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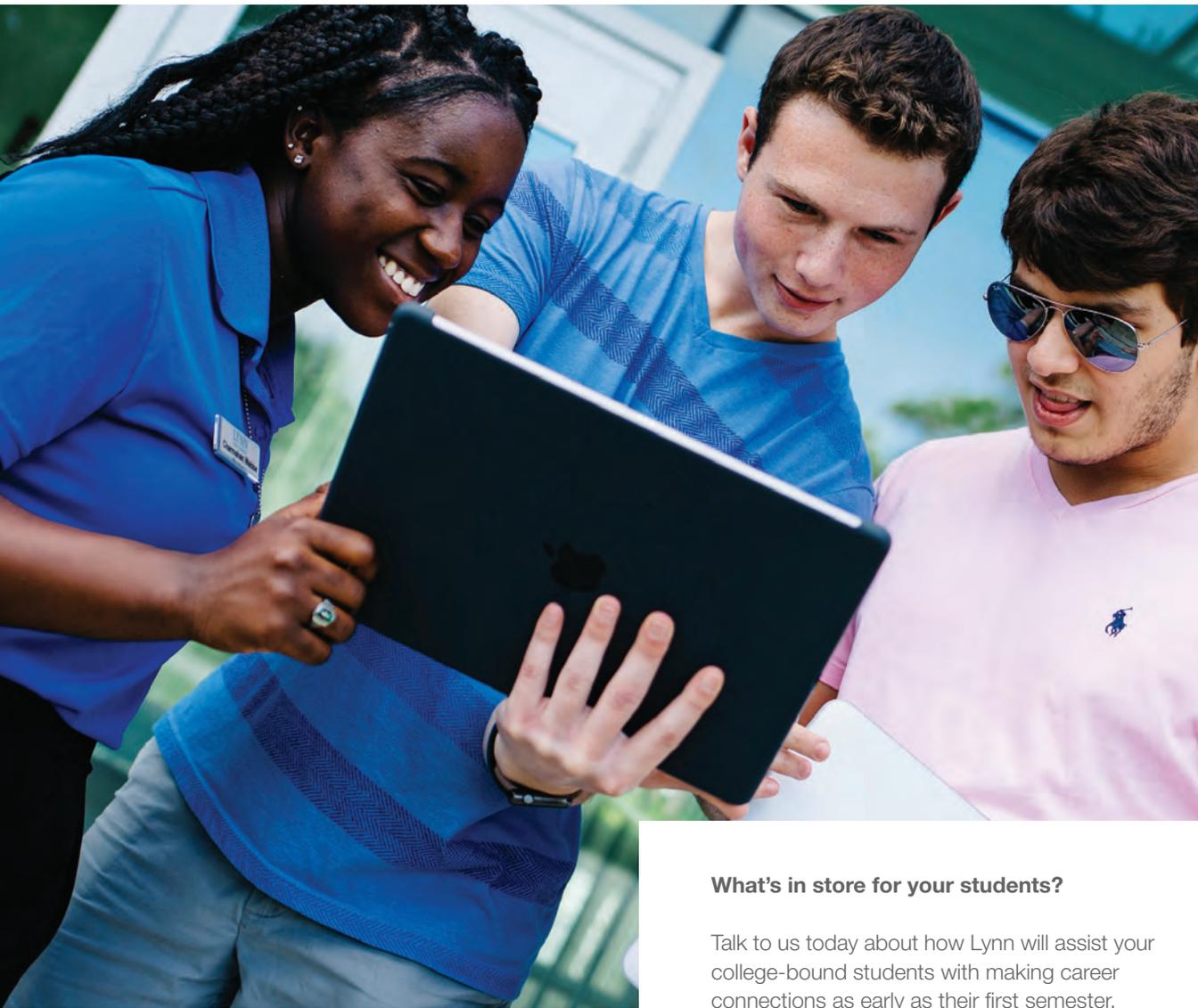
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## Dear Counselors

We recently had Signet Research conduct a study on the Readership of our Fall 2016 issue. This information is always valuable to us as it gives us feedback on how the magazine is being read and used. The survey showed that each copy of LINK for Counselors was being read by an average of 2.9 Counselors. This brightened my day as currently we send 25,000 print copies out per issue and an additional 19,000 digitally, so this shows we have a readership of more than 127,000 readers per issue.

We offer the magazine free so if you are sharing your copy with other Counselors (or you are a Counselor that had the magazine shared with you) we encourage you to sign up on our website at [www.linkforcounselors.com](http://www.linkforcounselors.com) and get your own free copy. Signing up ensures you will continue to get the magazine next school year as we update our list annually and drop subscribers that haven't renewed within a two-year period.

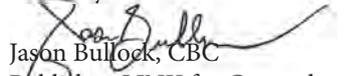
The survey also asks Counselors around the country what topics they would like to see covered in future issues of LINK for Counselors. Based on this feedback, we put together the content for this issue and will pursue relevant content for future issues. Counselors around the country indicated they would like to see more articles on helping their students with SAT/ACT prep, Financial Aid and general Counselor Development.

With that in mind, we have a slate of 19 great exclusive articles in this issue on topics that should be of interest to you. Articles covering should your students take the SAT or ACT, is taking the ACT the easy way out, how to help stressed students develop positive coping skills, the College Essay dilemma, Money Myths, helping your students write their first resume and much more are included. The table of contents on pages 6-7 has the complete line-up for you.

Lastly, we ask for your help. Is there a program being used in your school that will benefit other Counselors? Have you written something for parents that could use wider distribution to your Counselor counterparts around the country? If so, please let us know as we offer you a platform to share your voice with a larger audience of Counselors in all 50 states who might benefit from the sharing of this information.

Thanks again and have a great Spring and look for our next issue in October 2017. In the interim, contact me anytime with feedback or other needs.

Sincerely,

  
Jason Bullock, CBC  
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# Anesthesiologist

## Life in the Operating Room

By Dr. Chuck Tullius



Life in the operating room is a team effort with the anesthesiologist as its captain. There are many components involved in making sure the patient is safe, comfortable and cared for in the manner in which he/she is expecting. The general public, as well as some physicians in other specialties unfamiliar with anesthesiology, think that the anesthesiologist simply, “puts me to sleep”. I tell people, “Anyone can PUT you to sleep. It’s KEEPING you asleep and waking you up that’s the tricky part!”.

Anesthesiologists are physicians who have gone to four years of medical school and survived a year’s long internship comprised of clinical rotations in internal medicine, surgery, cardiology and time in the Intensive Care Unit. What follows is the residency in anesthesiology. It is three demanding years of training in the care and anesthesia of adult, pediatric, obstetric, cardiac, neurologic and pain management patients. At the end of those eight years, after having passed the three standardized exams needed to grant any physician a medical license, the anesthesiologist must then pass a rigorous written exam and then a very stress-provoking oral exam in anesthesiology. Out of all the tests the anesthesiologist must take along the way, it is that oral exam—the “Final” per se, which is the most difficult. Some anesthesiologists opt to specialize in one of the numerous branches of the specialty. Most of those “subspecialties” also have their own certifying exam.

The end product is a Board Certified Anesthesiologist. Finally ready to go out into the real world, the newly minted anesthesiologist enters the arena in which the training is over and the time has come to assume the role as the physician who is responsible for the total

care of the patient from his/her arrival at the hospital until he/she leaves the recovery area.

A typical day begins around 6am when the anesthesiologist begins evaluating the day’s surgical patients to make sure they are in the best condition they can be to have a smooth uneventful course in the operating room. There is a misconception that anesthesiologists have little interaction with the patient prior to entering the OR. Nothing could be further from the truth. We have only a few minutes with the patient to gather all necessary information, plus instill confidence in the patients (and their families) that they will have a proper anesthetic course. After the day’s scheduled surgeries are completed, the anesthesiologist is “on call” for emergency operations. Depending on the size of the hospital, the number of on call nights, weekends and holidays varies from every third night to just a few times per month.

The typical income of an anesthesiologist varies depending on the types of cases performed and the frequency of on call nights, but generally is between \$300,000-\$700,000/year.

Are your students ready to begin their journeys to become an anesthesiologist? If so, they should start studying science and math and get ready for the ride of their lives! After having practiced anesthesiology for over 25 years, I can assure them it is worth all of the sacrifices along the way.

*Dr. Chuck Tullius is a Board Certified Anesthesiologist practicing in Savannah, Georgia. A graduate of Jefferson Medical College and The Mercy Hospital of Pittsburgh Residency in Anesthesiology. Dr. Tullius can be reached at [drchucktullius@premedassistance.com](mailto:drchucktullius@premedassistance.com).*

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# Counseling for College Readiness

By Dr. Jennifer Gigliotti



As a secondary college counselor, it is incumbent upon you to provide students with well-rounded college readiness counseling. Students need support in three critical areas as you prepare them for post-secondary success – they must receive not only sound guidance in academic planning, but also assistance in financial planning and support for their social emotional readiness as well.

## Academic planning

The first cornerstone of counseling for college readiness is academic planning. The National Association for College Admission Counseling's State of College Admission annual report repeatedly tells us that the top two factors affecting admissions decisions for college admissions officers are students' grades in college preparatory classes and the strength of their high school curriculum (Clinedinst, Koranteng, and Nicola, 2015). As a counselor, it is your role to advance students' planning, preparation, participation and performance in a rigorous academic program that connects to their post-secondary goals.

We know that the rigor of high school course work is more important than parent education level, family income or race/ethnicity in predicting whether a student will earn a post-secondary degree (Adelman, 1999, 2006). How can you best prepare your students academically for college? Encourage them to challenge themselves in advanced courses such as AP, IB, and dual-credit, and ensure that your advanced courses meet rigorous standards.

As one of the most common advanced courses in high schools across the country, Advanced Placement courses have been shown to increase students' college readiness. There is strong evidence that participation in AP strongly correlates with student achievement, college readiness and college completion. Students who take AP exams are more likely to enroll in a four-year college (Chawjewski et al, 2011), have higher grade point averages their first year of college and have higher retention rates for their second year of college (Mattern et al, 2009). Additionally, students who have successfully passed AP exams are more likely to graduate from college within four years and less likely to drop out or transfer to another university (Morgan and Klaric, 2007).

Thoughtful academic planning at the middle school and high school level is critical. Encouraging students to challenge themselves in rigorous coursework and providing appropriate academic support for them is essential to students' academic readiness for college.

## Financial planning

The second foundational element in preparing students for college is financial planning. Often our focus on the academic planning piece overshadows all other aspects of college readiness counseling, however, without adequate financial planning students may not be able to matriculate.

How can you best prepare your students financially for college? It is vital that you educate yourself on how students can meet their financial

need. There is much to learn, but you don't have to be the expert. You simply need to have a solid understanding and you need to identify financial aid experts who can assist you as you guide students in their financial planning.

Begin to develop your own knowledge by understanding the FAFSA process. The Federal Student Aid office provides a tremendous amount of resources through their website ([studentaid.ed.gov](http://studentaid.ed.gov)) including the Financial Aid Toolkit and also a number of video tutorials that are posted on YouTube. Utilize these resources to educate yourself and your families. You might also consider hosting a FAFSA Completion night for families to encourage all families to fill out the FAFSA, regardless of their income. You can arrange to have FAFSA experts on hand to help answer individual questions by contacting local college financial aid offices, your state's higher education department, and/or the Federal Student Aid Outreach Team.

Encourage students and families to call financial aid officers at prospective schools to help them begin the conversation, ask questions and receive clarifications directly from the institutions. It is important for students to understand that they may need to identify a variety of sources of aid including federal student aid, grants and loans in order to meet their entire financial need. Lastly, identify local resources where families can turn for specialized help as needed.

### **Social emotional readiness for college**

The third key element in a student's readiness for college is his or her social emotional readiness. Students must possess a variety of academic behavior skills and aptitudes including self-management, self-advocacy, and general "soft skills" necessary for success.

It is critical that we develop these essential academic behavior skills in our students throughout their K-12 years so as to best prepare them for college and career success. Are we teaching self-management skills? Do we provide opportunities for students to direct their own actions with decreasing adult supervision? Do we teach our students how to cope with stress? Are we teaching our students to self-advocate? Have we empowered them to speak up for themselves, make their own decisions, learn how to get information, and find support

when needed? Many of our students struggle during their college transition, because they lack the self-management and self-advocacy skills that are necessary for success. Additionally, students must have a level of mastery of a number of soft skills such as communication skills, teamwork and collaboration, adaptability and perseverance, problem-solving, and basic study skills that are essential for success in both college and careers. Many of our students are deficient in basic academic behaviors that are critical for post-secondary persistence and success.

How can you best prepare your students for social emotional readiness for college? Ideally these are skills that would be taught throughout your students' K-12 experience, however, there are still important interventions that can occur late in a student's secondary career to assist with the transition to college. Utilizing a variety of formats including one-to-one counseling, focused lessons during advisory period, or possibly offering a "bridge to college" summer program, you can assist your students in developing some of these skills before they matriculate.

Help students understand that there will be an increase in academic rigor that they need to manage their personal time and deadlines, and that they must ask for help when needed. Seeking out support structures within the college is NOT a sign of weakness or an indication that they are not "college material." Guiding students to identify sources of institutional support in advance can be a first, strong step toward their independence and self-advocacy. Furthermore, students need



to understand the importance of sound academic planning, so they are carefully selecting courses each semester that fulfill necessary requirements for graduation and placing them on a more affordable 4-year trajectory.

Finally, the importance of college match as it relates to social emotional readiness cannot be overlooked. A student that may thrive at a small liberal arts college might seriously flounder at a large-state school. Take the time to understand where students are in the continuum of both academic readiness and social emotional readiness in order to assist them in developing informed college lists.

## Conclusion

As secondary college counselors, it is incumbent upon us to provide students with well-rounded college readiness counseling. You must be prepared to offer students sound guidance in academic planning, financial planning and support for their social emotional readiness as well. As a secondary college counselor, you play a key role in preparing your students in all three essential aspects of college readiness.

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*Jennifer Gigliotti is the Associate Dean of the Glasscock School of Continuing Studies and the Executive Director of the Center for College Readiness at Rice University.*



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# An Office in the Sky – Pilot Careers

By Jill Meridith

The *2016 Boeing Pilot and Technician Outlook* projects a need for more than two million commercial airline pilots, maintenance technicians and cabin crew between now and 2035, so there's never been a better time to study for a career in aviation and as a professional pilot.

For most travelers, the commercial airline pilot with his epaulettes and cap embody the image of a professional pilot, calm and capable, ensuring safe travel for thousands of people each year. It's a glamorous life of travel, and the pay can be significant with the average commercial pilot salary in 2015 hovering just above \$100K, according to the 2015 Bureau of Labor Statistics. But there are certain challenges as well - Pilots must earn a flight time to earn a place as captain in the left seat of an airliner. Hours can be long, and pilots are away from home for much of the time. But for those who make their home in the skies, the rewards far outweigh the disadvantages.

