

GUIDE TO WORK STUDY EMPLOYMENT & FINDING POSITION AT MIZZOU



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INTRODUCTION

This handbook serves as a guide to students who want to know more about the Federal Work Study (FSW) program at the [University of Missouri](#), or *Mizzou*. Once eligible and selected for a position students should read our *New Work Study Student Employee Orientation Guide*.

Federal Work Study is designed to give part-time employment to undergraduate and graduate students who need the income to help meet the costs of post secondary education, provide valuable learning and work experiences, and to encourage FWS recipients to participate in community service activities.

In 1994, the [University of Missouri's Financial Aid Office](#) and the [MU Career Center](#) joined together in the administration of the Federal Work Study Program. While the Financial Aid Office determines eligibility and allocates Work Study funds to students, the MU Career Center develops employment opportunities, refers students to positions, and provides training for students and employers. At this time, the Work Study Employment Office has developed a database of over 2,000 opportunities and referred approximately 1,500 students to positions. Some of these positions involve Community Service opportunities.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact our office as we are here to help you. E-mail is the best way to reach us, wrkstudy@missouri.edu. If you prefer to reach us by phone you may do so by contacting the MU Career Center and asking for someone from the Work Study Employment Office by calling (573) 882-6801.

BENEFITS OF WORK-STUDY

Aside from a wage, students find that work-study provides them with many other benefits including:

- Transferable work skills and experience which will be essential in your post-graduation employment search. While you may not be performing the same tasks in your career, you will however have to understand the expectations of an employer and develop interpersonal skills.
- Better grades and time management skills, several studies have shown that university students that work more than 5 hours but less than 20 earn higher grades than their non-working peers.
- Many students develop good working relationships with staff members who can provide excellent letters of recommendation or references for future jobs and education.

ELIGIBILITY

To be considered for a Work Study award, you must first complete the [Free Federal Application for Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) which assesses your financial need. This form must be completed each year by March 1st. Once the application has been received, the cost of education for you will be established. The budget includes an average monetary amount for fees, books, room and board, personal expenses and transportation. An expected family contribution is subtracted from the cost of education. The difference is defined as financial need which could create the need for a work study award. Under federal guidelines, the combination of all need-based aid may not exceed the financial need of the individual. When limited funding is available, regulations assure students with the highest need are considered first priority.

You will need to indicate that you want work study as it is not automatically added to your award package. If eligible, a Work Study award will be listed in the student's Financial Aid letters typically mailed in June for returning students and in May for freshmen for the following academic year. Summer students will receive a letter in April indicating eligibility. The monetary amount offered will be the maximum earnings the student may attain during each session. This amount may change if information or financial aid awards change the student's eligibility for financial assistance.

If a student is not eligible for the Work Study program, the Part-Time Job Program in the MU Career Center is another resource designed to help students find employment. Non-eligible students should logon to <http://HireMizzouTigers.com> for part-time jobs on-campus and within Columbia.

Once you know that you are eligible for Work Study and have all paperwork complete with Financial Aid, you may then make some choices of where you would prefer to work. This is where the MU Career Center's Online Work Study Employment System comes in. You may obtain your Work Study referral through our online database system by typing in your Pawprint and password, and then selecting a job that is of interest to you. Our online database system lists all jobs available, which include on-campus and community service positions. Keep in mind that you can only select one position at a time.

If your Financial Aid file is incomplete or has holds, you will be notified by Financial Aid through myZou (<https://myzou.missouri.edu/psp/prd/?cmd=login>). All must be cleared before you can be referred to an employer.

TYPES OF WORK-STUDY JOBS

At the University of Missouri, departments offer a wide variety of jobs (2,000 positions) to students. These jobs provide vital learning and work experiences outside of the classroom for students in each of the 82+ academic majors. Students are not required to choose a job within their academic major but are strongly encouraged to select jobs which will provide them with relevant work experience in a career field they wish to pursue after graduation. After good grades and a diploma from a university, the second criteria for many jobs after college is work experience. The four most common types of work-study jobs are: student assistant, clerical assistant, research assistant and lab assistant.

Community Service

Community service work study offers an alternative to traditional on-campus employment by creating jobs in the community where students have the opportunity to earn wages while helping a nonprofit organization. These jobs allow students to come into direct contact with the people they are serving. Seven percent of the Federal Work Study Program monies are allocated to community service positions. Community service involves services, which are identified by an institution of higher education, which are designed to improve the quality of life for community residents, particularly low income individuals, or to solve particular problems related to their needs.

