

Davis Putter Scholarship Fund  
Application FAQs 2010

The application form is designed for you to fill out on your computer and print out. “ToolTips” that provide additional information are available by hovering the cursor over each field. If your web browser does not support fill-in PDF forms, you may download and print out our blank PDF application form compatible with older versions of Acrobat Reader [here](#).

Please print out the Instructions and FAQs so you can refer to them as you assemble your application packet and to answer any questions you may have after you apply, as they will be removed from the website on April 1.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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GENERAL

1. What kind of students does the Davis-Putter Fund support?

We provide need-based grants to students who are able to do academic work at the college level and are actively working for peace and justice. Davis-Putter scholars are both graduate and undergraduate students and must be living in the U. S. and planning to enroll in an accredited school. Grantees must receive college credits for the time period covered by their grant. Early recipients fought for civil rights, against McCarthyism, and for peace in Vietnam. More recently, grantees have been active in the struggle against racism, sexism, homophobia, and other forms of oppression; building the movement for economic justice; and creating peace through international, anti-imperialist solidarity.

2. If I tell you about the type of work I am doing or my specific activities, will you tell me if I should apply?

No. You will have to make that judgment yourself. However, after reviewing the website, you will be able to assess whether your activities are similar in nature to those of the current grantees and those who have received scholarships in the past. Just because your specific area of activism is not listed in the material does not mean that you won't be considered. Each year the trustees look for people committed to activism in diverse communities, organizations and fields.

3. What if I am not active in the movement for social change but I hope to become involved soon?

We only support students who are working for social and economic justice and do not consider applicants who are not currently part of those activities. You will want to review the section on our current grantees, since that describes the students who have received grants and illustrates the qualities successful applicants bring to the Fund.

4. I am very involved in the type of activism that you have supported in the past and I am going to school, but I can afford to pay my own way. Am I still qualified for a scholarship?

We look at the applicant's contribution to social justice, ability to perform academically, and relevance of educational program, as well as their financial need. However, applicants who do not need funding will not be selected.

5. Can I still apply for the scholarship, even if I am not involved in any activism? I meet the requirements for everything else, except the activities.

Activism is the most important requirement for a successful application. No application will be seriously considered without it.

6. I am still in high school, but I am taking college courses. Can I apply for a grant for these courses?

Probably not. You must actually be enrolled at an institution of higher education and receiving degree credits from that institution. Advanced placement courses while in high school generally do not meet those requirements.

7. I have not been accepted by a school yet, but I don't want to miss out on applying for a scholarship for this year. How can I fill out the application?

Indicate on the application that you have not been accepted yet and use the costs related to the school that you expect to attend for the tuition and expense figures. If you are accepted at a school not listed on your application form, you may be asked to send us a new form (without the other materials you already submitted) with the new educational and living

costs.

8. Can I get a scholarship to help me pay for a research assistant I need for work on my doctoral project?

No. The scholarships are for normal educational and living expenses. The Fund is not a source to fund research or field work.

9. What do you mean by an accredited school?

The school must be eligible to award college credits under the rules and regulations of the state or jurisdiction in which the school operates. Studies that lead to licenses without college credit normally will not qualify (for example, computer technician). Some courses that lead to licenses may be for college credit (for example, nursing). The school you are interested in should be able to tell you if they are accredited -- by the state and national bodies that create educational standards and evaluate programs -- and whether the program in which you want to enroll will earn you recognized college credits.

10. Can I get a grant to attend a two-year college for an associate degree or for attending a junior or community college?

Yes, if the school is accredited.

11. What is considered a graduate program?

Students who have completed their undergraduate degrees or are in joint degree programs or are in advanced education programs and who are working for a masters, doctorate, or professional degree (medicine, law, architecture, journalism, etc.) are eligible to receive a scholarship from the Fund. Only rarely does the Fund award grants to students seeking multiple or second advanced degrees.

12. I am taking a year off from school to do field work. Can I get a grant for my living expenses for this period?

No. You must be enrolled in an educational program and the scholarship must be used in conjunction with securing college credits for that program.

13. I don't need money for school, but the community organization I am involved with needs money to pay me for organizing. Can my organization or I get a grant for that purpose?