The demand for pilots doesn't stop with the major airlines. There are many other pilot careers that offer personal fulfillment, opportunity to combine other career paths with flight, and pilot positions where the primary advantage is earning that required flight time to become eligible for more advanced positions.

One such time-building pilot position is that of banner tower. Resort towns and major events often include fly-overs, advertising local hotspots or supporting philanthropic causes with an airplane towing a message banner. Aerial photography, map making and crop dusting are also common time-building activities. Generally, these positions don't

offer the highest pay, but the view is unbeatable.

Flight instructing is another common method of building flight time. One of the unusual aspects of flight training is that instruction is generally conducted by a pilot without a lot of flight time rather than seasoned professionals. You'll find flight instructors working at local fixed-base operators and educational institutions around the country, as well as working for airlines to train pilots for specific aircraft in order to earn the "type" rating required to fly a specific aircraft.

Cargo pilots enjoy some perks airline pilots do not, like more time at home. Carriers like FedEx and UPS employ cargo pilots to move mail from point "A" to point "B" on a regular schedule, so generally those flying these routes will be based close to home and will have a good deal of predictable time off. For those flying cargo internationally, long periods of time away from home may be the norm, but layovers allow for time to enjoy exotic locales.

For those who are seeking adventure above all else, flying charter flights can take passengers and pilots to little known destinations of luxury and beauty. Popular charters fly to tiny islands inaccessible by other means, private homes and secluded businesses where most people just dream of visiting. It's definitely a life for the spontaneous since charters are generally unscheduled and duties can require several stop-overs and long stays.

For more serious-minded pilots, law enforcement positions marry flight with fighting crime. Border patrol, helicopter fugitive pursuits, riot control and search-and-rescue operations enhance the ability

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for police departments to tackle crime effectively.

Corporate pilots represent yet another category of career options and, unlike airline pilots, flights are generally unscheduled as flights are planned according to a company's daily operational needs. Corporate flight departments can be relatively large, like Wal-Mart's which includes 22 corporate jets and accommodates about 23,000 of the company's employee flights each year, to smaller corporate flight departments that may operate only one or two aircraft. Corporate pilot positions may entail duties in addition to flight, such as scheduling, cleaning and stocking aircraft and even aircraft maintenance. Corporate pay rates vary greatly from one operation to the next and are based on a variety of factors including the type of aircraft flown and pilot's experience, but generally, pay levels are lower than the major airlines.

Perhaps the most exciting – certainly the fastest growing – sector of the industry is that of unmanned flight. Drones have dominated the news recently, and new legislation has opened the door to operations around the nation. The advantages of unmanned flight in terms of costs and flexibility have been recognized in a variety of fields – from delivery services to government surveillance operations. The advantages of unmanned aircraft use is in its infancy but the potential is virtually unlimited.

Every pilot's career takes a different trajectory and some may serve in more than one of the categories listed as a pilot's career progresses. A typical career path may include flight instructing for a couple of years followed by flying a regional jet until earning enough hours to be eligible to fly for the major airlines. Each pilot position has specific requirements in terms of licenses, ratings, certifications; understanding the difference between licenses, ratings and types can be a little confusing and the terms are often used interchangeably. But in technical terms, a license grants a permission (like a driver's license) while a certificate shows that one has fulfilled certain requirements.

### **There are six types of U.S. pilot certificates, sometimes referred to as grade.**

**Sport pilot:** limited to one passenger, prohibited from flying at night, above 10,000 feet or in Class B, C or D airspace

**Recreational pilot:** limited to flights of less than 50 nautical miles from the departure airport, and, like sport pilots, can only fly during the day and in limited airspace

**Private pilot:** the most common certification prohibits flying for commercial purposes just as sport and recreational pilots, and allows for broader training and permissions when paired with appropriate ratings

**Commercial pilot:** allows for paid flying and transport and involves additional proficiency in flying complex craft

**Flight instructor certification:** requires the pilot to have an understating of advanced flight education and teaching concepts; not all pilots choose to secure this certification

**Airline transport pilot (ATP) certification:** the highest certification allows for the most privileges while also requiring the most completed flight time as well as the highest level of medical certification. In general, pilots must have 1,500 hours and be at least 23 years of age to be eligible for the ATP although a restricted ATP with lower requirements is available for some pilots, like military or students graduating from approved universities

Ratings reference what aircraft a pilot can fly and how - the how being VFR or visual flight rules as opposed to IFR or instrument flight rules that require the pilots to have training allowing them to fly in bad weather, at night or in any scenario that requires instrument flight. Ratings cover aircraft category (airplane, rotorcraft, glider, etc.), class of aircraft (single or multi-engine) and type (this indicates type of aircraft including weight).

So whether you're driven by salary or service, travel or time off, the many options available to qualified pilots can provide a career some only dream of. The career path for pilots can be challenging but the rewards are out of this world. If you think a flight career is for you, start with an observer flight at a local FBO. Also, be aware of the life choices that can prevent you from achieving your aspirations for pilot career. Consider a collegiate flight program that will provide flight skill as well as the added security of a bachelor's degree and, in some cases, an added advantage when it comes to flight time and ultimately earning the ATP.

**Resources:** [www.pilotratings.com](http://www.pilotratings.com); [www.AOPA.org](http://www.AOPA.org); [www.FAA.gov](http://www.FAA.gov); [www.alpa.org](http://www.alpa.org)

*Jill Meredith is a graduate of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, where she studied communications. She currently advises prospective students regarding career options. A long-time resident of Daytona Beach, Florida, she writes for a variety of publications.*

# Health Professions 101:

How to Assist Students in the Pursuit of Careers in Medicine and the Health Professions

By Elizabeth Drucker



You probably know that careers in the health professions are some of the hardest to pursue. Even when your students are very bright with stellar grades, standardized test scores, and everything else that medical schools search for in their applicants, they will undoubtedly experience much difficulty on the way there. Medicine is one of the hardest paths to take and your students will fare better if they attempt to sort out their goals before they reach the first day of college. There are several options for students who are interested in and seem to have an aptitude for science and math; it's never too early for your students to start exploring the fields of medicine that they might want to pursue someday. The more your students work to find that "ideal" career for them, the more secure they will feel in their futures. Choosing this path is anxiety-provoking for even the most relaxed students that rarely seem fazed by anything. Your students have to profess their dedication to a certain career because each class in the pre-health curriculum builds on the last one and also, students in medical school, for example, will have to take the MCAT (Medical College Admissions Test), which is like the SAT used for the medical school admissions process.

There are several different medical professions that require a doctoral degree (several years after college), and sometimes with a residency, which is a period of two to six years in which newly-graduated doctors will work in a hospital to gain experience as part of licensing requirements in all states. Psychiatry requires four years after medical school and surgery can require even more than six if the student decides to pursue specialized training in the form of a fellowship.

• **Allopathic medicine (MD)** = This is the traditional medical doctorate degree in which four years is required. Usually, but not always, students begin with two years of basic science classes in subjects like: histology, pharmacology, embryology, physiology, and anatomy. The classes in these two years are usually taught lecture-style, but medical schools have been recently experimenting with different class styles. For example, students are being introduced to more clinical skills earlier in the medical school curriculum, in which they learn how to relate to and interact with model patients, and other interpersonal skills that are important to hone in medical school. In the last two years of medical school, students will work on the inpatient wards in the hospital and usually spend some time in medical offices in the surrounding community. Clerkships include: surgery, internal medicine, psychiatry, neurology, pediatrics, and obstetrics/ gynecology, among others.

To find out more about obtaining a MD education visit: [www.aamc.org](http://www.aamc.org)

• **Osteopathic medicine (DO)** = Students who graduate with this degree have essentially the same degree or qualifications as MD graduates, with the exception of osteopathic manipulations and a more common view of preventative and holistic medicine. According to the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine: the degree "emphasizes helping each person achieve a high level of wellness by focusing on health promotion and disease prevention." Additionally, they view the patient as a "whole person." They do the exact same work as MDs,



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except for the different philosophy they are taught. DOs go to osteopathic medical school for four years and then complete an internship and residency, just like their MD counterparts.

To find out more about obtaining an osteopathic (DO) education visit: [www.aacom.org](http://www.aacom.org)

• **Podiatrist (DPM) =** According to the American Podiatric Medical Association, podiatrists “diagnose and treat conditions of the foot, ankle, and related structures of the leg.” The organization also states that podiatrists attend a specialist podiatric medical school for four years, along with three years of a hospital residency, which is all completed after the undergraduate (college) education. They often work with patients who are diabetic or have failing feet for a number of other reasons.

To learn more about podiatric medicine visit: [www.apma.org](http://www.apma.org)

• **Dentistry (DDS) =** According to the American Dental Association (ADA), dentists are able to use “cutting edge” technology, empower their patients, educate patients and community members about healthy dental behavior/hygiene. They also mention that dentists are often able to “be their own boss” in a solo practice. This is a good option for your students who work best as an individual as other medical professions require

more collaboration with other individuals. Dentists study the teeth and the tongue, often being in a prime position to diagnose cancer and prevent it from getting worse. Another important aspect of dentistry to note, is that with the aging population, people are seeking out dental services more than ever. Dental school involves four years; to get into dental school, there are a set of prerequisites that include the need for students to take the DAT (Dental Admissions Test). Upon graduation from dental school, it is possible to further specialize in orthodontics (braces) or endodontics (dentists that specialize in root canals).

To learn more about dentistry visit: [www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org)

• **Veterinary medicine (DVM) =** Veterinarians (or vets) are doctors specialized in taking care of animals, such as cats, dogs, horses, and other large animals. Your students who go this route will need to have stellar science grades and experience (such as volunteer) with animals. They will have to take the MCAT or the GRE (Graduate Record Exam) as well. Students will complete four years in the DVM program to be eligible to apply for a veterinary license to practice in the United States.

To learn more about veterinary medicine visit: [www.avma.org](http://www.avma.org)

## Tips on getting into health professions programs:

There are plenty of strategies your students can apply now to provide for later success:

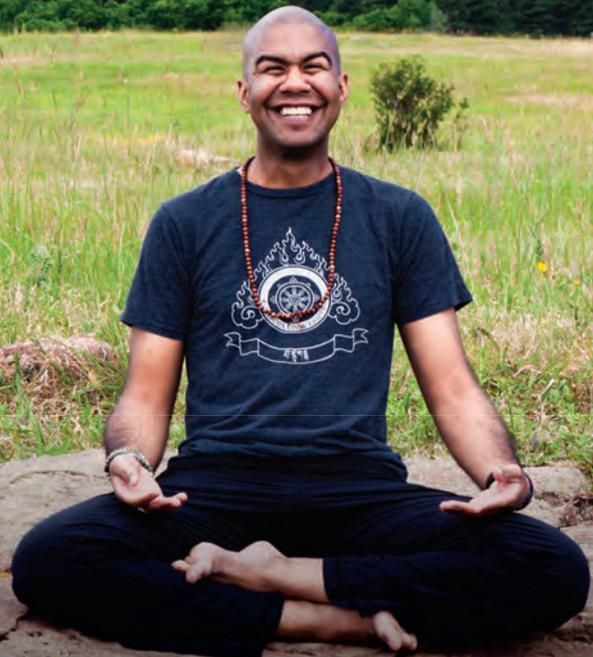
- (1) Encourage your students to take as many honors/AP science and math classes as possible. They should also get to know their teachers well so they can help when it is time to apply to college.
- (2) Shadow the fields the student is considering. You might want to build up a database of practitioners in the community who currently work in the medical field and wish to help high school students interested in the health professions.
- (3) Suggest that your students volunteer in a hospital, animal shelter, or anywhere else he/she will be exposed to all sorts of people.
- (4) Encourage students to practice their research and study skills.

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- Visual Arts
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# How To Help Stressed Students Develop Positive Coping Skills

By Dawn Marie Barhyte



It's no secret that being a teenager today is tough. Stress is a huge part of their lives. But we can help our students keep their cool when pressures mount and cope successfully if we teach them positive coping skills. By doing so, we will empower students so they develop the confidence and personal power to succeed.

According to Dr. Michele Borba, the author of *Unselfie: Why Empathetic Kids Succeed in an All About Me World*, "adolescence by nature is a stressful time-but we have also never seen such heightened levels of stress in our youth". She adds that it's a crucial time to make sure kids learn ways to cope and keep stress at bay. Not only will it improve their mental health and well-being but also have a positive impact on their academic success and general outlook on life. Kids who can handle stress are more likely to be empathetic so they can reach out to help or stand up for others. When stress mounts, empathy wanes so kids have to turn off their feelings for others and go into survival mode. She says if a child doesn't have positive ways to relieve stress they often resort to destructive ways of coping such as abusing alcohol and/or drugs, or smoking. The trick is to find what works to help a teen to cope. No one technique works for all kids, so it's vital to find what helps each student and keep encouraging him or her to practice it until it eventually becomes a habit.

Everyone has different stress triggers, so we need to help teens identify theirs and then explore techniques so they can relax and de-stress. Because stress is a normal part of life, we cannot rid our lives of it, but we can cope with it successfully to

avoid the potential negative consequences. Stress management gives us tools to reset the alarm system. Over time, stress can lead to serious health problems so it's vital to take action and not wait until stress has a negative impact on our health, relationships or quality of life before taking action. Unexamined sources of stress can lead to a very unhappy and unhealthy life. We can help teens start practicing a range of stress management techniques today, before stress undermines their health. Help students notice which techniques make them feel better and encourage them to add them to their stress relief repertoire. Recent brain research shows that developing positive coping skills can improve learning while increasing well-being. In fact, every time teens are challenged, their brain comes up with new ways to deal with stress, allowing them to grow.

## **Dr. Borba offers some ideas that teens say have worked for them in the past:**

- Yoga
- Keeping a Daily Journal
- Exercise
- Being with Friends
- A Minimum of 8 Hours of Sleep
- Listening to Music
- Deep Breathing or Mindfulness

## **Here are other shortcuts to stress relief and developing coping skills:**

**My Favorite Thing:** Encourage teens to learn something new, discover an activity that is meaningful and brings them joy! Express themselves creatively through doodling, collage, art, and writing. Sign up for something just for fun! Read your favorite blog, cruise Facebook or surf the web.

**It's About Time:** Encourage students to simplify their life by learning better ways to manage time, avoid overscheduling, and get more done with less stress. Prompt them to make a schedule and prioritize, think about what is most important and do that first. As they move down their to do list their stress levels will fall. Remind them to schedule some me-time.

