2015-2016 Financial Aid Policy Statement

Part I: General Provisions
1.1 This document, known as the Financial Aid Policy Statement, outlines the manner in which decisions about law student financial aid are made. All amendments to this document and other information about financial aid procedures shall be posted on the College of Law website or otherwise made available to interested students. Students shall be held responsible for any information that is so made available or contained herein.

1.2 Financial aid awards may be comprised of College of Law Tuition Grants, College of Law Scholarships, University Graduate Fellowships, Federal Work Study Awards, Federal Direct Loans and/or awards from such other financial aid programs as the College may from time to time administer. The University Graduate Fellowship programs are administered by the Graduate School and are not necessarily subject to the provisions of this Policy Statement.

Part 2: The Application Process and Requirements
2.1 All applicants for federal student aid and need-based Law Tuition Grants annually must file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Students are advised to pay strict attention to the requirements listed on their MySlice accounts and to information posted on the College of Law website, bulletin boards, and the College of Law catalog, which outline the procedures by which all forms are to be filed.

2.2 Each year, the College of Law sets a deadline for the receipt of all financial aid applications. Students must adhere to the deadline. Applications received after the posted deadline will be considered only after all timely applications have been reviewed. Late applicants shall receive awards only to the extent permitted by remaining available funds.

2.3 Federal aid eligibility, including Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans, Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loans, and Federal Work Study is based solely on student (and spouse, if applicable) information provided on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Parent information is not used to determine Federal financial aid eligibility.

2.4 Verification and Quality Assurance Program
Syracuse University participates in the U.S. Department of Education’s Quality Assurance Program. The Quality Assurance Program allows participating institutions to verify student financial aid application data. Students are randomly selected and must submit the requested documentation.

Part 3: Financial Aid Awarding Policies
3.1 To receive financial aid either administered or certified by the College of Law, students must either be enrolled at the College of Law, enrolled in an approved joint-degree program, or be a matriculated Syracuse Law student enrolled elsewhere as a “visiting student” in an approved program. Most types of financial aid from the College of Law require full-time enrollment. Change to part-time status (enrolling for fewer than twelve credit hours per academic semester) may result in an adjustment to or cancellation of any financial aid award. Part-time students seeking federal and/or institutional aid must register for a minimum of 6 credits in the fall and spring semesters and 4 credits during the summer term to qualify.

3.2 College of Law Tuition Grants, Scholarships, and Federal Work Study will be awarded only during the fall and/or spring semesters. Students wishing to accelerate their legal education by enrolling in summer courses should be advised of this policy.

3.3 Students who are approved to enroll as a visiting student at another institution may be eligible to receive Federal loans and/or private educational loans up to the cost of attendance at the school they plan to attend. The Financial Aid Office will send a consortium agreement to the visiting school and, once completed by an administrator at the visiting school, all of the loans will be processed, certified, and disbursed at Syracuse University College of Law. College of Law scholarships, College of Law grants, and Federal Work Study will not be awarded to students who visit away.

3.4 Students in 3 + 3 agreements are not eligible for undergraduate level federal, state, or institutional aid from their undergraduate institution.

Updated 1/2015
3.5 Syracuse University undergraduate students admitted through the 3 + 3 Program with the College of Law will be assessed for financial aid awards, funded solely by the College of Law, in their final year of undergraduate work (which is also their first year of law school).

3.6 All financial aid award offers are extended based on the best possible estimates of funds to be made available from all aid sources, including the Federal Government, and are therefore contingent on the actual availability of such funds in the estimated amounts.

3.7 The Syracuse University College of Law Office of Financial Aid reserves the right to modify, change or alter a student’s financial aid award based upon new information, changes to institutional policy, funding levels, processing errors, etc.

Part 4: Disbursement of Funds

4.1 Academic year financial aid is disbursed to student accounts twice a year, half at the beginning of the fall semester, and half at the beginning of the spring semester, no earlier than 10 days prior to the start of the semester.

4.2 Summer financial aid is disbursed at the beginning of the summer enrollment period and no earlier than 10 days prior to the start of the summer program.

4.3 Awards will not be disbursed if there are outstanding requests for additional information or other requirements are not met.

