

## **5 reasons to contact your financial aid counselor**

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sopanews@tulane.edu



Katie Swan, assistant director of financial aid at SoPA, meets with graduate students in-person or online to help navigate financial aid applications, aid offers, course changes and student loans. (Photo by Andrea Sagnard)

Navigating financial aid can be a daunting task. That's why the Tulane School of Professional Advancement (SoPA) aims to ease the process for all SoPA students with an in-house financial aid counselor.

Katie Swan, SoPA's assistant director of financial aid (and fellow SoPA alumna), brings first-hand understanding of the SoPA student experience and is dedicated to helping students navigate the financial aspects of higher education with clarity and confidence.

We asked Katie to share five ways a financial aid counselor can support you. Here's what she had to say:

## **1. Help with Financial Aid Applications**

Your counselor can guide you through applying for financial aid, including discounts, grants, loans and scholarships from both Tulane and outside organizations. They'll also make sure you understand the eligibility requirements.

## **2. Understanding Your Aid Offer**

Not sure what your financial aid offer means? Your counselor can break down each part—grants, scholarships, loans, and more—and walk you through how to accept or decline them.

## **3. Making Adjustments**

If you need to request an adjustment to aid or are changing your course load (like adding or dropping classes), your counselor can explain the effect those changes may have and help make updates to your financial aid.

## **4. Staying Eligible (Satisfactory Academic Progress)**

To keep your aid eligibility, you'll need to meet certain criteria such as maintaining a minimum GPA and completing attempted classes. Your counselor can explain the policy, check where you stand, and guide you if your good standing is at risk.

## **5. Student Loan Guidance**

If you're borrowing federal loans, your counselor can answer questions about loan limits, interest rates, repayment options, and ways to avoid default. They'll help you understand how borrowing now can impact your future.

Your financial aid counselor is a resource designed to simplify the process and ensure you have the support you need. SoPA graduate students are encouraged to reach out to [Katie Swan](#) SoPA undergraduate students should reach out to [Ternell Smith](#). They can help you review your aid, ask questions, or plan for the upcoming semester. For more information on financial aid resources, visit the [Tulane SoPA Financial Aid website](#).