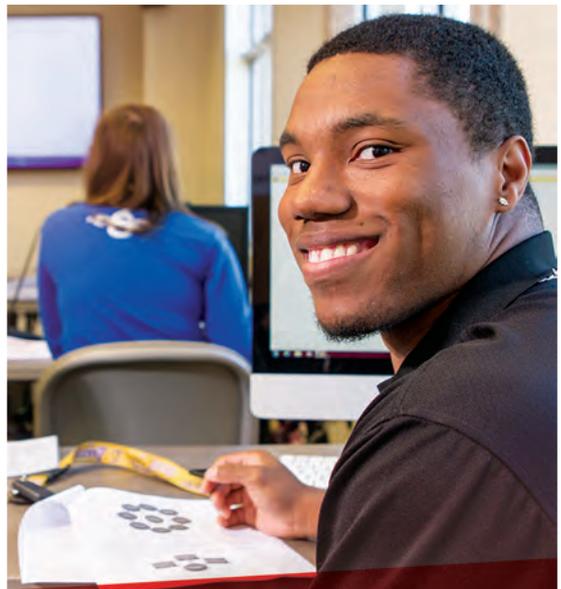
**Get Connected!:** Close, warm bonds counteract stress; teach kids to know when to ask for help, people who have a strong support system of family and friends manage stress better. Encourage teens to surround themselves with those who accept them as they are and who love them unconditionally. Encourage teens to let go of stress by acting as a soundboard.

**Attitude Adjustment:** Show students how to take charge of their internal dialogue, to try out new ways of thinking; when they first start to worry try to stop those thoughts or let go of things they cannot change. Learn to say no and practice acceptance. Help teens focus on strengths and assets, notice and be grateful for positive traits, skills and abilities. Help students think positively but realistically. Encourage teens to try to look at changes in their life as positive, not a threat. Practice reframing negative thoughts like things could be worse, instead of I can't do this, I will do the best I can and that is good enough.

**Be Your Own BFF:** Encourage students to practice self-compassion and treat themselves like they would treat a close friend or family member, give themselves a soft place to land when feeling stressed. When feeling stressed, tell them to pamper themselves.

**Get Hooked On Helping:** Show teens how to practice random acts of kindness and doing for others by volunteering or helping friends. This creates a win-win solution creating positive energy that is long lasting, thereby reducing stress.

*Dawn Marie Barhyte is a widely published freelance writer and former educator who continues to touch lives of young people through her writing.*



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# How to Help and Recognize Your Students Who May be Introverts

By Jim Paterson

There are probably a number of students you worry about in your school, especially some entering the confusing and challenging stage where they are making the transition to being an adult. More than likely one or two stand out.

Becky is an excellent student, smart and resourceful, very much an individual and very funny, with a dry sense of humor. She's good both in math and art – pretty much anything she does academically. But she is very quiet – hardly can be heard when she speaks, and highly unlikely to contribute.

Mark works hard in bursts, but is just an average student, though he regularly shows sparks of being very bright. Speaks with a few friends, but happy to be alone. He doesn't offer much in class and rarely asks for help from a teacher, although he often needs it.

How do two students with potential but without big personalities or much charm or social skill (who also appear to lack an interest in others or in changing) navigate this period during these difficult years and plan for a move into college and a career – or adulthood and the life they want. The good news for them is that there is increasing attention given to introverts, including the popular work of Susan Cain, whose TED talk relates to the challenges these students have and whose book (*Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*) became a best seller in part by focusing on how we can help quiet, young people adapt. She's also started a quiet schools network to help educators improve their connections to introverted students.

She says her work has made an impression. "I've heard from students feeling that they are unfairly

docked for not meeting current standards of class participation," she notes in an interview. "I've heard from teachers who now, in many cases, are required to make a majority of their lessons centered on group work." She notes that a student's understanding of material and engagement in a class can be determined in creative ways rather than traditional participation verbally. She says schools should not set "social standards" for the number of friends a student needs, should allow for quiet time in the day and in how classrooms are designed. Educators should think about how transitions and how change is difficult for some students. Counselors, she notes, can be champions of those concepts and there are other resources online about how.

## What about the next step?

To prepare students for their eventual move to college and a career, Latoira Rodgers, the college access coordinator at Greene County Middle School in Snow Hill, NC, says the process can start early with counselors helping introverts find strengths. She says some of her quieter students have found themselves comfortable in a special STEM program the school offers, but also in extracurricular activities, where they can be in a smaller group, perhaps with others who are similar. They also may have an opportunity to lead, work with others or take on more responsibility, all valuable experience and valuable in college or job applications. She says she has found other small-group experiences for them and keeps them in mind when she needs help for a task requiring a student to be responsible – giving a school tour to a new student, for instance, or helping younger classmates.

Marsha Pinto, a 21-year-old advocate for introverts who founded Softest Voices in 2013, says opportunities like these were a boost for her. “Being involved in something that interested me or where I was invested really helped me make a name for myself and show others that I was more than just the shy girl”, she says. “I find that introverts really show through their strengths and talents when they are given a chance to do so.”

When it comes to working with introverts late in high school, Sophia Dembling, author of the book *The Introvert’s Way: Living a Quiet Life in a Noisy World*, says that counselors should first be certain to give equal attention to them since they are often less visible and don’t advocate for themselves. She says the college application process obviously requires every student to take responsibility, but sometimes educators simply overlook quiet students. “I think, foremost, counselors need to be aware that they might be dealing with an introverted student, then help that student identify his or her specific strengths,” she says, noting that a quiet student may not have had conversations about his or her interests or talents as often as others. Counselors also might encourage them in situations where they need others’ assistance but are intimidated – getting someone to complete a recommendation or meeting with a college representative, for instance. They may be entirely capable of handling every step, but just need encouragement or some direction, she says.

## The college scene

“Perhaps they also can help the student really think about the college environments in which they feel the most comfortable. A party school is probably not the best choice for an introvert. The anonymity of a large school might be attractive to some introverts, overwhelming to others. A small school may be less hectic, but the introvert might then feel more in the spotlight.” The living arrangements at a school might be important – a private room, for instance, or class size. The significance of Greek life or the types of activities offered might be worth noting. Finally, she says, a counselor could begin the discussion about simply being in a new environment at school. “Perhaps they would be more comfortable attending school where they could live at home or in their home community. They might be fine with a new environment, however, and prepared to adjust without being any more extroverted, but should feel comfortable about how they will live more quietly than some at college.”



Pinto stresses that it is simply important for counselors to be available to even the most introverted students. “Teachers often assume that it’s not worth talking to or getting to know the quiet students because they don’t have anything to say hence they don’t have potential,” she says. “There are a few teachers, who will take those few extra steps to the back of the classroom to connect with the quiet student rather than judge them from a distance. We quiet students may not say much at first, but, trust me, we appreciate them making the effort.”

*Jim Patterson has written broadly on career exploration, academic success and other education related topics for several national and trade publications. He was a school counselor and was formerly named “Counselor of the Year” in Montgomery County, MD, a large Washington, DC-area district. He is currently a writer for many educational publications and websites based in Lewes, DE.*

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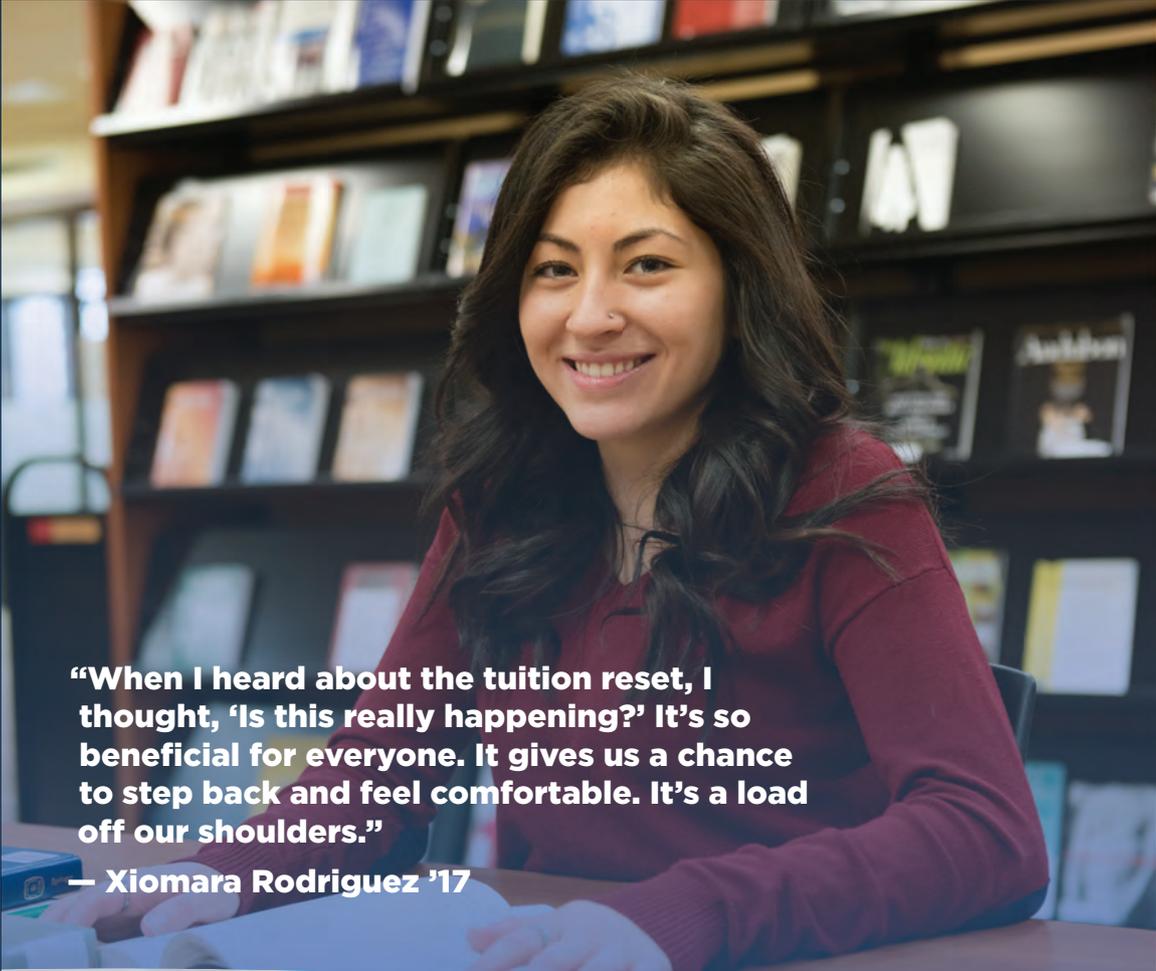
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# Money Myths

Debunking some of your students' misinformation about college financial aid

By Jim Paterson



One of the many roles you fill as a counselor involves helping students with college exploration and applications, and one of the more complicated yet crucial parts of that process involves understanding and applying for financial aid. Even middle school students and their parents should have some understanding of how they might pay for college.

Experts say there are more options than ever when it comes to financial aid, and now about 85 percent of students get financial aid, including an average of \$10,000 in grants from all sources and \$25,000 in loans, the federal government reported.

Some experts say the biggest problem for high school students and their parents is misinformation about financial aid. They think the process will be easy – or too hard. They don't think they will be eligible, or they worry too much about how to apply. They don't know when to start the process or where to go for good information. And they are often very concerned about filing the Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA), the federal form which is where the financial aid process begins.

There is a lot of information online that students and parents can access about the process, particularly from the US Department of Education, and The College Board, which produces the SAT test and AP classes and exams, also has detailed information on its “Big Futures” site. The two offer the two primary financial aid forms – FAFSA and Profile, which are used at different schools and have different requirements.

When you need to provide support, in private

conversations or perhaps in a “financial aid basics” session, counselors should explain the differences of various sorts of aid, focusing on scholarship money offered by the school, the government or others, and loans, which have low interest rates but must be paid back. They should be familiar with the basics of those programs along with FAFSA and Profile, experts say.

The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators has some good information for counselors for such a program. The federal government also has a Financial Aid Toolkit for counselors and some tips on how to sponsor a presentation to parents.

The best advice, experts say: tell families to start early, do lots of research and be practical. “I tell my clients that their goal in the financial aid process is to incur as little debt as possible and stretch whatever monies their parents have put aside as far as they possibly can,” says Diane Wilcox, a former high school counselor and school administrator in Dallas, who now advises students about the college application process.

Beyond that, says Daniel Hughes, a Harvard and Georgetown Law School graduate who taught in urban schools and now helps students with financial aid and college acceptance in the New York City area, students should keep an open mind. He notes, for example, that private schools might seem too costly but could offer enough incentives to make them the best deal, yet parents often think otherwise.

Here are some other myths you might want

to debunk with students and their families – misinformation that consultants who do this work every day hear from their clients.

**1.** We make too much money. Kiersten Murphy, president of Murphy College Consultants in Issaquah, WA, says it's one of the most common inaccurate ideas that her clients have. "I always encourage families to use a Net Price Calculator or FAFSA's forecaster to get a better idea. Certainly the only way to know for sure is to fill out the FAFSA form, which they should complete because they never know what they'll be eligible for or if their financial circumstances will change in the future from a job loss, divorce or an illness or death."

The US Department of Education agrees. Here's how they put it on a useful Q&A about the FAFSA form that counselors might share with their students: "There is no income cut-off to qualify for federal student aid. Many factors besides income – from the size of your family to the age of your older parent – are taken into account. Your eligibility is determined by a mathematical formula, not by your parents' income alone. And remember: when you fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), you're also automatically applying for funds from your state, and possibly from your school as well. In fact, some schools won't even consider you for any of their scholarships (including academic scholarships) until you've submitted a FAFSA. Don't make assumptions about what you'll get – fill out the application and find out."

Peg Keane Keough, an accountant who works with students and their families on college planning in Bellevue, WA, says often families believe if they have saved for college it will hurt chances for financial aid, which isn't true. Nor will home equity, though if they are using the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE home equity is factored in. There are several differences with the FAFSA and Profile forms related to assets.

**2.** Grades aren't good enough. "Students need to realize that need-based financial aid has nothing to do with a student's grades," says Murphy. "Grades can be an influence in merit scholarships, which is different."

There is a distinction. Some aid is based on their financial need and some on their academic performance – and some may be a mixture of

both. The federal government notes, however, that even for the need-based aid students need to keep their grades up to remain eligible. "Quite often merit-based aid is not based on financial need at all but rather rewards the strongest applicants to that school, giving them the monetary incentive to attend, says Gisela Turner, an educational consultant from Mequon, WI. "But they also may consider need."

**3.** Grades alone will do it. A good academic record helps with merit aid – and certainly with the application process – but it's no guarantee of receiving financial aid. "Many parents think that all schools offer these scholarships and that any smart kid can get them which is not the case," says Turner. A school may also require additional application essays in order to receive the merit scholarships.