4.4 Financial aid that has been disbursed will appear as a credit on the student’s Bursar bill.

Part 5: Merit-Based Scholarship Awarding Policies

5.1 The College of Law may award merit-based scholarships to matriculated students demonstrating exceptional academic promise or performance. College of Law merit-based scholarships are awarded to entering students based on the student’s admission application.

5.2 College of Law scholarship recipients must be matriculated as full-time students in the J.D. program at Syracuse University. Scholarships cannot be transferred to another institution. Full-time students are defined as those who register for and complete a minimum of 12 credit hours during each fall and spring semester.

5.3 Scholarships from the College of Law may be combined with other tuition awards, not to exceed the amount of tuition for each academic year.

5.4 Scholarship awards may be renewed during each of a returning student’s remaining years at the College of Law as long as the student meets the minimum renewal standards described in both their original scholarship notification letter and the award policies described herein.

(a) Eligibility for merit scholarship renewal is based upon the official cumulative Law Grade Point Average. Renewal of awards will be determined upon receipt of all grades for an academic year (occurring after the completion of each spring semester). Grades earned outside the College of Law will not be used to calculate the official cumulative Law Grade Point Average.

(b) Grading policies are described in the Syracuse University College of Law Academic Handbook. All law students must meet the academic standards described in the College of Law Academic Handbook and are held accountable for the policies that are used in the calculation of the official cumulative Law Grade Point Average.

(c) The minimum cumulative College of Law Grade Point Average (GPA) necessary for Trustee’s Scholarship or Chancellor’s Scholarship renewal is a 3.00; the minimum cumulative GPA necessary for Orange Law Scholarship, Dean’s Scholarship, or Alumni Scholarship renewal is 2.80. Grades will not be rounded to the nearest 10th of a point.

(d) Trustee’s and Chancellor’s scholars with official cumulative Law GPA’s that are less than a 3.00 but at least a 2.80 at the end of the spring semester will lose their original scholarship but will be offered a lesser valued merit scholarship as a replacement. These new merit scholarships require the recipient to maintain a minimum 2.80 cumulative Law GPA. The Trustee’s and Chancellor’s scholarship will not be reinstated, regardless if a 3.00 cumulative GPA is earned at a later date.

(e) Students must complete all courses for which they register within the regular timeframe of the semester in which they are enrolled. Students with “incompletes” will not be eligible for scholarship renewal.

(f) Scholarship awards will be renewed at their original levels provided that resources are available and, when combined with other tuition awards, do not exceed the amount of tuition for each academic year.
Scholarships are renewable for two years. If a student enrolls in an approved joint-degree program the scholarship may be renewed as the student satisfies the requirements to complete required courses in the joint degree program, not to exceed a fourth year.

Returning students who take an official approved Leave of Absence prior to earning a full academic year official Law GPA must have a minimum GPA of a 2.20 to be eligible for the scholarship upon returning from the approved leave.

Returning students who take an official approved Leave of Absence and have earned a full academic year official Law GPA must meet the minimum academic standards described in their original scholarship notification letter to be eligible for the scholarship upon returning from the approved leave.

Recipients of scholarships who fail to meet the renewal standard at the end of any academic year will not receive renewal of their scholarship awards for subsequent years, regardless if minimum requirements are met at a later date.

Part 6: Satisfactory Academic Progress

This policy on satisfactory academic progress relates specifically to law students who are receiving Federal Student Aid (including Federal Direct Loans and Federal Work Study). All law students must also meet the academic standards described in the College of Law Academic Handbook.

Academic progress is defined as earning a minimum number of credits over a specific number of semesters and maintaining a minimum grade point average (GPA). Academic progress will be reviewed annually, at the conclusion of the spring semester, once final Fall/Spring grades have been recorded. Law students must maintain a cumulative Law Grade Point Average of at least 2.20 to be considered in good standing.

Academic Probation: The Academic Standards Committee has absolute discretion to grant academic probation to students who fall below 2.20. Students on Academic Probation fall below the necessary requirements for satisfactory academic progress and are ineligible for further financial aid. However, eligibility may be regained by submitting a waiver demonstrating that failure to meet the standards for academic progress was based on circumstances beyond the student’s control (such as illness/injury or other special circumstances), or, students may enroll without institutional, federal, and state financial aid during a subsequent academic period to earn the required grades/courses to regain eligibility.