No. The Davis-Putter Scholarship Fund only gives grants to individual students for their educational program at accredited schools.

14. Is US citizenship required?

No, but applicants must have participated in activities in the United States and be planning to enroll in an accredited program in the US in order to apply. There is a strong preference to award grants to students who are planning on staying in the United States and building the progressive movement here.

15. Why can't I apply if I am going to a recognized school abroad?

While an application under those circumstances may not be automatically rejected, it is extremely difficult for the trustees to judge the activism, quality of the educational program, or soundness of the future plans of applicants working and living in another country, and such applications are much less likely to be approved.

16. Are applications open to students registered in a Canadian university? Although I reside in Canada, I am involved with issues that straddle the Canada-US border.

Students whose goals coincide with those of the Fund and who are involved in activism in the United States may apply if they believe they meet the other criteria.

17. Can I apply for a scholarship if I am taking a year to study abroad?

Yes, provided that you will earn credits toward a degree at an accredited program in the United States.

18. How large are Davis-Putter grants?

The maximum grant is \$10,000 and may be considerably smaller depending on the applicant's circumstances and the amount of money available. All of the scholarship funds come from the contributions of individual donors.

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## APPLICATIONS

19. When are applications due?

Applications must be postmarked no later than April 1. There are no exceptions. We recommend that you do not wait until the last minute to compile and mail your application. We encourage you to mail the completed application package as soon as you have the current information about the school you will attend, other grants you may receive, your grades, and your projected expenses.

20. Can I put the application form in another format, such as Word, to make it easier for me to fill it out?

No. In order to read and evaluate hundreds of applications, it is important that the applications are uniform. That is why the application is in PDF format. Our PDF fill-in form allows you to fill it out on your computer and then print it out to mail in. Any changes in the application format may result in the application being rejected. If you are having trouble with filling out our PDF form, see these additional FAQs at the end of this page (FAQs 72-80).

21. How do I submit my application?

Applications must be mailed to:

Davis-Putter Scholarship Fund Post Office Box 7307 New York, NY 10116-7307

Do not send your application packet by a private carrier, such as UPS or FedEx, as they are not able to deliver to a post office box. Since the deadline is a postmark, do not send your application by overnight mail, certified mail or by any method that costs more money or requires that the volunteers who pick up the applications to stand in line to sign a receipt. Be sure to keep a copy of your application packet.

22. What should my application packet include?

- a. Three copies of your completed application form.
- b. Three copies of your personal statement, which should not be longer than 1,000 words, describing your current work for social change and your specific role in building the progressive movement.
- c. The original and two copies of the transcripts of your previous academic work. If your transcript is in an "official" sealed envelope, you do not need to order additional copies. Simply open the envelope and make two copies to send along with the original.
- d. The original and two copies of signed letters of support from two people able to evaluate your political work and your contribution to the progressive movement. These do not have to be in sealed envelopes. However, if a recommender wants to submit a sealed recommendation, ask him or her to give you three copies.
- e. Three copies of the Student Aid Report (SAR). If you are not eligible for US federal financial aid, please include a brief explanation and verification of income and expenses. (See the section on Financial Information -- FAQs 58 and 59.)

f. One recent glossy passport-like color portrait photograph of you alone, suitable for reproduction for publicity purposes if you are selected to receive a grant. Place the photograph in an envelope with your name clearly marked on the back of the photograph and on the outside of the envelope. Do not use staples or paperclips to attach the photograph.

g. All the information we need in order to reach you by phone or email in May and June if we have any questions about your application.

23. Do you want the application assembled in any particular way?

Yes. Put one copy of each of the required documents together to make a complete application packet, so that in the end you will have three separate, identical and complete packets. Each separate application packet should be fastened together. We will send two of the applications packets to members of the selection committee. The third is kept in a central location. All three packets should be mailed to us in one large envelope.

24. Can I fax you my application or send it to you by email?

We do not accept applications or supporting materials by facsimile or electronic mail under any circumstances. Applications received by fax or email will not be considered.

25. Can I file an application after the April 1 deadline if I have a good reason for being late?

Applications postmarked after the deadline date will not be considered. The Davis-Putter Fund expects applicants to start preparing the application sufficiently in advance to accommodate unanticipated problems. If you miss the deadline and you are continuing your schooling, you can apply next year if you believe you might qualify then.