"Many students applying are just like you, with fantastic grades, a resume full of unique extracurricular experiences, and other qualifications, but that does not automatically mean that they will receive merit aid. You can research a college's merit scholarship information page on their website," says Murphy.

**4.** Siblings reduce chances. They don't, says Hughes. "Some families wrongly think it's harder to get aid with multiple children in college at once receiving assistance," she says.

**5.** Financial aid will pay it all. That happens sometimes, but isn't likely. "Students are sometimes deceived into thinking that their financial aid package is the "be all" and "end all" to enable them to pay for college, says Wilcox. And Turner adds, "one of the other biggest myths is that all colleges offer scholarships".

**6.** Listed price is final word: A public state school or community college are often a good value but are not always less expensive. Experts say that students should keep an open mind, particularly if they have a good academic record and schools want them – and they have need. "Some families believe a prestigious private college requires a hefty amount of tuition that makes it an out-of-reach option given the family's budget," says Hughes. "Actually, while these colleges are often expensive, they also have the most generous grants and financial aid, meaning they can actually be the best

option for cost-conscious parents.”

**7.** FAFSA and taxes. Wilcox notes that a family does not have to complete their taxes and can use estimated information or their previous return, and can update it later. However, she says, they may find that the revisions change the formula. “They potentially are facing a rude awakening when the aid packages are adjusted to reflect actual numbers.”

**8.** FAFSA is too complex or not worth it. From the Department of education: “The FAFSA is easier than ever, especially if you fill it out online. There are detailed instructions for every question, and the form walks you through step-by-step, asking only the questions that apply to you.” There’s also a toll free number: 1-800-4-FED-AID. Families, again, should also realize the FAFSA form is used for all sorts of financial aid besides just the federal scholarships.

The entire college financial aid application process can seem daunting, but you can reassure families that they can get through it, there is support and it will pay off.

**9.** Estimated family contribution is a final figure. Experts say its not the exact amount students will have to pay. Joseph Trentacoste, assistant vice president of student services at Mercy College in Dobbs Ferry, NY, explained this to Nerdwallet, which offers a lot of information about college financing. “Although the EFC is based on dollar figures, it is not the exact amount you will have to pay for college, and it is only used as an index to determine your eligibility for federal awards. Other factors, the largest being the cost of your school, play in to the amount and type of aid you can receive,” he said.

**10.** Loan madness. There is a lot of publicity about the problems with student loan debt, probably exacerbated during the recession when students could not get jobs despite debt that was averaging about \$35,000. Remind students to be realistic and practical and carefully consider what they can afford and its value. You might remind them, also, that they’ll make nearly twice as much per week with a degree and have a much better chance of getting a job.

## Some useful Web sites

### Presidential information on college aid:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/reach-higher>

### Overviews of financial aid:

<http://www.nacacnet.org/studentinfo/articles/Pages/parentsfa.aspx>

<http://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/paying-for-college>

<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/financial-aid-awards/your-financial-aid-award-explained>

### Information about college scholarships (and search pages):

<http://www.college-scholarships.com/free-scholarship-searches/>

### Information about college loans:

<http://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/paying-for-college/student-loan?int=970708>

### Information about FAFSA:

<https://fafsa.ed.gov>

Nerdwallet guide to FAFSA

<https://www.nerdwallet.com/blog/loans/student-loans/fafsa-application/>

### Information about College Board Profile:

<https://student.collegeboard.org/css-financial-aid-profile>

### Aid calculator:

[www.ReachHigher.gov](http://www.ReachHigher.gov)

### College Board and Tuition Coach Estimated Family Contribution calculators:

<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/paying-your-share/expected-family-contribution-calculator>

<http://www.tuitioncoach.com/collegecost/index.jsp>

*Jim Patterson has written broadly on career exploration, academic success and other education related topics for several national and trade publications. He was a school counselor and was formerly named “Counselor of the Year” in Montgomery County, MD, a large Washington, DC-area district. He is currently a writer for many educational publications and websites based in Lewes, DE.*

# Management Information Systems:

## The Intersection of Business and Computing

By Dr. Victor Perotti



Like many others, the world of business has become increasingly more interwoven with technology. As the pace of technological change continues to accelerate, individuals with the ability to keep up with such innovation become that much more in demand. Collectively, both trends have presented an opportunity for those capable of both working with new technology and communicating its utility to others.

This new dynamic has led many students to explore Management Information Systems (MIS) as a possible program of study. A degree in MIS will teach students to understand and design the processes and systems used by today's growing and evolving businesses. Students learn how to improve organizations' operational efficiency, add value to existing products, engender innovation and new product development, and help managers make better decisions, among much more.

### MIS's Place in Today's World of Business

A large part of the MIS coursework prepares students to work with advanced enterprise systems, which are increasingly being employed by established organizations, such as Google and Intuit, and new entrepreneurs and start-ups alike. They become familiarized with software like SAP, which gives students hands-on experience monitoring complex business processes and practices, and also provides new levels of insight into the data. Those who graduate with a degree in MIS are uniquely prepared to utilize such technology effectively in a business or technology setting.

Having an awareness and acumen of such technology

has made recent MIS graduates enticing to many cutting edge companies as potential employees. MIS graduates are well suited for a career as a Business Analyst, Project Manager, Data Analyst, Business Intelligence Specialist, or Systems Analyst; considering their knowledge of both business and computing.

Companies like Google, Toyota, IBM, JP Morgan Chase, Intuit, Wegmans, and Space-X have noticed and seek out MIS graduates for such roles. Established industries, including Banking and Financial Services, Healthcare, Management Consulting, and new ones like Mobile have recognized the value of graduates who have an understanding of both business and technology that stems from an MIS degree. Their inherent understanding of both technological and organizational systems makes MIS grads a good fit for a myriad of fields.

### Who are MIS Students?

Occupying an advantageous space in-between business and computing, MIS students are those who understand both worlds. MIS Students often are the ones that communicate between the 'very technical people' and the 'very managerial – or business oriented – people'. For those reasons it is not surprising that over the course of their studies, a number of Computer Science students will come to realize they would prefer a career path that deals more with people. Once discovering MIS, a less commonly known track, many remark that they wish they knew more about options of its ilk before entering college.

Students who study MIS are the people that feel comfortable communicating between the "very

technical people” and the “very managerial – or business oriented – people.” To facilitate this, programs like those at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) strive to impart both an understanding of the core business tenets of finance, marketing, and accounting, as well as an increasingly important understanding of today’s technology. Not to mention a willingness and ability to pick up new technical skills.

MIS students that get involved in entrepreneurial activities can be characterized as the one most comfortable wearing multiple hats. According to graduates from the program, such as Deniz Kaya (class of 2010), that’s largely why MIS students are seen as unique.

“[MIS students] have an interest in being technical, but also enjoy being client facing,” Kaya noted. “They want to be a part of both conversations.”

### **The Future for MIS Programs**

The success of MIS graduates has drawn increasing interest for such programs at both the undergraduate and graduate level. This is significant as the field continues to attract more and more talented educators and knowledgeable students.

The prospects for such graduates, as indicated by the Department of Labor’s Occupational Outlook Handbook, has been increasingly bright in recent years. Job outlook for ‘Computer and Information Systems Managers’ for instance has a 15% projected growth between 2014 and 2024 (a rate that is much

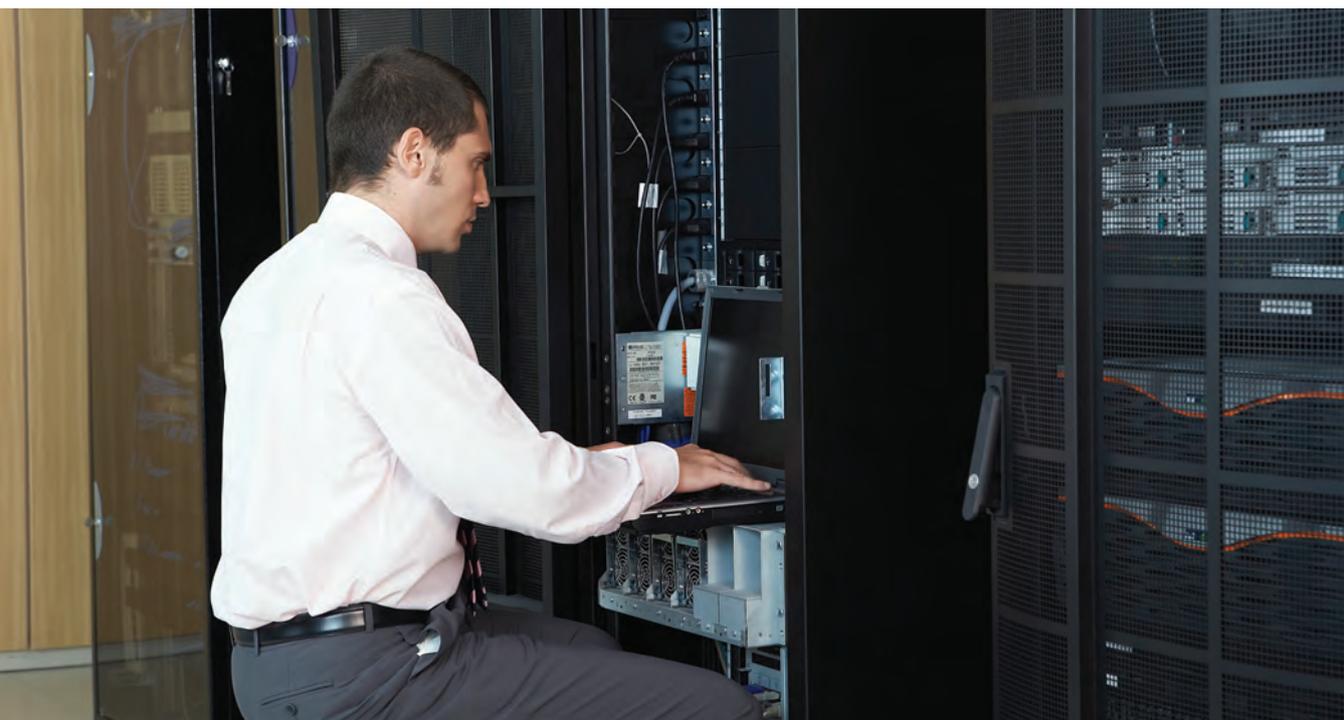
faster than average). The reported median pay in 2015 was also \$131,600 a year.

With students seeing so many fruitful job opportunities based on their understanding of programming, data analytics, and “Big Data,” colleges like RIT are adapting to put even more of a focus on such skills. As educators, we need to have a technological versatility which echoes the one we wish to impart to students.

It is vital for MIS students to not be afraid of initially feeling uncomfortable while learning about new technology. As one of the important traits for them to have is a comfort with continuing to learn.

Kaya pointed out that many MIS students have a desire to stay up-to-date with the latest technology, as being comfortable and capable of doing so makes MIS majors well-prepared for an ever-evolving tech-oriented world.

*Dr. Victor Perotti is a Professor and Department Chair of MIS, Marketing and Digital Business at Saunders College of Business at Rochester Institute of Technology, recently ranked #10 nationally for MIS programs. Dr. Perotti’s research focuses on identifying opportunities for and the integration of digital business, as well as enterprise systems and networks. His most recent publication, “Rise above the crowd: A quasi-experiment in journalistic event coverage using mobile phones and billboards,” was published in the Journal of Digital and Media Literacy. Learn more about MIS at RIT at [saunders.rit.edu](http://saunders.rit.edu)*



# Tips for Financial Aid Conversations

Important subjects that your students should discuss with their college financial aid advisor

By Casey Bolduc

As longtime participants in, and close observers of the student financial aid landscape, we understand the crucial role Financial Aid Administrators play in helping students prepare for financing their education. Here are some key points to consider when discussing the financial aid process with older high school students.

Most college financial aid offices employ advisors who understand the subject of student finance inside and out, and who are happy to help current students and prospective students navigate the path to paying for college. They are in the business of trying to help students get the money they'll need to attend their institution - so it's to your students' advantage to seek out their expertise.

It always pays to first cover some background information about the college financial aid process. That way, having already covered some of the basics, students can ask better questions of their financial aid advisor, and focus on the subjects about which they're still not clear.

## Here are a few basics to cover:

- With any college, it's important that students and their families complete the FAFSA every year as soon as possible after it becomes available on October 1. This is a family's only way to find out how much student loan money they are eligible to receive, and will help them determine how much they will be responsible to pay out of pocket, or borrow, for college.
- Encourage students and their families to discuss the costs of college well before senior

year, and more importantly, who is going to pay the college bills. The more comfortable a family is with discussing college finances, the easier it will be to make the important financial decisions as a family moving forward.

- Explore as many scholarship opportunities as possible. The more free aid a student qualifies for, the less they will have to pay or borrow in the end.
- Provide additional resources to help students and families through the financial aid process. For example, more information about the process of paying for college can be found by visiting [studentloanawareness.com](http://studentloanawareness.com).

## Questions students should consider asking their college financial aid advisor.

College financial aid advisors can be a college student's best ally. It's important for students to establish contact with them as early in the college financial process as possible, and to get the information they'll need by asking the right questions.

## Here are a few suggested starting points for a student's financial aid advisor conversations:

- What kinds of scholarships and grants are available for students with my interests and background?
- What sources do you recommend I check in order to find them?

- Can I have a list of preferred lenders who have a track record of lending responsibly and affordably to your students?
- Does your school offer any institutional awards for which I may qualify?
- In the unfortunate event that I have to withdraw from school for some now unforeseen reason, what's your school's refund policy?
- What kind of deadlines do I need to be aware of during the financial aid process?

*Casey Bolduc writes about Student Lending for Citizens Bank. With over 25 years experience in the student loan industry, Citizens Bank offers a range of borrowing options for credit-qualified students and their families. Point your students to StudentLoanAwareness.com where they'll find a full suite of educational resources to help them navigate the process of paying for college.*



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# The ACT as the easy way out? Not so fast.

Just when you weren't looking, the ACT has changed.

*By Evan Wessler*



Twelve years ago, I was a junior in high school on the east coast. When it came time to take my standardized college admissions exam, there wasn't a real question as to which one it would be; the prevailing mentality in my high school and geographic region was "SAT or bust". To me and my peers, the ACT was little more than an afterthought—a test vaguely associated with the Midwest, and not a serious contender for our attention. But oh, how the tables have turned.

