aid verification requirements. In general and in accordance with federal financial aid regulations, all applicants who have already filed their 2016-2017 FAFSA but elect not to use the IRS Data Retrieval Process will be required to support their reported FAFSA data with information obtained directly from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). This would include but not limited to a 2015 IRS Tax Return Transcript for students and their parents (if a dependent student), as well as other documentation required to verify information on the FAFSA.

Applicants Who Choose Not To Use the DRT Tool OR Change the IRS Income Information

Applicants who choose not to use the FAFSA-IRS Data Retrieval Tool or applicants who use the tool but subsequently change the income information will be informed that they will be required to verify the information used on the FAFSA. Verification includes, but is not limited to, submitting a copy of your/your parent 2015 IRS Tax Return Transcript and may require verification of family members, those enrolled in college, and child support received.
GUIDE TO USING IRS
DATA RETREIVAL TOOL INSTEAD OF PRINTING TAX RETURN TRANSCRIPT

1. Select you “Already Completed” your 2015 tax return.

Log into www.fafsa.gov, you will select make a correction to your 2016-2017 FAFSA application. Go to Financial Information.

2. Put in your correct filing status.

3. Answer the following questions to see if you qualify to use the IRS data retrieval tool.

4. If you qualify you will be able to “Link to the IRS”

   Click “Link to the IRS”

5. Select “OK” - you will now be leaving FAFSA’s website and be going to the IRS website.
6. Type in your address exactly how it appears on your personal tax return. Then click submit.

7. Select “Transfer My Tax Information into the FAFSA”

8. Then click “Transfer Now”
9. Once information is transferred it will say “You have successfully transferred your 2015 IRS tax information.” Then click “Next” to continue the application process. When done make sure to electronically sign the FAFSA and re-submit application.
Would you prefer to have your Tax Return Transcript mailed?

1. Go to irs.gov
2. Select Request Transcript of Your Tax Records

3. Select Get Transcript Online

You can get a transcript by mail to view your tax account transactions or line-by-line tax return information for a specific tax year. The method you used to file your return and whether you have a refund or balance due, affects your current year transcript availability. Note: If you need a copy of your return, you must use Form 4822, Request for Copy of Return.

To use Get Transcript by Mail, you need your Social Security number (SSN) or your Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN), date of birth, and address from your latest tax return.
4. You must enter your personal information and select Continue:

5. Select “Return Transcript” under the drop down for Type of Transcript and “2015” for Tax Year selection. Then click on Continue:
6. You are now complete in requesting a tax return transcript. You will need to wait 5-10 business days to receive your transcript.