Some fields which qualify as community service include health care, child care, literacy training, education (including tutorial services), welfare, social services, transportation, housing and neighborhood improvement, public safety, crime prevention, recreation, rural development, and community improvement. An agency may qualify as a community service work site, but not all positions there would

qualify. Emphasis is placed on direct service; therefore, a filing job at a food bank would not qualify.

Although a priority is placed on assisting low-income individuals, support for students with disabilities or efforts at crime prevention are also encouraged.

For more information on community service or a referral to a community service site, contact the Community Service Work Study Coordinator at 882-6801.

AWARD AMOUNTS & WAGE RATES

As stated earlier, your award amount is determined by your financial need (through completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid or FAFSA) and availability of funds to the work study program. For the 2011-2012 academic year, work-study award amounts will be around \$1,300.

Note: Changes in your financial aid award package can change your work-study award amount or change your eligibility. For example if a student is later notified by the Office of Financial aid that they qualify for a grant or scholarship for \$500, their work-study award may decrease by \$500.

The hourly wage rate is determined by the department. Departments may refer to the Student Wage Schedule revised annually by the [MU Human Resources Department](#). The various wage rates should reflect the degree of training, proficiency, and skill required for the position.

All employers must pay their work-study employees at least Missouri's minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour. Some employers pay above this level or provide additional means of compensation as their positions require advanced skill, experience, and/or knowledge.

The following are other salary guidelines outlined by the Federal Student Financial Aid Handbook:

1. Students must be paid at least the Missouri minimum wage, which is currently \$7.25 per hour.
2. In determining an appropriate wage rate, departments must consider:
 - A. Skills needed to perform the job;
 - B. How much persons with similar skills are paid in local area for the same type of work;
 - C. Rate MU would normally pay similar non-Work Study employees;
 - D. Any applicable federal, state or local laws that require a specific wage rate.
3. Students doing comparable jobs must be paid comparable wages whether the jobs are performed by students at different class levels or by a student and a regular employee.

Considerations: Experience v. Wage Rate

While wage should be a consideration in the job selection process it should **not** be the primary reason for choosing a particular job. A wide variety of job experience and skills may later give students an edge over those who only perform basic skills once they begin applying for the same jobs after graduation.

Many post-graduation employers value a variety experience as much as they do good grades however;

experience is not a substitute for good grades. A job which pays \$7.75 may not allow you to expand your job skill sets as much as another job which pays \$7.25. *Remember, that your award amount is fixed therefore it cannot be exceeded regardless of wage rate.* The \$7.25 will only require 25 extra minutes of work per week or about 5 minutes a day to earn the same amount of money as the job with a \$7.00/hour wage. With all this in mind you must make a choice based on **your own needs**.

According to the [Federal Student Financial Aid Handbook](#), "a student's need places a limit on the total Work Study earnings permissible, but has no bearing on his or her wage rate. It is not acceptable to base the wage rate on need or on any other factor not related to the student's skills or job description." Student employees returning to a former position should be considered for increases in pay.

PAYROLL PROCEDURES & WORK SCHEDULE

Below is general information about completing the necessary paper work to receive your work-study award. Please note that your work-study award (which you earn from working at an hourly wage) will be directly deposited into your **bank** account bi-weekly and will not be credited to your University account. Families which expect students to use portions of their award to pay University expenses must make the appropriate arrangements.

- Pay Period-You are paid bi-weekly (every other Wednesday) at an hourly rate established by your employer when you accepted the position. Missouri minimum wage is \$7.25; therefore you should not be paid below this level.
- Work Schedule-This should be discussed before you are hired and every semester to meet your needs and those of your employers. You can estimate the number of hours you should work per week by dividing your work-study award by your wage and then that quotient by the number of weeks during the academic year. Example, if you award amount is \$1,300 per academic year, wage is \$7.25/hour, and there are 30 weeks in an academic year: $\$1,300 \div \$7.25 \div 30 \text{ weeks} \approx 5.97 \text{ hours}$.

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)

Q: What is Work Study?

A: Federal Work Study (FWS) is a federally subsidized program designed to give part-time employment to undergraduate and graduate students who need the income to help meet the costs of post secondary education. Work Study jobs can complement your educational program or career goals. You will also gain relevant work experience in a business setting.

Q: How do I apply for Work Study?

A: Work Study is a campus based program co-administered by the Financial Aid Office. To apply for Work Study, you need to:

1. File a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
2. Indicate interest in Work Study by marking FAFSA Box 35.

Q: Are wages earned through FWS taxable?