Eight years later, the number of ACT test takers would surpass the number of SAT test takers for the first time. Parents and students—especially those in the wealthier, better-informed, and admittedly more neurotic pockets of the coasts—became savvy about the college admissions process, and learned that the ACT was a viable alternative to the SAT after all. Murmurs of the ACT as the “easier” test circulated, attracting the attention of students who found it difficult to navigate the SAT’s vocabulary and more puzzle-like math problems. More recently, the arms race between the ACT and the SAT’s College Board has accelerated, with both testing organizations securing statewide testing contracts, and in some cases even “poaching” states from each other. In Long Island, NY, where my organization Method Test Prep is based, it’s now completely normal for students to default to the ACT and ignore the SAT. The debut of the redesigned SAT last year further fueled the trend, as students fearful of the unknown flocked to the seemingly more predictable and stable ACT. And then, little by little, the ACT began to change.

The first few changes were mostly aesthetic, and

while surprising in their suddenness, were relatively innocuous. Paired passages started appearing on the Reading section, and the ACT saw it fit to tinker with the number of passages in the Science section. The ACT Writing (Essay) received a makeover, but ultimately featured prompt topics similar to those administered previously. There was nothing revolutionary here. While the structural adjustments did mean there were a few new skills to address, the changes did not represent a significant departure from the ACT as we’ve known it to be.

Recent and more gradual changes, however, have made it a mistake to view the ACT as the easy way out. Especially over the past year and a half, the content of the exam has become noticeably more challenging, expanding both the breadth and depth of the skills and concepts students are expected to have mastered before college.

The ACT English section has always been extremely predictable: the grammar, mechanics, and rhetorical skills tested by the exam almost always feature identical answer choice structures, and the go-to pitfalls built into the section have been relatively consistent. There has, however, been a marked shift toward testing higher-level sentence structure. As part of its Test Information Release (TIR) service, the ACT releases only three of the six ACTs administered each year. Based on my analysis of these tests, there has been a much greater prevalence of more difficult punctuation and phrasing questions, both of which require students to have a deeper understanding of how words and phrases build sentences and affect their meanings. These questions are particularly challenging for students

whose reading is less fluid, and whose experience with more complex structures is limited. From a preparation standpoint, these questions are also harder to learn and “beat”, because mastering them requires more than recognizing a giveaway or using an easy strategy.

The ACT Math section has always tested a broad range of topics spanning pre-algebra, algebra, geometry, algebra 2, and trigonometry. On the most recent exams, the Math continues to focus on these areas, but now regularly presents more advanced topics. It is now common to see questions about matrices, asymptotes, conic sections (ellipses, not just circles), and topics in statistics like expected value and standard deviation. These are concepts that many students don't encounter until precalculus, and that some won't encounter in high school at all. The increased frequency of advanced questions has made it more difficult for top students to break the 30 mark, and has expanded the breadth of what organizations like mine must account for in their guidance of students' prep.

There isn't much new to say about the Reading section on the ACT. Though the paired passages present challenges for students who have difficulty keeping the ideas from the two passages from melding, and though certain variations on the typical question types have arisen, this section has been relatively true to form. The biggest concern for students continues to be the timing, as answering forty questions across three full-length passages and one split passage in thirty-five minutes is a tall order. Say what you will about the SAT, but you must acknowledge that the pace of its Reading section makes completing its ACT counterpart seem like sprinting through a gauntlet.

And then there's the Science, almost universally feared by students and almost universally misunderstood by parents. No, it's still not primarily a test of outside science factoids, but interestingly, the Science section has begun to more frequently test “common”, broad science concepts. Students can now expect to see multiple questions that in some way incorporate foundational principles of biology, chemistry, Earth science, and physics. That isn't to say that students should go back to their notes to prepare: most of the time, the answers to the questions can be whittled down with a combination of strategy and a little common sense. The greater concern for test takers should be the increased frequency of longer questions that require several



logical jumps between data sources (figures and tables) within an experiment. These questions can present hypothetical scenarios (some quite verbose) based on the experiments, challenging students to connect experimental results with new conditions. In all, the Science section remains a test of reading comprehension and reasoning under pressure, in which students must deal with a novel scenario. All (or at least most) of the information necessary for answering the questions is there; it's digging it out that can be tough.

Like all standardized tests, the ACT remains largely predictable. In many cases, it still features question types that are more straightforward and less abstract than those on the SAT. To assume, however, that the ACT is the cure for your SAT ills without taking seriously the recent changes to the ACT is shortsighted. While the ACT hasn't trumpeted its innovations and revisions as has its standardized testing rival, rest assured: they've arrived. It's now up to students to educate themselves thoroughly about which exam favors their strengths, and to make sure they work with the most recent materials possible so that they are fully aware of what they'll face on test day.

*Evan Wessler is VP Education of Method Test Prep. He can answer any questions you have about the SAT or ACT by e-mailing him at [evan@methodtestprep.com](mailto:evan@methodtestprep.com) or visiting the Method Test Prep website at [www.methodtestprep.com](http://www.methodtestprep.com).*

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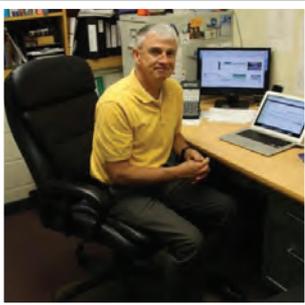
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# College counseling is only part of Len Smalling's job

By Connie Voss



*Being a counselor in a small high school in a small town requires a different skill set than being a college counselor in an inner city school. There are fewer students to contend with and fewer disturbing*

*behavioral problems to encounter, but it's also much more personal.*

The wide open spaces surrounding Nickerson, Kansas pretty much typifies America's heartland. The town was founded in 1872 and boasts a population of 1,070 people, although the sign proclaiming the population said 1,108 in the 1960s. The main street consists of a red brick pavement, a few old brick buildings, a couple of metal buildings, a restaurant and a car wash. The largest building in town is the high school at the end of Nickerson street; it's home to the Nickerson Panthers and is appropriately named Nickerson High School. Like the town, enrollment at the high school has dropped some over the last few years but it has leveled off to about 325 students for the 2016-2017 school year.

The student base is largely Caucasian. The number of boys slightly outnumbers the girls. Sports is a big deal and the football team always draws a reasonable but excitable crowd during those chilly fall nights. Although the team hasn't had a winning season in a while, they are improving. Nickerson is a slice of mid America that doesn't really change much over time while at the same time—it's

changing quite a lot.

## Getting to know you...

After spending 12 years in the navy, Len Smalling got his B.A. then his M.A. He's been a counselor at Nickerson High School for 16 years. He calls the students "my kids" because he gets to know each so well during their four year stint at the school. He often gets to know their families and he may counsel multiple teens within a family. He likes to follow the trajectory of "his kids" as they pursue their education and establish careers.

Len says, "College counseling is a small part of my job. I am the only counselor at the school and am responsible for the emotional/social well being of the students. I am also the school nurse four days a week, I'm the SIS (Student Information System) administrator and I perform other jobs as well." Since the school is small and so community oriented, many on the faculty do double or triple duty. He stresses, "We utilize our entire faculty to help guide our students. This cooperative effort is especially useful when using Career Cruising™ software during seminars. We think this is a great program to help assess aptitudes, career goals and to search for appropriate colleges. We also use IPS (Individual Plans of Study) to get students more involved in their career goals. IPS allows them to track their progress throughout their high school years and take it with them as they move on in life."

The school draws students from surrounding areas including both Sterling and South Hutchinson, Kansas. Nickerson is about midway between Sterling (population around 2,300) and South

Hutchinson (population around 2,400). The largest town in the area is Hutchinson with around 42,000 people. Hutchinson's one and only high school is populated by nearly 1,500 students annually. Some students select Nickerson because they feel the smaller size invites more personalized attention even though the bigger school offers more subjects.

Personalization seems to be the key when it comes to Len Smalling's counseling style as well. Len feels it is incumbent upon the school to serve and nurture all of its students rather than just cultivating the college bound. "We have a very good community college in Hutchinson and many students use it as a stepping stone to other schools. In fact 60 percent of our graduates will likely attend Hutchinson Community College. Others will attend various in-state colleges or universities. Some attend Ivy League schools, but the majority of our students remain in-state."

### Education, Training, or both...

The state of Kansas also realizes the value of promoting technical careers. Len explains, "Each year we have about 15 juniors and seniors who attend the Hutchinson Career and Technical

Education Academy. If they attend for two years, they can get a certificate and be very employable upon graduation. The cost of the program is covered by the state according to SB155 (Senate Bill 155)."

Another helpful decision-making tool is the annual Hutchinson Community College Career Fair that is held each October. Colleges, the military, various professions and technical schools are represented. The fair includes demonstrations so students can see first hand what a particular career may entail and how to prepare for it. Len expounds, I ask my kids, "Would you buy a house without seeing it first? Then why would you pay to go to a college or trade school without knowing anything about it? That usually gets their attention." Len also believes in comparison shopping. "I tell them to shop around and compare what is being offered at another school. I caution them not to compare private and public schools because they aren't the same."

This is the first generation who will attend a college or university for about 25 percent of the families served by Nickerson High. Len says, "Unlike years ago when families were born and raised in the community, we are beginning to have a

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more transient population. Many of our Hispanic students will be the first in their families to attend college and it is the same for many of our low income families.”

### The new wave of online classes...

The school also has a College & Career Virtual Academy. The online program is in its infancy but is growing rapidly with 35 courses being taught this semester. Thirty of the school’s students are taking both credit recovery and online classes not regularly offered in the classroom and 22 students statewide are pure virtual students. Len goes to the virtual student’s location when it’s time to administer state assessments tests. He says the school is trying to move toward a more blended mix of in-class and online courses. He notes some schools are now requiring students to take at least one online class just for the experience.

As a school counselor, Len is also a director of dreams in some respects because he is there to help thirteen year olds begin to channel their interests into potential career paths. He recounts one student this year who said she wanted to become a surgeon or a member of a state school’s dance team. He had

to point out the dichotomy of the two goals. A few years back one boy said he wanted to fix boat motors for a living. He is now a marine mechanic and makes a very handsome living with no student loan debt. Len says his main job is to try and get his kids thinking about defining a goal and career as early as possible. He explained, “You can always tweak your plan as you grow and change but it is essential to have a strong foundation in place first.”

Although Len hails from the Pacific Northwest and has traveled the world, the small town school he has chosen to work in has many rewards. “You can be more responsive and flexible with less bureaucracy, so we can react faster to the needs of our community,” he says. And then there’s that rewarding personal touch where everybody knows your name and all the kids are “my kids.”

*Connie Voss has been writing professionally for over 40 years. Her body of work includes a wide range of technical articles and human interest stories. She researched and wrote St. Thomas High School in the 20th Century an account of the first 100 years of a well-known Houston, Texas boys’ school. She writes a monthly column on advertising and marketing and assists a variety of industrial firms with their*

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# Specialized Art School vs. Liberal Arts College

Which is best for your student?

By Lee Ann Adams

The Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design (AICAD) is a membership organization representing the 42 private, independent, nonprofit, specialized art and design schools in the US and Canada. The term independent refers to freestanding institutions of higher learning - as opposed to art schools or specialized art departments within larger university settings. In our work with prospective students and their parents, art teachers, and counselors, we often encounter questions about the differences between both options.

## What is an independent, specialized art & design college, and why choose this option?

Let me begin by saying that this option isn't the best fit for all students interested in the arts. Firstly, these specialized institutions are typically small, and can range between 5,000 students to as small as 30 students. For students looking for sprawling campuses, crowded lecture halls and Greek Life, an independent, specialized art & design college will not offer these things. Secondly, for students who are not sure they want to focus on the arts or pursue a career in the arts, a liberal arts college or university would offer these students greater opportunities to explore their academic options, while still having access to limited arts instruction and facilities.

For students who are passionate about the arts, have art and design related career goals, and are eager to commit four years to the pursuit of a focused and rigorous education in support of these goals - an independent, specialized art & design college would likely be the best choice. For these students, here are

several key advantages in choosing a specialized art and design school:

- Classes are typically small and longer than the average academic course to provide adequate time for technical instruction and hands-on learning.
- The average student to faculty ratio at AICAD colleges is 10 to 1.
- Passionate faculty who are likely working professionally in the areas they teach.
- Students become part of a larger community of like-minded creative peers and mentors.
- A range of choices across areas of study/majors, with opportunities for cross-disciplinary study.
- Most AICAD schools offer significant career preparation and programming, such as career planning, internships, entrepreneurship, financial literacy, intellectual property law, marketing and branding, and general management.
- Internship opportunities are often integrated into the curriculum.
- Access to an extensive range of tools, technology and facilities, giving students the necessary technical training and practice to pursue a career in the arts.
- Extensive opportunities for students to publicly exhibit work.
- A tight-knit alumni community offers a critical creative and professional network after graduating.

## What is the difference between a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) and a Bachelor of Arts (BA)?

Students who choose to study at an independent, specialized art & design college will earn a BFA. The National Association of Schools of Art & Design (NASAD) defines the BFA as, “the professional degree (BFA) focuses on intensive work in the visual arts supported by a program of general studies . . . Students enrolled in professional undergraduate degrees in art and design are expected to develop the knowledge, skills, concepts, and sensitivities essential to the professional life of the artist or designer. In any of many possible roles, the professional must exhibit not only technical competence, but also broad knowledge of art and design, the ability to integrate art and design knowledge and skills, and an insight into the role of art and design in intellectual and cultural life.”

The BFA degree typically requires that at least 65 percent of the total course credit for the degree be taken in a focused course of study in art and design. The remaining credits will focus on studies in the liberal arts, including English and the humanities, and the social, natural, and physical sciences.

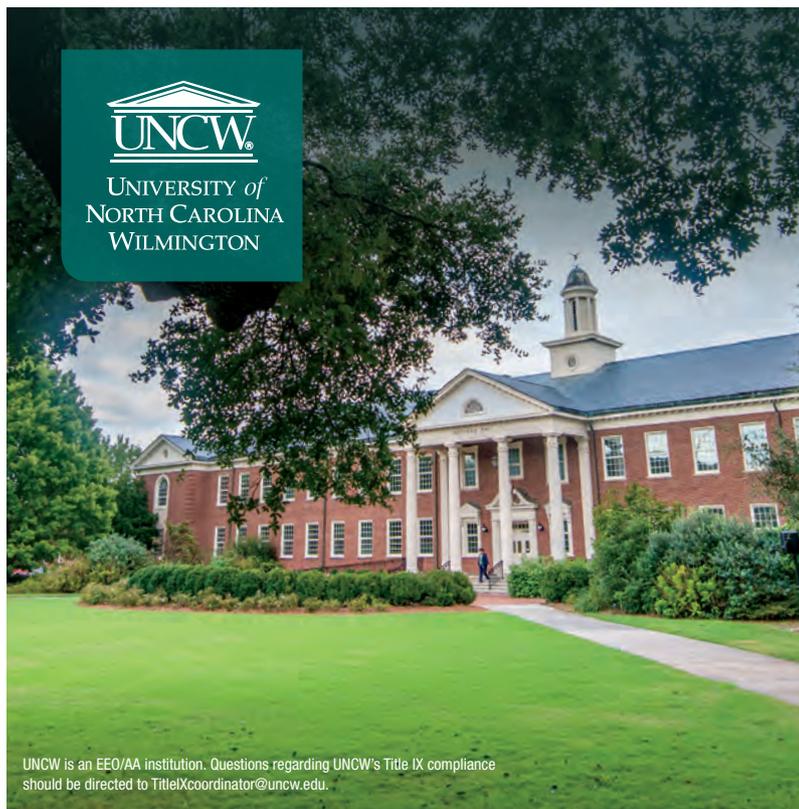
There is a common misconception that students don't receive a well-rounded education at a specialized art and design school. While students are certainly focused more heavily on their creative study and

practice, they are also complementing and informing this education with significant study in the liberal arts.

