CATAWBA COLLEGE
Established in 1851

Scholarship.
Character.
Culture.
Service.

2013-2014 SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE APPEAL FOR INDEPENDENT STUDENT

Student Name: _____ **Student ID#** _____

Email: _____ **Home/Cell Phone**_____

This appeal is a request for a review of special circumstances that you feel may change your financial aid eligibility. Professional Judgment refers to the school's authority to make adjustments to the data elements reported on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) so that the Department of Education can recalculate the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The EFC is the number that the school uses to determine a student's eligibility for need based financial aid. The school does not have the authority to make direct adjustments to the EFC and can only change data elements that may change the EFC. The Catawba College Financial Aid Office requires that you provide certain documents to support your claim of special circumstances. The professional judgment process is an extensive process that requires a thorough review by financial aid staff to determine what, if any changes maybe appropriate based on your appeal. It is a time intensive process that includes the following steps:

1) The financial aid staff will determine if your appeal meets the basic criteria for further review.
2) If the basic eligibility requirements are met, the file will then be reviewed to determine if all required documentation has been submitted. If additional documentation is required the student will be notified via email.
3) Once we have received all of the necessary documentation we will first verify the accuracy of the information initially submitted on the FAFSA.
4) Once we have ensured the accuracy of the initial FAFSA information, we will then evaluate the appeal, make appropriate changes to the correct FAFSA file, and submit those changes to Department of Education.
5) The Department of Education will then recalculate the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and the student's eligibility for need based aid.

PLEASE NOTE:

If we verify the current FAFSA and there is information that was estimated or reported incorrectly **the corrections may result in an EFC that is actually higher than what your current records indicate.** Therefore, the student may have received aid they never would have qualified for had the FAFSA information and the EFC been correct prior to the appeal. The student will lose any financial aid they weren't actually eligible for unless they demonstrate eligibility after a professional judgment is approved and then applied.

ALSO KEEP IN MIND:
Even if the Professional Judgment process results in a lower EFC, the change may not be enough to generate eligibility for need based financial aid and an increase in the financial aid award.

IMPORTANT POINTS AND DATES

- Appeals submitted after December 1, 2013 may require copies of 2014 W-2 and/or 1099 forms and may not be reviewed until a 2013 IRS Tax Return Transcript can be obtained.
- Applications submitted after March 1, 2014 must include a 2013 and a 2014 IRS Tax Return Transcript.
- **We recommend you complete your current award requirements & accept any current financial aid that you need to use to satisfy your bill.** Due to the nature of the Professional Judgment process your request may not be completed before the payment deadline. You must satisfy your semester bill even if your Professional Judgment application has not been reviewed or finalized or a Hold may be placed on your registration.

STEP 1- Explanation of Special Circumstances

Provide a detailed letter of explanation regarding your current situation that you are asking us to consider. Please remember to include applicable dates and any documentation supporting your circumstance.

STEP 2- Special Circumstance & Required Documents

Complete the section below that corresponds to your circumstance. **NOTE the documentation required for each situation**.

SITUATION (Check the box for your situation)	**REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION** (check if included)
☐ You and/or your spouse had a **total loss of full-time employment for at least 6 weeks in 2013.** ____ Check here if the loss of employment was due to disability or federally designated natural disaster Name of person unemployed:_____ Their relationship to Student:_____ Number of weeks unemployed in 2013 to date:_____	___ Copy of 2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript and W-2's * ___ Employer's written notice of termination of employment ___ Copies of most recent pay stubs for all 2013 employment ___ Document unemployment benefits & amount received ___ Document all other sources of income (taxed & untaxed) ___ Attending doctor's statement of disability ___ Document date disability/disaster caused unemployment ___ Documentation of employer disability payments ___ Documentation of Worker's Compensation ___ Document Official Declaration of Natural Disaster status
☐ You and/or your spouse had a **total loss of untaxed income or benefit.** Benefit Lost: ____Unemployment ____Social Security ____Child Support ☐ Other: _____ Last date benefit received _____	___ Copy of 2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript and W-2's* ___ Benefit provider's notification of loss of benefit ___ Document amount of benefits received in 2013 ___ Copies of most recent pay stubs for all 2013 earnings ___ Document all other sources income (taxed & untaxed) In addition (as it applies) ___ Document unemployment benefits & amount received ___ Court documents verifying date of loss of child support
☐ You and/or your spouse had an **unusual one-time income reported on your 2012 IRS Tax Return.** ***Note:** Income used towards discretionary expenses may not be taken into consideration as a reason to adjust aid eligibility.	___ Copy of 2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript and W-2's* ___ Copy of original 2012 1040 IRS Tax Return including all schedules/forms and any 1099's. ___ Documentation of source of income ___ Signed and dated statement indicating how the one time income was used along with supporting documentation.
☐ You have already filed your FAFSA and since that time: ☐ **You separated/divorced.** ☐ **Your spouse has passed away.** **Date of occurrence** _____	___ Copy of 2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript and W-2's* ___ Copy of court documented separation/divorce decree And/or Documentation of separate residences. ___ Copy of spouse's death certificate or obituary
☐ **Other:** ***Note:** The Financial Aid staff will review your circumstance to determine if it is a viable situation for a professional judgment.	___ Copy of 2012 IRS Tax Return Transcript and W-2's* ___ All applicable documentation to support your circumstance.

*** How to Obtain a Tax RETURN Transcript from the IRS.**

Online request at **www.irs.gov**: Following these steps a paper Tax Return Transcript will be mailed to the specified address within 5-10 days. :

1. On the main page under Tools, click "Order a Tax Return or Account Transcript"
2. Click "Tax Return Transcript" in Section 1 then click "Order a Transcript"
3. Enter tax filer's SSN, DOB, and Address (must match tax return exactly) & click "Continue"
4. In the "Type of Transcript" field, select "Return Transcript" and then the year

Telephone Request: Automated: 1-800-908-9946 ▪ Live person: 1-800-829-1040 OR Visit your local IRS Office

STEP 3- Additional Required Information

Complete this section to the best of your ability.	Student	Spouse (If Applicable)
Estimated 2013 income earned from work		
Estimated 2013 US income tax paid		
Estimated 2013 unemployment benefits		
Estimated 2013 other taxable income and benefits		
Estimated 2013 untaxed income and benefits		

STEP 4- Complete Verification Worksheet

Print and complete the Independent Verification Worksheet. This worksheet can be printed from the Catawba College Financial Aid Office website at www.catawba.edu/finaid Select the link for "Forms and Applications" and select the 2013-2014 Independent Verification Worksheet. Print and complete the form and return it with this appeal and your documentation to the Catawba College Financial Aid Office.

Signatures

Each person signing below certifies that all of the information reported is complete and correct. The student and one parent whose information was reported on the FAFSA must sign and date.

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____

SPOUSE SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____
(If Applicable)

WARNING: If you purposely give false or misleading information in an attempt to obtain federal financial aid, you may be fined up to $20,000 and/or incarcerated.