A: Yes, just like most jobs, the wages you earn are subject to federal and state payroll (withholdings) and income taxes. It's important that students file their taxes, even if they do not earn enough to be subject to them because they may be entitled to a tax refund. Free tax preparation is offered on campus every February – April. Office for Financial Success 61 Stanley Hall (573) 884-1690. Hours: 4:30 to 8 p.m. Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Saturdays

Q: Can I work more than one Work Study job?

A: No, you can only work one work study job, if you find that you can handle your current hours and are looking to work additional hours ask your supervisor if it would be possible for your department to pay you to work additional hours. Another option is to find a non-work study job on or off campus. You can find many part-time jobs at <http://HireMizzouTigers.com>. Please note that we advise you to be cautious of taking on a second job (especially early in your college career) as working beyond 20 hours a week has been shown to be detrimental towards some students course work.

Q: Can I have a work study job in the summer?

A: No, you can only receive work study at the University of Missouri during the fall and spring semesters. Some departments can hire you as a non work study employee and pay your wages during the summer. Ask your supervisor if that would be possible.

Q: What happens if I do not earn my entire work study award?

A: If you do not earn your entire work study award during the academic year (first day of the fall semester to the last day of the spring semester) it disappears. As you do not have to work the same amount each semester, many first year students work fewer hours in the fall (earning less of their award) and work greater hours in the spring (earning the remainder of their award).

Q: Can I have my work study award increased?

A: Requests for additional Work Study money are reviewed by Financial Aid Advisors and granted on a case-by-case basis depending on the availability of funds. **Direct your questions regarding the status of your financial aid package to the Financial Aid Office, 11 Jesse Hall, or call 882-7506.**

Q: What are [A Way With Words & Numbers](#) and [Jumpstart](#)?

A: Jumpstart, a **preschool** enrichment and literacy program, trains and supports college students to serve as part-time tutors. A Way with Words & Numbers is an **elementary and middle school** enrichment literacy and mathematics program. Tutors in both programs work one-to-one with young children to build skills crucial to school success. Both programs are open to work study students and pay \$810 an hour and may include additional financial incentives. More information about these programs can be found at:

- A Way With Words & Numbers: <http://career.missouri.edu/A3WN/index.php>
- Jumpstart: <http://career.missouri.edu/jumpstart/index.php>

Q: What if my file says INCOMPLETE?

A: Your financial aid folder must have a "complete" (no holds) status before you can get an on-line work study referral. If your status shows "incomplete," go to myZou <https://myzou.missouri.edu/psp/prd/?cmd=login> to check the status of your application.

Q: After I am notified of eligibility from Financial Aid, how do I obtain a job?

A: To obtain a job for the Fall/Spring Semesters, you may search the database on the web in our office or at any computer with web access. Once a position is decided upon, you will need to print out a

application form. This application will contain contact information. If you are a new student to the University you will need to take your application form to the department by the end of the first week of classes. If you are a returning student or changing work study positions you must take you new application form to the department within two days working days of receiving the application.

Q: Is a job referral a guaranteed job?

A: A application is not a guaranteed job. You should expect that you may be interviewed as this is a real job. If you need help preparing for an interview, the MU Career Center can work with you. If after an initial interview you are not hired or decline to take the position, you will be released from that position so that you can choose another position.

Q: Since it is called Work Study, does that mean I can study on the job?

A: The name can be misleading. FWS jobs are not any different than any other student jobs on campus. There are required tasks to be completed as designated by the employer. It is important to view the work study job as a "real job" in which the employer requires work in exchange for wages.

Q: What is a community service work study job?

A: Seven percent of the Federal Work Study Program monies are allocated to Community Service positions. Community Service is defined as services which are identified by an institution of higher education, through formal or informal consultation with local nonprofit, governmental, and community based organizations, as designed to improve the quality of life for community residents, particularly low income individuals, or to solve particular problems related to their needs. An emphasis is placed on direct services. Some jobs are located off campus and would require transportation. Fields which could qualify as community service include health care, education, welfare, social services, transportation, public safety, recreation, rural development, and community improvement.

Q: Do all Work Study positions pay the same?

A: No. The hourly wage rate is determined by the department. The rates selected by the departments reflect degree of training, proficiency, and skill required for the position. Award amount has no bearing on wage rate selected by the employer. Issues regarding pay increase and number of hours worked per week should be discussed with your supervisor.

Q: How do I get my application form?

A: You may print out your referral form from our office in Student Success Center or from any computer with web access. You will need your PawPrint and password to gain access.

Q: I have a question about Work Study. Where do I go for more information?

A: Email us! at wrkstudy@missouri.edu .