In contrast, students who choose to pursue the study of the arts at a liberal arts institution, will likely earn a BA. NASAD defines the BA as “a liberal-arts degree that focuses on the study of art, design, and art history in the context of a broader program of general study.” The BA degree typically requires that at least 50 – 70 percent of the total course credit for the degree be taken in areas outside the arts, such as English, the humanities, and the social sciences, natural, and physical sciences.

### Still can't decide?

For high school students, this choice can seem daunting. There are many factors to consider when selecting a college and the specialized art school vs. liberal arts college decision can be complex. It is a tall order to ask a seventeen-year-old student to decide what they want to study in college for the next four years, and an even taller order to ask them what they want their career to be. For every student who is dedicated and determined to practice the arts academically and professionally, there are many others who are unsure of their commitment to the arts and can envision themselves in a range of



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educational settings and careers.

Fortunately, there are opportunities for students to try out a specialized art school through pre-college programs during high school. Art school pre-college programs range in duration but are typically 4-6 weeks long and are designed to give students a real art and design college experience. Students choose an area of focus/major, live in the college dorms and follow a college-level studio curriculum with other like-minded students from around the world. This experience can help students decide if specialized art school is right for them, or if they would prefer a more academically varied experience.

Stephen Beal, President of the California College of the Arts, offers a succinct description of this intensive educational experience in an article entitled *The Art School Brand: Something in the Way We Teach*:

“Our students, regardless of their choice of major, engage in project-based learning. They learn through making. They learn integrative team-based thinking and how to build their ideas through iterative, progressive modeling. They gain empathy and an appreciation of how different disciplines bring distinct approaches to solving complex real-world problems. They learn to focus their creative ideas

and to make art that matters--not just within the boundaries of our campus, but also out in the world.”

Students interested in pursuing the arts at the college level have a hard choice to make, but if they want to follow their passion and do what they love every day, prepare themselves for the creative careers of the future, and connect with like-minded creative students on a daily basis, they should seriously consider attending a specialized art and design school.

*Lee Ann Adams is a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design and is currently the Assistant Director of Programs and Operations at the Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design (AICAD) - a nonprofit consortium of the 42 leading colleges of art and design. Her role with AICAD centers around the marketing and communications efforts of the organization, and she works tirelessly to drive enrollment at AICAD member colleges, and to build the public recognition of an art and design education more broadly. Lee Ann has been an artist for as long as she can remember, and has worked in the arts in various capacities since graduating with a BFA in 2003. She approaches all of her work creatively, strategically and passionately, and she believes deeply in the value of an arts education.*



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# Should my students take the ACT or the SAT?

By Vicki Wood



When a college admissions test makes major changes to their format, scoring scale, and assessed content, it's common advice from test experts to have students avoid the exam for at least a year while admissions officers learn how to interpret the newest data. But with the first anniversary of the redesigned SAT looming in March, many of you are likely wondering which test you should recommend this spring for your current juniors. And like so many decisions in the college admissions process, the answer is not straightforward. A student would be well advised to base this decision on research, preferences, and practice test results.

At first glance, the ACT and SAT look quite similar. Closer inspection, however, reveals some differences that may sway students one way or the other. Let's take an in-depth look at the advantages of each of the two tests, section by section:

## SCIENCE SECTION

**SAT Advantage:** No dedicated Science section

**ACT Advantage:** Charts and graphs questions are not included in the Reading and English sections

Students who are intimidated by the ACT's Science section—which is actually not a test of scientific knowledge but an assessment of reading and data interpretation skills—may gravitate toward the SAT because it does not have a dedicated Science section. Yet these students must understand that the SAT stealthily assesses their ability to interpret charts and graphs by scattering infographics and corresponding questions throughout the Math,

Reading, and Writing sections. For some test takers, this might be a disadvantage to the SAT, as it's difficult to switch gears suddenly, going from finding grammatical errors to analyzing data and back to grammar again. Students who have difficulty maintaining focus may actually prefer the dedicated Science section on the ACT.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE SECTION

**SAT Advantages:** More time per question, fewer questions, one less passage

**ACT Advantages:** Passages are easier to read (lower text complexity) and not necessarily drawn from academic fields, no questions about charts and graphs

**Other Considerations:** The ACT typically focuses more on grammar and usage, while the SAT puts emphasis on rhetorical skills

Other than the random charts and graphs included on the SAT, the SAT Writing and Language Test and the ACT English Test are nearly identical in format and tested content. The SAT has fewer questions and more time per question (48 seconds per question on the SAT versus 36 seconds per question on the ACT), and contains four passages compared to the five on the ACT. These passages contain the grammatical errors that are tested, and they are generally easier to read on the ACT; the SAT passages have a higher text complexity and are selected from specific academic formats (narrative nonfiction, arguments, and explanatory passages) and specific topics (careers, history/social studies,

science, and humanities), whereas there are no set formats for ACT passages.

Both tests assess grammar/usage and rhetorical skills, but the ACT has more questions about grammatical errors while the SAT focuses more on style, strategy, and organization. Most students prefer memorizing specific rules for grammatical questions, but there may be some who favor a test with more rhetorical elements.

## READING SECTION

**SAT Advantages:** Theoretically more time per question

**ACT Advantages:** Fewer questions, one less passage, lower text complexity, fewer vocabulary questions, no charts and graphs questions,

**Other Considerations:** The SAT has “Command of Evidence” questions whereas the ACT does not. Both tests have vocabulary-in-context questions; 8 to 10 on the SAT and 2 to 4 on the ACT.

Once again, the two tests closely resemble each other in content if you remove the SAT charts and graphs questions. Both the ACT and the SAT have a set of paired passages and individual long passages followed by ten or eleven questions. The SAT has an extra passage and thus more questions, but if you allow two minutes reading time per passage on both tests, there is substantially more time per question on the SAT (61 seconds per question on the SAT and 37.5 seconds per question on the ACT). But that’s really where the SAT advantages end. The text complexity on the ACT ranges from grade 8 to grade 13, but the text complexity on the SAT goes up to grade 16. Texts on the SAT are typically culled from the last fifty years, but the SAT is known to use passages that were written over one hundred years ago. Most students will need more time to read these complex SAT passages, thus cutting into the amount of time allowed to answer each question, so it’s difficult to say that the SAT truly allows more time per question.

New to the redesigned SAT Reading test are Command of Evidence questions, which ask students to pinpoint in the text where they found the answer to the previous question. These questions will benefit strong readers, but are more difficult for test takers with average reading skills. If students miss the first question, they are almost guaranteed

to miss the second question. In addition, the SAT has 8 to 10 questions in which the test taker must define a word in context. The ACT only has 2 to 4 of these questions, and the discrepancy may influence students with strong feelings about vocabulary to take one test over another.

## MATH SECTION

**SAT Advantages:** More time per question

**ACT Advantages:** Only one math section, calculator allowed on all questions, all questions are multiple choice, fewer item sets, less text-heavy questions

**Other Considerations:** The SAT has a nearly equal ratio of contextual, “real world” math questions to conceptual math problems, while the ACT focuses more on conceptual questions. The SAT also has a stronger emphasis on Algebra.

The SAT has two Math sections, one of which prohibits calculator use. This fact alone is enough for many technology-dependent students to choose the ACT. Once again, though, the SAT affords more time per question: 75 seconds per question on the no-calculator section and an astonishing 86 seconds per question on the calculator section. This is compared to 60 seconds per question on the ACT. Students should be warned, however, that the SAT questions have a substantially higher “words per math item” count, so even though test takers have more time, they have a lot more to read and process during the SAT Math sections. The ACT features 60 multiple choice questions, while the SAT has 45 multiple choice questions and 13 student-produced response questions, in which the test taker must find the answer without the benefit of the correct answer provided in a multiple choice list. While these student-produced response questions do not typically have a higher level of difficulty than multiple choice questions, they frequently intimidate test takers.

Both tests require the same content knowledge, such as Algebra, Data Analysis, and Trigonometry, although questions about these subjects occur in different proportions. On the SAT, Algebra has taken a prominent lead on the test and, as a result, Geometry’s role has been diminished. The ACT still tests these two topics in similar ratios. The redesigned SAT has moved to include more “real world” questions (which is likely the reason they are

now so text-heavy), while the ACT still focuses on conceptual problems. These two facts may influence students to pursue one test over the other.

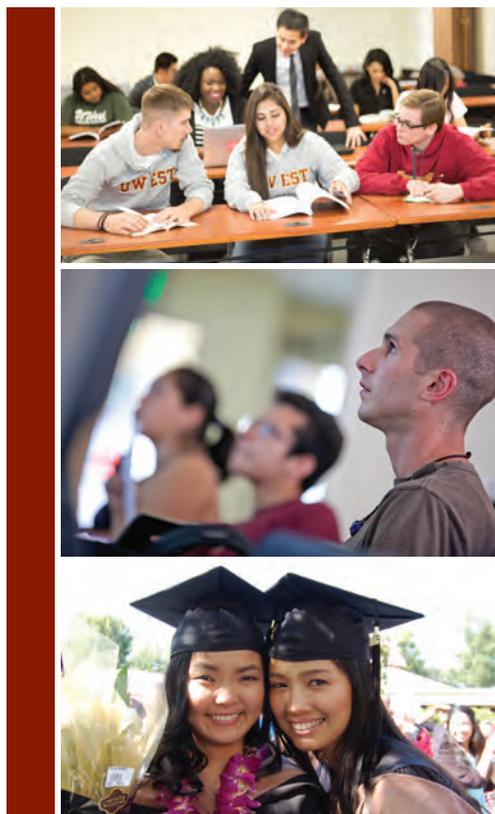
In addition to the advantages mentioned above, the ACT is currently a more stable test with many years of data on which admissions officers can rely. The SAT is still relatively new and recent reports from Reuters and a College Board whistleblower indicate that entire sections of test questions used in 2016 may not have been vetted properly. While there is no indication how this news is affecting college admissions, it is something to be aware of and follow in the new year for test prep experts and college counselors alike.

If, after researching both tests, students do not feel compelled to take one test over another, suggest that they take a free online practice ACT and SAT. It is important that they take each test under timed conditions, all in one session, so that they mimic testing conditions as closely as possible. After scoring the tests, the concordance tables on ACT's and College Board's websites will help them see whether the ACT or the SAT best accentuates their strengths.

Of course, many students will still want to take both the ACT and the SAT, but they would be wise to study for one at a time, starting with the test that they feel will generate the best results. Because the tests are so similar, a student's preparation for one will also get them ready for the other, but they should only attempt the second test when they feel they have reached their maximum score on the first one. And they should carefully study the format differences before attempting the second exam.

With the recent changes to the ACT and the SAT, there is no longer a simple way to determine which test a student should attempt. Every decision now needs to be tailored to each individual student based on his or her strengths, preferences, or performance. Current recommendations from test prep experts—including senior instructors at PowerScore—still lean toward the ACT for most students, but it's only a matter of time before the College Board steadies its ship and the SAT is completely back in the race.

*Vicki Wood is with PowerScore Test Preparation. She can answer your questions about the SAT or ACT by e-mailing her at [vwood@powerscore.com](mailto:vwood@powerscore.com) or visiting their website at [www.powerscore.com](http://www.powerscore.com)*



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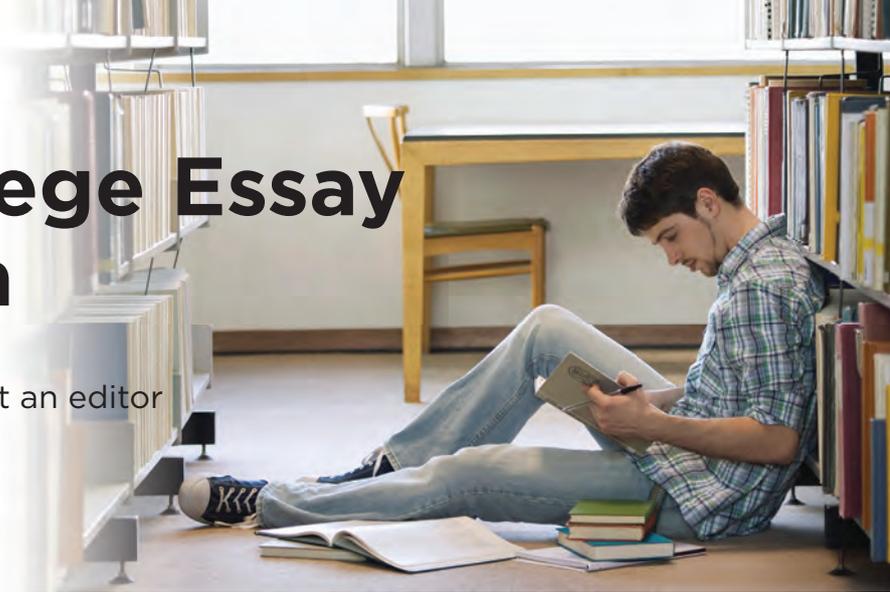
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# The College Essay Dilemma

How to be a coach, not an editor

By Kim Lifton



It's spring, and college application season for your junior class is just a few months away. How many students have come to see you to discuss their college essays? A few? None?

Despite your best efforts to guide and encourage students to get started on their college application process sooner, rather than later, most students are not yet prepared for the hands-on piece of the college application journey that awaits them.

While so focused on college visits and securing a spot at their ultimate dream school, you know that students don't always make advance plans for filling out the apps, writing personal statements and supplements, or preparing a timeline to complete their applications by the school's deadline.

That's why spring of junior year is the perfect time to discuss the essay in more detail - and get them prepped to really write! For most students, the essay is the most daunting part of the entire application. If you help them get started early, you might be able to help take some of the stress out of their journey.

Beyond planning and carving enough time to get it done, you can be a good coach. How? Teach them how to reflect, and share tips on getting students to reflect with any parents who are involved in your students' college journey.

## Be a Coach, Not an Editor

Before we share some of our tips for coaching without editing, consider these words from National Book Award and Pulitzer Prize winner

David McCullough: "Writing is thinking. To write well is to think clearly. That's why it is so hard."