6.4 Appeals: Any student who falls below the standard to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress may submit a written petition to the Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards Committee (in care of the College of Law Office of Financial Aid, Cole Suite 100, Dineen Hall) to initiate an appeal for a waiver. The appeal must address the reasons for the student’s poor performance and/or the circumstances that necessitated withdrawal from classes rather than the student’s need for the financial assistance.

6.5 Financial Aid Probation: Students who successfully appeal to have their financial aid reinstated by the Satisfactory Academic Progress Committee will be placed on financial aid probation for one semester. Students must adhere to the requirements of the academic plan set by the Academic Standards Committee and/or the Office of Student Life. Students who make progress under the established academic plan will be eligible to receive financial aid for the subsequent semester.

Part 7: Tuition

7.1 Tuition Rates: Tuition rates are published in the Syracuse University Bulletin of Tuition, Fees, and Related Policies and are subject to change without prior notice.

7.2 Full-Time JD Students: JD students enrolled in 12-19 credits per semester are charged a full-time rate for tuition for the semesters in which they are enrolled full-time.

7.3 Part-Time JD Students: JD students enrolled in 11 credits or fewer are charged at a per-credit rate of tuition for the semesters in which they are enrolled part-time. Tuition charges will be calculated based upon the number of credits for which a student registers multiplied by the per-credit rate of tuition.

7.4 Joint-Degree Students: Joint-degree JD/Graduate students are always charged at the law rate, not the graduate student rate, regardless of the courses in which the student enrolls.

7.5 Full-Time LLM Students: LLM students enrolled in 12-19 credits per semester are charged a full-time LLM rate for tuition for the semesters in which they are enrolled full-time.
7.6 Le Moyne or Nazareth 3 + 3 Program: Students in their final year of undergraduate work (which is also their first year of law school) will pay tuition to Syracuse University, at a cost equivalent to their undergraduate college’s tuition rate. The following two years of the program will be charged at the College of Law tuition rate.

7.7 Summer Tuition Rate: Students are charged a per-credit tuition rate during the summer enrollment period. Summer tuition charges will be calculated based upon the number of credits for which a student registers multiplied by the applicable per-credit rate of tuition. Law students who enroll for summer classes at Syracuse University are charged at the law school tuition rate, regardless of whether the classes are taught through the College of Law or through another department at the university.

7.7 SU Abroad: SU Abroad students pay Syracuse University tuition as stated in the tuition rate schedule published in the Syracuse University Bulletin of Tuition, Fees, and Related Policies. In addition to the SU Abroad tuition charges, students pay a program fee for the particular SU Abroad program for which they enroll.

Part 8: Cost of Attendance

8.1 Cost of Attendance: the College of Law provides an estimate of the costs that are reasonable for a student to attend Syracuse University College of Law and pursue the J.D. degree program or the LL.M. degree program. The Cost of Attendance includes allowances for tuition, fees, room, board, books, personal expenses, and transportation.

8.2 Award Limits: the total of all financial aid a student may receive, regardless of source (federal, state, institutional, or private) or type of award (scholarships, grants, need-based employment, federal, or private loans) cannot exceed the cost of attendance, as is set by the College of Law.

8.3 Budget Adjustments: On a case-by-case basis, the Financial Aid Office will consider individual requests for an adjustment to the standard cost of attendance. Appeals will be considered using the standards set by the Department of Education. (a) If approved, a budget adjustment will allow a student to borrow additional student loans. Students must submit the Budget Adjustment Request Form to the College of Law Financial Aid Office with receipts and other required supporting documentation. (b) Examples of budget adjustment requests that may be approved include, but are not limited to: the one-time purchase of a computer, health insurance, and child care expenses. (c) Budget adjustments will be approved at the discretion of the Financial Aid Office; decisions will be final.

8.4 Non-Allowable Expenses: Examples of expenses not allowed in the educational budget include costs of moving, payment of consumer debt (such as credit card payments), the purchase or upkeep of an automobile, costs associated with finding employment (interview expenses, clothing), and expenses incurred during periods of non-enrollment (i.e. summer).