Below are examples of packaging policies of two universities whose policies are available on the web: The Metropolitan State College of Denver (the MET)\(^1\) and Connecticut College.\(^2\) According to the MET packaging policy, students meeting eligibility criteria are ranked. Funds are awarded to those with the highest eligibility for aid programs in the following sequence until all funds are exhausted:

1. Federal Pell Grants
2. Federal and state work-study
3. FSEOG
4. Federal Perkins Loans
5. Colorado Student Incentive Grants
6. Colorado Student Grants
7. Estimated Federal Family Education Loans

Connecticut College claims to distribute funds in an equitable and consistent manner by which financial need, once established, is constructed stepwise according to the following program priority order, until all need is met:

\(^1\)http://www.mscd.edu/admission/finaid/handbook/package.html.
\(^2\)http://oak.conncoll.edu/admin/finaid/policies.html.
1. Federal Pell Grants
2. FSEOG
3. Federal work-study
4. Loans (Federal Stafford, Perkins, or Connecticut College)
5. State grants
6. Connecticut College Scholarships

The Department of Education Federal Student Aid Information Center suggested yet a different order of layering:

1. Pell Grants
2. Other non-federal sources of aid: scholarships, military benefits, state aid, etc.
3. Federal work-study
4. Loans: Stafford, then Perkins, then PLUS

Across the three layering methods, the Pell Grant is the foundation upon which all other aid is layered. In fact, this appears to be the case in general, according to the Department of Education Federal Student Aid Information Center. In the MET policy, work-study funds are used before FSEOG grants are considered. Connecticut College, conversely, attempts to provide FSEOG grant aid prior to turning to work-study funds. Both turn to loans only after these three resources have been exhausted or deemed inappropriate for the student’s level of need. Both programs resort to state grants only after “self-help” (i.e., loans) have been considered. This is somewhat different from the scheme outlined by the Department of Education, which implies that state aid should be applied prior to the use of loans. It is presently not possible to gauge the extent to which these two college policies are typical of other universities. Nor is it possible to estimate the extent to which universities adopt the layering strategy articulated by the Federal Student Aid Information Center.