This quote illustrates how important it is to reflect in personal essays, especially the college application essay. It's hard to do, which is why it causes so much angst among your students, and their parents.

At its core, the college essay is all about reflection. And to reflect, students must think. You already know that most 17-year-olds have very little practice with this type of thinking and writing.

You can best help your students learn this important skill in the coach role now, rather than as an editor later. We've helped parents work with their children early in the process, and they are always amazed by how straightforward it is. Many are also surprised by how wrong they were initially about their role in the process.

Because many of you know your students well, you might have ideas about what their essays should look like before they even meet with you. You know what the students have done, where they thrive, and what traits and characteristics define them. But the idea must come from the student.

Try to keep your ideas to yourself and be willing to be surprised by what you learn by guiding them through a process of discovery.

## Help Your Students Understand the Prompt

To get the reflection process started, help your

students understand the prompt. Understanding the question is central to success on the essay. We talk to admissions officers all the time, and they all say the same thing. They want your students to answer the question, and many students fail to do this, year after year.

All college essays begin with a prompt, not a topic. To answer any prompt correctly, ask your students to start with this question: *What do you want the readers of your application to know about you apart from courses, grades, and test scores?*

Your students' answers are key to success on the essay. It's an opportunity to shine, to offer readers some insight into who each student is beyond the grades, test scores and activities.

Take a look at this Common App prompt that we parsed for our students. Our coaches use the same approach with students completing other Common App, ApplyTexas, California and supplemental essay prompts.

### **Common App Prompt 1**

Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.

The key word in this prompt is “meaningful,” but even that word can seem big and overwhelming. What makes an experience meaningful?

Ultimately, your students' essay is not about your background, identity, interest, talent or experience; it's about your student. You can ask, “Why is this aspect of your identity, background or experience so meaningful? Have you learned something about yourself?”

Always remind students that admissions officers read these essays to find out something they don't already know about each applicant.

They already know the grades. They can see which sports and clubs every applicant joined; it's on the application. They know what types of courses are offered at your school, and whether the neighborhood is wealthy, poor or somewhere in the middle.

They can even figure out which types of books students read if they took American Literature. You already know that the transcript provides them

with a wealth of information. But the students are not thinking about that. Students need reminders.

Students really need to understand that colleges are not interested in their experiences in the essay as much as some insight into any experience. In other words, the subject – the student – is far more significant than the topic, or the experience. They are interested in rounding out the application by reading an essay, which should show them how anything your student did during high school affected her, who she met along the way or why she cannot get a particular piece of music out of her head. They have no idea how your student has changed or why he or she might be a good fit for their school.

Your challenge is to encourage each student to write an essay that illustrates something meaningful and answers the prompt.

### **How to Help Your Students Reflect**

Before any of your students write that first draft, help them figure out exactly what they want readers to know about them. Colleges want to know what each applicant wants to tell them about themselves, not what the student believes admission wants to know. Colleges want students to dig a little deeper than usual to show some insight and reflection.

Guide them by starting a conversation about their best traits and qualities. Here are some conversation starters:

- How do your friends describe you? Here are a few examples of common traits you can use to gently engage the student:
  - Are you industrious?
  - Are you shy? Curious?
  - Do you think you are resourceful? Hard working?
- What three words would they use to describe you?
- What do you do in your spare time?
  - Follow up with: What trait do you think it is that helps you succeed at that?

Once your student is comfortable knowing which

traits and qualities he wants to share, your student will be ready to find a story that answers the prompt and illustrates at least one of those traits.

### Resources for Counselors and Parents

- Go to our NACAC16 resource page for counselors. LINK: <https://wowwritingworkshop.com/NACAC16/>
- Monthly Parent Chats. <https://wowwritingworkshop.com/college-essay-writing/just-for-parents/> Please let your parents know about Wow's free resources for parents. Parents submit questions; we answer them and give the scoop on how to help their kids master the essay, during a 30-minute phone call. It's free. They are recorded, too. If a parent signs up and can't make it, we'll send a recording. Feel free to join us, too.
- Ebook for Parents. You can even get comprehensive instructions for coaching

your students on the essay in our guide written for parents, *How to Write an Effective College Application Essay: The Inside Scoop for Parents*. Please share the link to the ebook with your parents. It's just \$9.99 on Amazon.com. You can read the guide on ANY electronic device (smart phone, computer or tablet). Just download the free Kindle App to the device of your choice. Everything in this guide comes from what we've learned at Wow from working with students and talking to admissions officers.

*Kim Lifton is President of Wow Writing Workshop, a leading expert on the college application essay. Kim is a former journalist who has made it her mission to know EVERYTHING about college admissions. She speaks with senior admissions officers from the nation's most selective colleges almost every day. Wow works directly with students, and trains school counselors, English teachers and independent educational consultants who want to improve their essay-coaching skills.*

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# Translation and Interpretation

## Demand for Rare Translation and Interpretation Degree Rises

By Carl Apple

Your students can turn their love of languages into a marketable career! Imagine your students in a fast-paced environment, communicating cultural differences in the midst of important business deals, medical situations or government interactions.

The ability to decode cultures and bridge worlds—translation and interpreting—is one of the most sought-after skills today. And if your students love languages, they can become part of this dynamic field.

Demand for translators and interpreter training outpaces supply across the entire U.S. The U.S. Department of Labor is calling it one of the fastest growing business sectors worldwide.

The program is designed for students who are looking to work in a variety of settings such as government, business, medical, legal, education or industry, for translation and interpretation agencies or as freelance translators or interpreters. Students who enter this field can serve as a crucial communication link

between patients and doctors, diplomats and politicians, literary artists and the world.

Many schools throughout the country are offering degrees in this field. The American Translators Association has a list of schools that offer similar degrees.

The Bachelor of Science degree offers a professional focus meant to develop the skills needed to use world language translation and interpretation in a real-world setting. It introduces the basics of translation and interpretation theory as applied to the actual practice.

As an employer in need of translation and interpretation services on a daily basis, Bill Manns, president of Mercy Health Saint Mary's in Grand Rapids, Michigan, is glad to see colleges focusing on the field in a practical way.

“At Mercy Health Saint Mary's, we have experienced an increased need for interpreters for our patients,” said Manns. “In 2015, our Interpretive Services team has grown from three full-time interpreters to eight full-time interpreters to meet

the needs of our community's linguistic and cultural diversity.”

Translators provide products and services, and work with written documents, as distinguished from interpreters, who work as oral language mediators. While most practitioners pursue one field or the other, it is possible to work in both.

Translation and interpretation is one of the top ten fastest-growing business sectors worldwide, with demand rising at 25-30 percent per year. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2014) projects a 46 percent growth nationally in employment for translators and interpreters with bachelor's degrees, much faster than the average for all occupations. Salary ranges can vary widely, but US News & World Report lists the upper range at more than \$80,000.

Upon graduation, your students will have an excellent command of the source language and cultural knowledge; an excellent command of the target language; an understanding of the theoretical principles of translation and interpretation and the ability to use translation tools effectively.

This is an exciting career that you should recommend to students who have the required skill sets. Demand continues to grow, so the sky is the limit for students who want to do something they love and earn a great income.

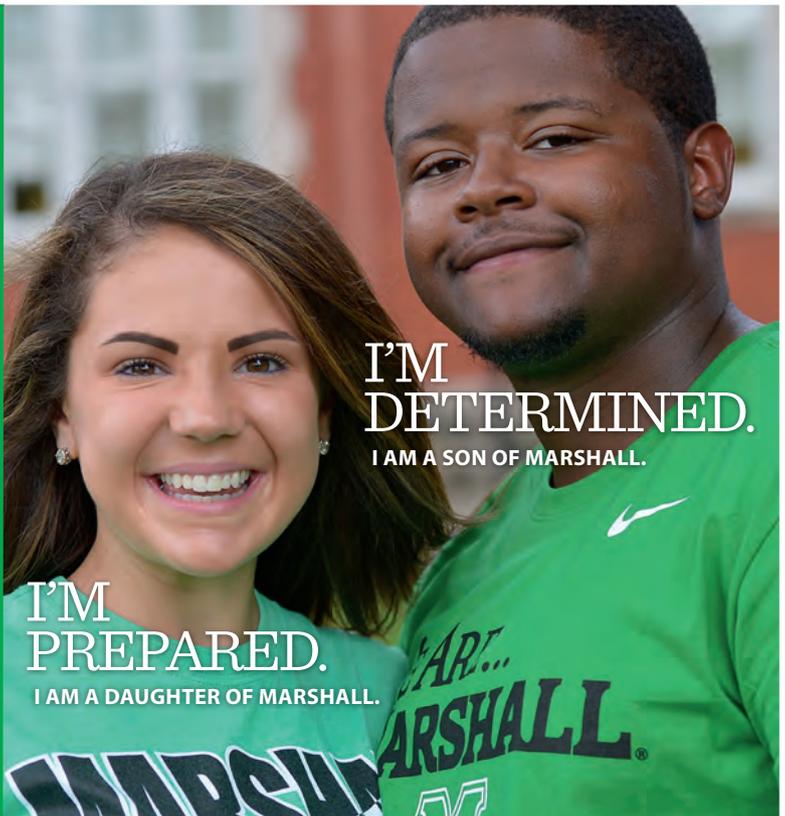
*Carl Apple is Associate Vice President for Marketing, Communications and Public Relations at Aquinas College in Michigan. Aquinas offers a rare Translation and Interpretation Bachelor of Science degree. The program is designed for students who are seeking the professional focus and interdisciplinary breadth that the B.S. degree offers with a minor or double major to develop the skills to use translation and interpretation in a professional setting. For more information visit their site ([www.aquinas.edu](http://www.aquinas.edu)) or e-mail Carl direct at [carl.apple@aquinas.edu](mailto:carl.apple@aquinas.edu)*



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# Using BLS Data to Explore Careers

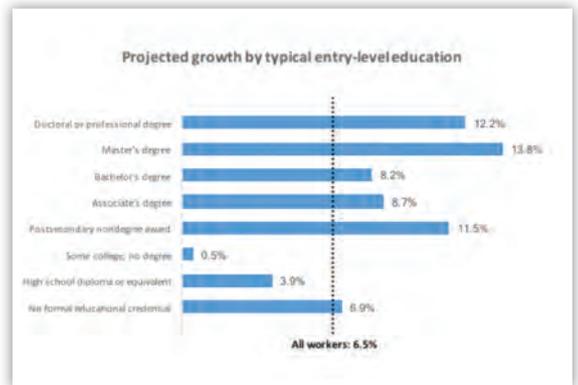
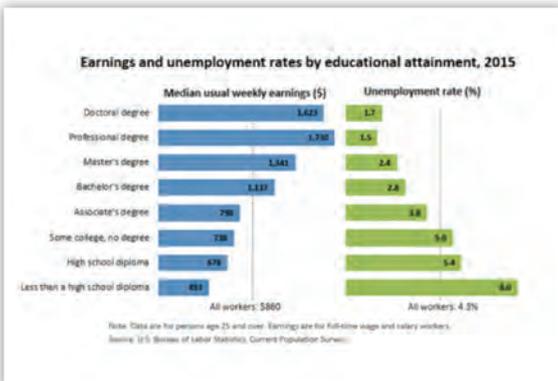
By C. Brett Lockard and Christopher Pinheiro



When your students are considering what they want to do after high school, there are certain questions they may ask you: What jobs require a college degree? How much do workers earn in an occupation? How many jobs will there be in this field? Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) can help provide answers with projections and wages for over 800 occupations. There are many ways this data can be used, and some resources are listed in the sidebar below. For example, the projections show that healthcare occupations are expected to have the fastest employment growth and to add the most jobs between 2014 and 2024.

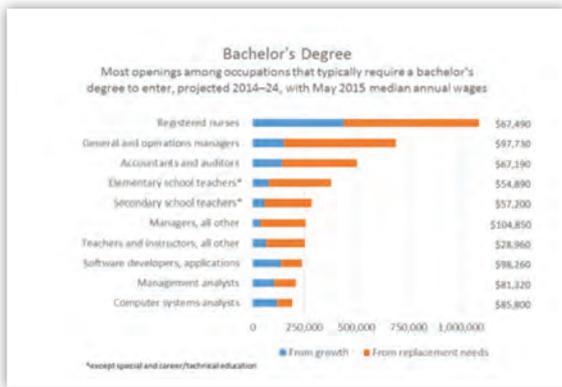
The primary focus of this article, though, is to look at opportunities by education level. As a Counselor, you know the value of an education, but BLS data can provide hard evidence to show your students. The following chart, based on worker's level of educational attainment, shows that more education generally leads to better prospects for earnings and employment.

In addition to being associated with higher earnings and lower unemployment in the present, the future also looks bright for occupations which require postsecondary education: they are projected to grow faster than those that do not. The following chart presents the projected growth rates for occupations assigned to each educational category. This represents projected growth in all jobs in those occupations, not just entry level jobs. Additionally, the entry level education reflects the 2014 requirements; BLS does not project how those requirements may change.

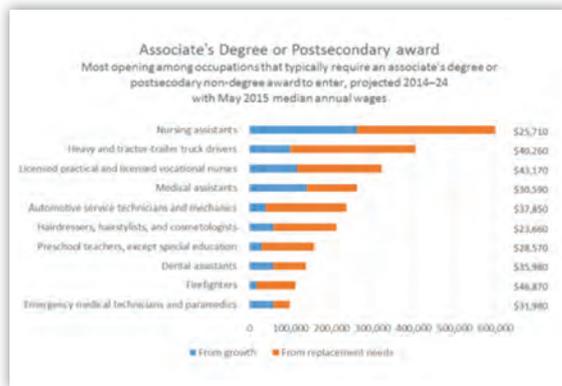


## Occupations with the most job openings, by entry-level education

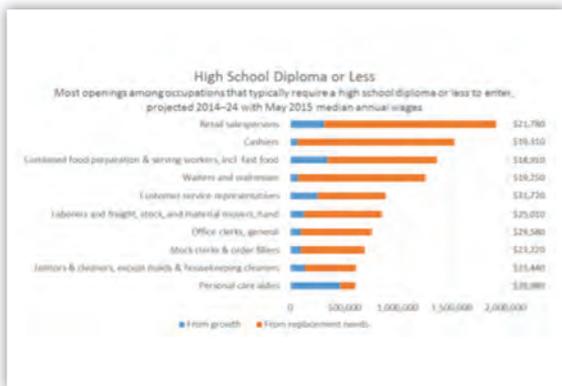
Let's take a closer look at job openings by occupation. The following charts have the top 10 occupations for different groupings of educational attainment typically required for entry. Projected job openings are separated into openings caused by replacement needs, such as retirements, and those caused by growth in that occupation.