26. I just received information about the Fund and I do not have enough time to complete the application before the deadline. Can I get an extension to file?

We cannot extend the filing deadline for any reason. The Fund has been in existence for over forty years. We are sorry that you only learned of the Fund recently. Now that you know about these scholarships, you will be able to apply before the deadline in future years.

27. I dropped the application in the mailbox the day of the deadline. It is not my fault that it was postmarked a day later. Will my application be rejected?

Yes. You are responsible for making sure that you have a valid postmark on or before the April 1 deadline. If you are mailing your material on the last day, make sure your package

will get an actual postmark on that date.

28. I went to the post office on the date of the deadline to mail the letter, but it was closed due to an emergency. What can I do?

In that case, you can file your application on the next day the post office is open and enclose a statement from a postal supervisor or other proof of the early closing, such as a newspaper story. While we expect applicants to prepare for most delays, it is extremely unusual that a post office will close or that there will be circumstances that keep people from getting to the post office.

29. Can I drop off the application at the Fund's offices?

No. The Fund does not maintain a central office. Remember that the application does not have to be delivered by the deadline. We accept the official postmark as proof that the application was submitted on time.

30. Can I send my application by UPS or Federal Express or DHL or Purolator or other courier service?

No. The Fund only accepts applications at its post office box which courier services are unable to reach. In any event, there is no need to spend extra money for a courier service. The application does not have to be delivered by April 1. We will accept an official postmark as proof of timely filing. The only express mail service that delivers to a post office box is the postal service's own Express Mail which is expensive and unnecessary.

31. Is it better for me to send my application by Certified Mail or Registered Mail or ask for a Signature Confirmation?

No. Any method of mailing that requires a signature will cause a delay. We retrieve applications from the post office box every day but we cannot stand in line to get mail that requires a signature. Additionally, we have sometimes found that mail that receives special treatment from the Post Office is more likely to be put to the side or temporarily misplaced. Because we receive regular first class or priority mail from almost anywhere in the United States within three business days, there is no reason to use a special mailing procedure.

32. I have an old application form that has a later deadline. Will you accept this?

No, we only accept applications filled out on the current form and postmarked by April 1.

33. Why is the Fund so insistent about the application deadline?

Each year the Fund receives thousands of inquiries and hundreds of completed applications

postmarked by April 1. In order to make decisions about grants by July, the members of our initial selection committee have to review these applications as promptly as possible. Then, the applications that proceed to the next level have to be sent out for review by additional reviewer trustees. They may want to conduct telephone or in-person interviews with the applicants. Then summaries of the finalist's applications and interview reports have to be prepared before the annual selection meeting. A cutoff date is necessary because it is impossible to restart the process to consider late applications. We decided that a postmark was the fairest way to set the deadline, since most applicants do not have extra resources to pay for express delivery.

34. Can I send in the application sheet and personal statement by the April 1 deadline and send the other parts (such as recommendations and transcripts) separately?

We urge applicants to send all the materials and copies at the same time, as it is extremely difficult to match things that arrive separately. If parts cannot be matched or arrive late, your application may be considered incomplete or the reviewers will not be able to evaluate your application because some documents are missing.

35. I sent in my application on time, but I sent it to an old address I had for the Davis-Putter Scholarship Fund and it was returned to me. Can I do anything about that?

Resend us the entire package, including the postmarked envelope with the wrong address, by first class mail. If it arrives in time to go out to the reviewers, your application will be considered.

36. Will I be penalized if I do not have three copies of all the application materials and if it is not put together in three identical application packets?

Your application may be rejected as being incomplete and the reviewers will not consider it due to missing documents. We will not copy material for applicants.

37. Can I submit other material to show my work or activities?

Yes. We welcome a reasonable number of articles, photographs, writings or other materials that will help us evaluate your work and qualifications. You should include copies of this material in each of the three application packets. Keep in mind that the reviewers may not be able to play videos, DVDs, CDs, tapes, etc., so it is better to describe this type of material rather than to include it.

38. Can I have my application material returned to me?

We are unable to return materials so please do not send any documents or photographs that cannot be replaced.

39. I have included a precious videotape of my activities with my application. It is my only copy. Can you make an exception and send it back to me?

