

UW-STOUT Multicultural Student Services
ADVANCED OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM (AOP)
Eligibility Criteria and Guidelines 2009-2010

1. Minority and disadvantaged graduate students seeking their first Master's degree, Education Specialist degree and students enrolling as non-degree seeking "special" students may apply for the AOP grant
 - a. Priority is given to:
 - i. Renewal applicants
 - ii. Minority Wisconsin residents seeking first Master's degree
 - iii. Disadvantaged Wisconsin residents seeking first Master's degree
 - iv. Minority non-residents seeking first Master's degree
 - v. Minority Wisconsin residents seeking Education Specialist degree
 - vi. Disadvantaged Wisconsin residents seeking Education Specialist degree
 - vii. Minority or disadvantaged non-degree seeking "special" Wisconsin resident students
 - b. Cut-off date for priority consideration for applicants is March 13, 2009 by 4:30pm
2. U.S. citizens or permanent resident graduate students may apply
3. Students are required to file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) with the Financial Aid Department
4. Students are required to complete the AOP application process annually
5. Students must self-identify by completing the AOP application
6. Students must certify their AOP application and continuation of AOP award
 - a. To be certified the student must:
 - i. Be admitted to the Graduate School
 - ii. Be a member of one of the following racial/ethnic minorities: African-American, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Southeast Asian, or other American ethnic minority group (as determined by submitted information on your admissions application and AOP application) or disadvantaged
 - A student can be considered disadvantaged if they meet any of the criteria including but not limited to one or more of the following:
 1. Financial need as determined by FAFSA
 2. Comes from a family that received any type of public assistance, including eligibility for school lunch program
 3. First generational college student
 4. Participated in special services for disadvantaged student programs such as Upward Bound, Trio, Talent Search, etc.
 5. Student who did not have the expectation and encouragement to pursue post-graduate education as a viable option
 - iii. Be making satisfactory progress as determined by the Graduate School Policies
 - iv. Be making satisfactory academic progress as determined by federal guidelines
 - v. Meet with Multicultural Student Services Department once a term
7. Students are required to complete the AOP certification process annually
 - a. Certification will determine eligibility for the spring semester
8. Students pursuing their first master's degree are eligible for AOP awards for a maximum of a 2 year allocation, limited to 4 semesters of full-time attendance, funding limits and years of eligibility will be prorated if less than full-time, limited to 6 semesters
 - a. Funding limits are based on tuition and fees
 - b. Additional funding limits will be considered in the event there is available funding
 - c. Awards are not to exceed the amount of cost of attendance as determined by your school
9. Students pursuing dual master's degrees are eligible for AOP awards for a maximum of a 2 year allocation, limited to 4 semesters of full-time attendance, funding limits and years of eligibility will be prorated if less than full-time, limited to 6 semesters

- a. Funding limits are based on tuition and fees
 - b. Funding limits will cover the cost for one master's degree
 - c. Additional funding limits will be considered in the event there is available funding
 - d. Awards are not to exceed the amount of cost of attendance as determined by your school
 - e. Students who pursue a second MS degree concurrent with their first MS are eligible
10. Students that change their master's degree program are eligible for AOP awards for a maximum of a 2 year allocation, limited to 4 semesters of full-time attendance from the first date of original program enrollment, funding limits and years of eligibility will be prorated if less than full-time, limited to 6 semesters
- a. Funding limits are based on tuition and fees
 - b. Additional funding limits will be considered in the event there is available funding
 - c. Awards are not to exceed the amount of cost of attendance as determined by your school
11. Students pursuing the Education Specialist degree are eligible for AOP awards for a maximum of a 2 year allocation, limited to 4 semesters of full-time attendance, funding limits and years of eligibility will be prorated if less than full-time, limited to 6 semesters
- a. Funding limits are based on tuition and fees
 - b. Additional funding limits will be considered in the event there is available funding
 - c. Awards are not to exceed the amount of cost of attendance as determined by your school
12. Students entering as non-degree seeking "special" students are eligible for AOP awards for a maximum of two semesters regardless of enrollment status
- a. Funding limits are based on tuition and fees
 - b. Additional funding limits will be considered in the event there is available funding
 - c. Awards are not to exceed the amount of cost of attendance as determined by your school
 - d. Total funding for all "special students" is limited to no more than 10% of the total AOP allocation for UW-Stout
13. A year allocation is defined as fall and spring terms
14. Students must be registered for at least 5 credits
- a. Courses must apply to program requirements
15. All attempted credits count toward your semester limits
16. Students seeking their second master's degree (non-concurrent with first Master's degree) are not eligible
17. Students enrolled as dual-level (undergraduate/graduate) are not eligible
18. Students may appeal the denial of their application
- a. Students must complete and submit an AOP Appeal Application
19. Although awards are not based strictly on need, participants will be expected to pursue other available sources of funding in addition to AOP, students are encouraged to apply for:
- a. Foundation Scholarships
 - b. Graduate Assistantships on campus
 - c. Out-of-state tuition waivers
20. Any AOP balance, refund, or cancellation will be rewarded on a first-come-first-serve basis after the priority deadline
21. All applications will be date stamped as they are submitted
22. The AOP/LUMRG committee will review applicants materials for eligibility
23. After recipients are selected, award notices will be sent via the regular financial aid award process
- a. AOP will not replace any grants, scholarships, waivers, fellowships, or other awards the student is or would have been eligible to receive
 - b. When possible and feasible, AOP will replace need-based loans
 - c. Funds will be credited directly to the student's account for institutional charges
24. Submission of eligible recipients will be sent to the Financial Aid department on April 1, 2009