Sorry, we are unable to accommodate your request. Do not send us any material that you need returned. Send us only copies that we can retain or just describe the material without sending it to us.

40. My computer won't print out the application from the website because of computer or printer problems. What can I do?

There are several alternatives. Without having to spend any money, you can use the equipment at your local public library or your school, if you are currently enrolled. Another alternative is to make a trip to a quick print shop, like Kinko's, or a computer center, where it should not take more than a few minutes on their equipment to print out the application.

41. How will I know if you have received my application?

If you want to be notified that your application has arrived, for a small fee you can obtain a "Delivery Confirmation" form from the clerk at the post office. This form does not require a signature and will enable you to confirm when your package was delivered. Do NOT use "Signature Confirmation".

42. I am going to be moving around over the next few months. What mailing address, telephone and email should I put down on the application?

You will want to give us the address and phone numbers where we can reach you during May or June, since that is when we may need to contact you for an interview or supplemental information. If you are uncertain where you will be during that period, you might give us the phone number and email address of a family member or friend we can contact and who will know your whereabouts. Of course, you will also want to make certain that you give us your permanent address and email so we can reach you in July, as that is when we notify applicants of our decisions.

For information about completing our fill-in PDF form, [click here](#).

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## PHOTOGRAPHS

43. Do I need to send you three copies of the photograph?

No. The photograph is not circulated to members of the selection committee. Photos of

successful candidates are used for publicity purposes, such as on the website and in our annual report. We only require one photo, placed in an envelope with your name clearly marked on the back of the photograph and on the outside of the envelope. Do not use staples or paperclips on the photograph.

44. Why do you require a photograph?

We include the photos of successful grantees on the website and in our annual report. We want to show our donors the real faces of the students we support.

45. Can I use a photograph of me and my friends at a party or demonstration?

The photograph should be a high resolution, color portrait-style photo of you alone printed on photographic paper. If you don't have one like that, you should be able to have one taken inexpensively at any store that prepares passport photos. We cannot accept low resolution digital photos or photos printed on plain paper.

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## PERSONAL STATEMENT

46. Is my personal statement about whatever I choose to tell you?

Your personal statement must describe your activism, including the activities and organizations with which you are or have been involved. We are also interested in learning about your perspective on social change. As long as you have covered these topics, you can add anything else that you feel would help the trustees in their decisions although we ask that your statement be no longer than approximately 1,000 words.

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## TRANSCRIPTS

47. How do you want the transcripts submitted?

We do want to see your official transcript, but the transcript does not have to be in a sealed envelope or sent to us directly from the school. In fact, we prefer to receive a certified transcript that has been provided directly to you, the student. In that way, you can make the two additional copies to include with your application packets. If you receive the transcript in a sealed envelope, you may open it to make the copies.

48. Do you want me to submit the transcripts of all of my undergraduate work, even if I am now attending graduate school?

Yes.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

49. Who should I ask to write a letter of support?

The most helpful letters generally come from people who are able to describe your contribution to the progressive movement because they are also involved in that work.

50. Do you want each of my recommenders to send you three copies of their letters of support?

You can tell the persons you ask for recommendations that the Fund accepts letters given directly to the student for inclusion in the application packet. If the recommender wants their letter to be confidential, they can do that by placing the letter and two copies in a sealed envelope and giving the envelope to you to include in your application packet.

51. One of my recommenders is out of the country and won't be back until after the deadline. Can I submit this one late?

We would suggest that you find a different recommender and submit the completed package on time. If the recommendation arrives after you submit your application, you run the risk of the letter not being placed in your file in time for the evaluation.

52. I want to submit a recommendation from a professor/activist who now lives abroad, but the mail there is very slow and I am worried that it won't arrive in time. Can it be faxed to you?

No, but a signed letter can be faxed or scanned and emailed to you and you can include three copies in your application.

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## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

53. Can I still get a scholarship even if I have a financial aid package that includes loans to cover my tuition and expenses for the coming year?

Yes. The trustees will consider granting a scholarship that will reduce the amount of loans that a student must take out for the year.

54. I have a full scholarship for this year, but I need a grant to help me pay off the loans I took out last year. Can I get a scholarship for that purpose?

No. Scholarships can only be for education and living expenses for the current period of enrollment.

55. Why are you asking for a 12 month budget, when I will only be attending school for 9 months?

Our scholarship grants are for educational and living expenses only for the period that you will actually be attending school between this July 1 and next June 30. By knowing your living budget for the full year period, we can determine the portion of living expenses you will need for the period in which you are enrolled.

56. I will have car expenses for only six months. How do I handle that?

Even though the number "12" is already showing in the Months column in No. 19, it can be changed to reflect the actual number of months for the expense, and the subtotal will reflect the number you enter. You can also use the three blank lines at the bottom of the living expense section for items that don't fit in to the preprinted categories.

57. Why are you asking for so much information on my parents and family in Nos. 12-15?

We look at the individual financial circumstances of all applicants, and the circumstances of the family of origin are often a major factor - for better or for worse. While we ask all applicants to provide us with a full picture of their families, in general no family contribution is expected if the applicant is 23 years old as of January 1, working on a post-undergraduate degree, married, or supporting dependents. If there are special circumstances that affect your family relationships or contributions, report this in Nos. 14 or 15.

58. What are FAFSA and SAR?

FAFSA is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. It is available at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>. The information you provide on your FAFSA is verified by the US Department of Education which then prepares a Student Aid Report (SAR) that calculates your financial need (including the total cost of your education) by determining your expected family contribution and your eligibility for a federal grant. This report is then forwarded to the schools you indicated for determination of what other financial aid (federal, state and private) you may be eligible to receive.

59. Why do you want to see the FAFSA and SAR?

The information on these forms gives the Fund a uniform way to assess the applicant's financial need. We consider this information, along with the financial information requested on our application form, to determine financial need. Although our primary focus is on the justice work applicants are doing, it is also important that we understand your financial situation.

60. What if I haven't received my SAR yet?

If you filed your FAFSA in January, as they recommend, you should have received the SAR before the April 1 deadline. FAFSA claims that the turn around time is 4-6 weeks but it is usually much quicker. If you haven't received the SAR by April 1, include your FAFSA with any corrections you made when you returned it, and mail us a copy of the SAR immediately after you receive it.

61. What should I do if FAFSA has sent a SAR but I had to make corrections and send it back to them and I don't receive the corrected SAR until after the deadline?

If you had to make corrections and return the SAR and have not received it back by the deadline, include copies of your FAFSA and SAR with the corrections in your application packet.

62. Do I have to submit the original of my SAR?

We don't need the original. Three copies of the printout will do.

63. What should I do if I am not eligible for US federal financial aid?

You should go to the FAFSA website and print out the FAFSA and Dependency Worksheets (available at [HYPERLINK "http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/worksheet.htm"](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/worksheet.htm) \t "\_blank" <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/worksheet.htm>) Fill them out completely and attach them to the application. Applications that do not include a copy of the SAR, or a completed FAFSA if not eligible for US federal aid will not be considered. You should also submit documentation verifying your income and your family income.

64. I have just arrived at the line for the "Amount requested from the Davis-Putter Scholarship Fund." The difference between my expenses and my available funding is \$2,000. I want to ask for \$8,000 because I plan on using my savings for future years in college.

We look at the funding available for only one year because we cannot predict whether a student will get scholarships or funds from other sources in future years. If you enter an amount requested that is greater than the difference between your expenses and available funding, you should include an explanation.

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## RENEWALS

65. Are grants renewable?

Yes. However, you must submit three copies of the new application package by the April 1 deadline. Numerous grantees have been supported for more than one year. However, renewals are not automatic. You must continue to meet the criteria of the Fund and your application will be considered in the same way as the others we receive.

66. I received a grant last year and am applying for a renewal. Do I have to submit new recommendations and a new personal statement?

Yes, the Fund finds the letters from the recommenders very helpful in assessing an application. The letters and personal statements for renewal applicants should focus on the most recent activities and perspectives.

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## APPLICATIONS IN ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

67. What if I am in prison, or know someone in prison, who is unable to access the internet?

We provide printed copies of the form and instructions for applying to those who are incarcerated. Please send us the complete address of the prisoner by email or send a stamped envelope addressed to the prisoner:

Davis-Putter Scholarship Fund  
Post Office Box 7307  
New York, NY 10116-7307

68. What if I am vision impaired and unable to read the PDF form?

Contact us by email about alternative format applications.

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## NOTIFICATION OF DECISIONS

69. When will I hear from the Fund about my application?

Applicants will be notified of our decisions by the end of July.

70. Is there someone I can call or who can call me to advise me of your decision?

Award letters are mailed to successful applicants. Others receive notification of the decision by email. We do not accept phone calls about scholarship decisions.

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## CHANGING PROGRAMS OR STATUS

71. I have been notified that I have received a Davis-Putter scholarship. If I change my school or program, can I transfer the grant to the new one?

Grants are issued for the school and program listed on your application. If you need to make a change, contact us in advance of making that change by using the contact information you received with your award letter. We will advise you as soon as possible whether the grant can be transferred.

72. What will happen to my grant if I change from full-time to part-time?

The amount of your grant is based upon the enrollment status listed on your application. If you change from full-time to part-time, your grant will be reduced. Unfortunately, we are unable to increase the amount of your grant if you change from part-time to full-time.

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## COMPLETING OUR FILL-IN PDF FORM

73. I can't fill in the application form on my computer. What could the problem be?

The most frequent cause of problems with interactive fill-in forms is not using the latest version of the Adobe Acrobat reader. For the interactive application form to work properly, you need to have Acrobat Reader, version 6.0.2 or later. You can download the latest version of Acrobat Reader for free at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>.

74. I have filled out the application form on the screen. Why can't I save a copy on my computer?

The application is an interactive PDF form. It can be completed using the free Adobe Acrobat Reader and printed out. Unfortunately, Adobe requires computer users to purchase

the full Acrobat program if they want save interactive PDF forms. If you only have Acrobat Reader and not the full program, you won't be able to save a copy on your computer. You should print out a copy for your records.

75. I am sure that I filled in the amounts for the different items, but now they have turned into zeros. Do you know why this is happening to me?

This can occur if you have typed in the dollar sign (\$) in front of the number. Try just typing in the amount in numbers without using the \$ or any other non-numeric character.

76. Can I e-mail the application form to the Fund now that I have filled it out on-line?

No. We do not accept any part of the application by e-mail. You will want to print out the application form and assemble your personal statement, transcripts and letters of recommendation. Mail the original and two copies of all of those documents to the Fund, together with the required photo, by the April 1 deadline. You should make an extra copy for your own records.

77. Can I fill out the application by hand if I can't or don't want to fill it out on the computer?

Yes. Simply print out a blank form. You can then print or type in the information requested. If you print out a copy of the interactive form, a few lines may have \$0.00 already printed where you will need to put in a different amount. Simply cross out or blank out the \$0.00 and put in the correct amount.

78. My tuition in No. 19 is different for each of the three terms I will be attending school. How can I report this?

You can report one term on the Tuition line and use the blank lines (below Books) to report the other terms. Similarly, if you have the same tuition for fall and spring and a different amount for the summer, you can report the two regular terms on the Tuition line and the summer term on one of the blank lines. If you don't have the space, you can calculate the average of the tuition you will be paying for each term and place that amount on the line next to Tuition. In either case, let us know what you have done in No. 29 or by attaching a note.

79. How do I enter a one-time expense that won't be repeating?

If it is an extraordinary education expense, such as fees or costs of study abroad or a special project, report it in No. 20 and not in No. 19. If it is a living expense, such as a one-time moving expense, use the blank lines below Medical/Insurance and place a "1" in the Months column. The correct amount of the one-time expense will now be included as

part of your total expenses. You will also want to give us an explanation of the expense in No. 29 or by attaching a note to your application.

80. If I have too many loans, repayments and other grants to fit on the number of lines allowed for those items, what should I do?

If you have more items than the spaces provided Nos. 21, 22, 23 and 24 you can combine the amounts of the excess items as part of the last Amount entry and write "Combined" as the Source. Attach a note explaining that you have done this or include the explanation in No. 29. It is extremely important that the totals for Nos. 19-25 are correct so that we get an accurate picture of your financial position.

81. No matter what I do, I just cannot get the form to work correctly. Can you help me?

If the fill-in form does not seem to be working correctly, simply print out the application and fill it in by hand.

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