The Bachelor's Degree chart shows occupations typically requiring a bachelor's degree for entry. Three of the occupations with the most projected openings are related to teaching. Registered nurses are the only occupation related to healthcare.



The Associate's Degree or Postsecondary Award chart shows occupations typically requiring a postsecondary award that takes fewer than four years to earn—specifically, a postsecondary non-degree award or an associate's degree. Of the top 10 occupations with the most job openings in this category, half are related to healthcare.



The High School Diploma or Less chart shows occupations typically requiring a high school diploma for entry and those that generally have no formal educational requirements. Only 2 of these top 10 typically require a high school diploma: customer service representatives and general office clerks. These are also the 2 occupations with the highest median annual wage. The other 8 occupations typically require no formal education credential to enter.

## Resources

**Here are some free resources with more information about the topics covered in this article:**

*The Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)* is the federal government's premier career information resource. It contains detailed information—such as what workers do, the work environment, how to enter the occupation, pay, and job outlook—for over 300 occupational profiles. (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>)

The Employment Projections (EP) program website provides much more detail on the projections that form the basis of this article and the OOH. (<http://www.bls.gov/emp/>)

New with this set of projections, the EP website also has a number of handouts which may be helpful when interacting with students. (<http://www.bls.gov/emp/#handouts>)

Career Outlook has articles that provide data and information on a variety of topics—including occupations and industries, pay and benefits, and more. These articles are helpful for students, career counselors, jobseekers, and others planning careers. (<http://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/>)

While the BLS only produces national projection, most state workforce agencies prepare state and local area projections. (<http://www.projection-central.com/>)

*C. Brett Lockard and Christopher Pinheiro are economists at the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. They both work in the Office of Occupational Statistics and Employment Projections. Specifically, they work on the team that produces the National Employment Matrix, which details occupational projections by industry.*

# How to Help Your Students Write Their First Resume

By Jim Paterson



With a counselor's help, experts say teens should put together a resume even if they just start planning it freshman year – or even middle school – to collect key material.

Whether it's called a portfolio or a resume and whether it's displayed in a cool online platform, neat one-page document or (it's in its infancy) stored in a hard-copy or electronic folder crammed full of notes and awards, the record of what they've done is important.

## There are three good reasons why:

- They obviously may need it for a job or college application.
- It provides a spot for adolescents, with innumerable other things racing through their heads, to store key information they'll need later.
- It will encourage them to consider their accomplishments and gather more.

“They should collect everything and then be selective as they refine a presentation that really shows who they are and what they have done,” says Rose Keating, a career counselor who assists with resume development. Experts now say that it helps students if they begin the process early, certainly as they start high school but perhaps before.

## Early for good reason

When students begin thinking about collecting information concerning their accomplishments they are more likely to begin thinking about... accomplishing things. It doesn't have to be election

as president of student council and it doesn't have to be membership in 20 organizations, just a clear indication that they've shown an interest in activities and worked hard at them.

A counselor can encourage students to collect material or just document accomplishments, and meanwhile get in the habit of thinking about their record. A counselor can accompany an explanation about resumes or portfolios (many students don't know, exactly, what they are) with a description of how important the students' accomplishments will be in the future. It is another opportunity to stress hard work and success, experts say.

Of course, too, counselors know that students are often scrambling at the last minute to put together information for a college or job application or a resume, so this process of collecting and organizing the information is valuable and worth starting early.

## What goes there?

Experts say at the start of the process, students should be expansive with their resume material, keeping track of all their activities and noting how long they were involved, whether they held a leadership position or took on special responsibilities and who the adviser or adult was who supervised them. They should also note what they thought of the activity – what they learned and how it changed them (also valuable information for essay writing).

“A resume should focus on achievements and accomplishments. Rather than simply listing clubs, organizations, teams, and academics, it should

highlight what was accomplished in each role,” says Alison Doyle, president of Career Tool Belt, and an expert on resumes. “If a student was team captain, president of a club, raised donations for charity, belonged to the honor society or received an award of any kind, mention it. But focus on what you did that showed initiative”

Other college consultants and college admissions counselors reinforce that leadership positions are key, which is a point that high school and middle school counselors can make as students prepare a resume or as they consider the roles they take during these years.

“They should be thinking early on about their role in school organizations, at jobs or in the community,” says Seattle area college consultant Kierston Murphy.

Mitch Warren, director of admissions at Purdue, agrees, but notes that students should also “be authentic”. Their resume or application should not be contrived, he says. “Contrary to some assumptions, most colleges are not looking for ways to keep students out. We’re looking to make a good match. So, tell us about the real you. If we say no, it may be in your best interest. We may see something that tells us that you wouldn’t do well or like it here. But we might also see something you wouldn’t expect that tells us you would be a good match.”

## The specifics

Keating says the written resume should be clean and easy to read. Students should avoid unusual fonts or formatting. It should lead the reader to the important material and serve the purpose of providing information.

US News, on a list of biggest mistakes on a college application, says an overly long or poorly presented resume is a common issue identified by college admissions officials. It noted, too, that a resume should not replace the section of an application asking students about their experiences.

There are a number of resources online where students can get guidelines for a resume, see samples or get a template. And counselors can offer resume help as a service during a lunch period or in a classroom presentation, or they can make it a habit to ask students about it as they meet with them concerning other issues.

## The new look

The resume, a traditional document following fairly standard rules (keep it formal, simple and fact-filled) has taken a step forward and moved to video and to the Web.

A student who wants to put together a resume for college can do it easily and quickly with ZeeMee, a platform that allows them to include all sorts of information in a variety of formats including videos. About 200 colleges now accept ZeeMee as part of the application process – in fact some encourage use of the platform. It’s free and easy to use.

Besides that, students applying for job or work can do a video resume, although career guide Rose Keating warns that they should still follow the standard rules about them: make it look professional and authentic. Write a script, consider the setting and let several others who will be truthful review it.

One other platform is available from a group sponsored by about 80 colleges called the Coalition for Access, Affordability and Success. It’s goal, a spokesperson says, is to make the process easier and more accessible.

The platform offers a “locker” where students can store documents, video – anything that they have accomplished or might need in the college application process.

In addition, the student can ask others to collaborate with them, so advisers, mentors, bosses or counselors can access the information and comment about it.

It can then easily be used in applications to the colleges thus far participating, a list planners say will grow as more students become aware of the free service.

*Jim Patterson has written broadly on career exploration, academic success and other education related topics for several national and trade publications. He was a school counselor and was formerly named “Counselor of the Year” in Montgomery County, MD, a large Washington, DC-area district. He is currently a writer for many educational publications and websites based in Leswe, DE.*

# The Pitfalls of Perfection

By Dawn Marie Barhyte



Increasing number of students set the bar so high that it's impossible for them to reach it. They feel the pressure to be brainy, attractive and participate in lots of extracurricular activities to pad their college applications and impress admissions. Some are feeling that they can't be really good at just one thing, that they must be outstanding at everything. In other words, they feel pressured to do the impossible-to be perfect.

This pressure is not just in their imagination; it's very real and is being felt by many adolescents today. The reality is, no one can do it all, so many students are feeling overly stressed. The stress caused by the pursuit of perfection and the feelings of failure to achieve the impossible can evolve into more serious psychological difficulties. Trying to do everything just right can be destructive to a student's health and well-being. In fact, experts say that adolescents can become so stressed that they can suffer from crippling insecurity, depression, anxiety, eating disorders and/or migraines. This achievement frenzy is hurting students, and putting them at risk when they fall short, ultimately undermining their success.

This perfection trap is impossible to live up to and may result in students missing out on accomplishments, keeping them from enjoying life and realizing their potential. According to Jennifer Smith, LCSW of Crisis Management Strategies at Centerstone, striving for perfection can be self-defeating behavior in that it can often be a paralyzing continuum of worry, criticism and expectation. This cognitive preoccupation can cause one to be more apt for underperforming in

high stress situations for fear of failure.

As counselors, we need to recognize when our students are working overtime to measure up to unrealistic standards and help them see that achieving perfection is impossible. We need to communicate that while it's wonderful to strive for excellence, it's detrimental to reach for perfection. Studies have shown the higher our expectations, the more elusive happiness becomes. Research has found that perfectionist thinking impedes success, as goals are unrealistic and therefore unattainable and can become a self-defeating cycle. This reach for perfection has a negative impact on self-esteem and causes a downward spiral of self-criticism and self-blame because students are never satisfied with their achievements.

In fact, even if students don't suffer from psychological disorders, this persistent drive to be perfect sets the teen up for constant worrying and disappointment. Dr. Thomas S. Greenspon, author of "Moving Past Perfect: How Perfectionism May be Holding Back Your Kids and What You Can Do About It" and "What To Do When Good Enough Isn't Good Enough; The Real Deal on Perfection: A Guide for Kids" says this push for perfection, a push that has become endemic to our culture, narrows a person's focus to achievements as a single measure of success and leaves out mindful attention to lived experience and to relationships. He adds, for those who are perfectionistic, the intense anxiety about making mistakes is burdensome, exhausting and in the end self-defeating. He remarks that this anxiety actually impedes performance. We need to help our

students flourish and achieve excellence without falling into the insidious hold of perfection. We need to communicate that schools are places to learn, that errors are a normal part of the learning process and everyone makes mistakes; these are not the reasons to devalue ourselves.

According to Dr. Michele Borba, author of “UnSelfie: Why Empathetic Kids Succeed in Our All About Me World”, says we see this “I’m never good enough” especially in gifted and talented kids. She adds, while some kids are hardwired with that inborn tendency to always push themselves to the max, there are things we can do to help. For instance, we can teach them coping skills so they can lower their stress and show them how to set more realistic expectations.

### **Here are signs to watch for:**

- Always comparing themselves to others; cannot stand coming in second place or doing worse than others, wants to be the best and anything less is not good enough.
- Headaches, stomach aches, trouble sleeping and other physical ailments before or during a performance.
- Too cautious about trying something new that may be outside of their area of expertise, therefore may not excel.
- May put others down. All in an effort to be the best and make the other person feel less than perfect or inadequate.
- Worrying it won’t be good enough or fear of failure. Avoids difficult or stressful tasks; leaves work unfinished out of fear it won’t be perfect.
- Concentrates on the mistakes instead of the overall job or how well they performed.
- Way too hard on himself, cannot laugh at themselves or their mistakes.

How we can help our students? Dr. Greenspon says perfectionism is reversible; it’s about feeling lovable and accepted even if they are imperfect and we can play a role in affirming this message. He says a crucial element in overcoming perfectionism is the affirming presence of a person we trust.

### **Help Students with an Attitude Adjustment!**

Teach kids to set goals that are challenging but realistic, to develop backbone. Prompt kids to think about what they can do to meet those goals and make them a reality! Encourage kids to relax their standards and let go of the elusive perfection. Challenge kids to see there is a big difference between striving for excellence and perfection. Working hard to achieve goals is an enriching experience; If mistakes are seen as learning experiences, you are putting in effort toward excellence. If mistakes are seen as personal defects, the concurrent anxiety will get in their way. It’s the effort that counts, if you are never making mistakes, you aren’t growing.

### **Help Students See It’s All About Time:**

Help kids learn how to use their time wisely. Encourage them to set a time limit on how long they can work on a particular activity.

### **Encourage Students to Lighten Up:**

Communicate that being so serious and treating everything as a life or death situation is stressful and self-defeating.

### **Give Students a Reality Check:**

Challenge students to stop thinking in black or white and help them dispute the belief that they need to be perfect. It’s vital to ask them to examine what they are afraid will happen if they are not perfect, and then address their fears. Ask them to loosen expectations.

### **Encourage Students to be Their Own BFF’s:**

Remind students to be kind to themselves, stop comparing themselves to their peers and celebrate their achievements.

### **Help Students Roll With the Punches:**

The inner dialogue of perfectionists is very critical and self-defeating. So help students reframe self-talk by teaching them positive self-talk that is less critical such as nobody is perfect, all I can do is my best.

*Dawn Marie Barhyte is a widely published freelance writer and former educator who continues to touch lives of young people through her writing.*

# LINK for Counselors thanks you for the kind words!

THANK YOU



“Thank you for the most recent issue of LINK. I added the LINK for the LINK magazine on our school guidance page under Resources for Hoover High School. Our parents will like this magazine.” —*Jason Downey Hoover High School*

“I just received my copy of your magazine. What caught my attention were the topics on the front of the magazine. Thank you for thinking of us counselors!” —*Cynthia Deiner Los Osos High School*

“Your group is doing a great job/ service for all of us. I use your articles frequently as I advise students and parents, and they also keep me fresh and engaged with current goings-on. LINK is a hit!” —*Steve Cook Stoney Creek High School*

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“I do think the articles are useful and I use them to add information to our newsletter for our parents.” *Counselor, Signet Research Study, 11/15*

“I love that you send me a hard copy and I love the size of the book, Easy to carry and read while waiting in the school pick up line and for appointments. Thanks!” *Counselor, Signet Research Study, 11/15*

This was my first issue that I received...After a few minutes looking through it, I started reading the articles. I was impressed and thought of ways to use the information in my group guidance. There is valuable information that will be useful to me...I will keep it and use. Look forward to the Spring issue” *Counselor, Signet Research Study, 11/16*

We love to hear your feedback on how we are doing. Send any comments on how we are doing or what you would like to see to [Jason@linkforcounselors.com](mailto:Jason@linkforcounselors.com).

<b>CONFERENCE</b>	<b>DATE   LOCATION</b>
Pittsburgh National College Fair	February 9 to 10, 2017   Pittsburgh, PA
Tampa National College Fair	February 25, 2017   Tampa, Florida
Miami National College Fair	February 26, 2017   Miami, Florida
Syracuse National College Fair	March 8, 2017   Syracuse, New York
Upstate South Carolina National College Fair	March 11, 2017   Greenville, SC
Rochester National College Fair	March 12 to 13, 2017   Rochester, NY
Charlotte National College Fair	March 12, 2017   Charlotte, NC
Raleigh National College Fair	March 14, 2017   Raleigh, NC
Metro Detroit National College Fair	March 26 to 27, 2017   Novi, MI
New York National College Fair	March 26, 2017   New York, NY
Western Michigan National College Fair	March 28, 2017   Grand Rapids, MI
Cleveland National College Fair	April 1, 2017   Cleveland, OH
Columbus National College Fair	April 2, 2017   Columbus, OH
Springfield National College Fair	April 3, 2017   West Springfield, MA
Montgomery County National College Fair	April 5 to 06, 2017   Gaithersburg, MD
Hartford National College Fair	April 6 to 07, 2017   Hartford, CT

<b>CONFERENCE</b>	<b>DATE   LOCATION</b>
Prince George's County National College Fair	April 6 to 07, 2017   Hyattsville, MD
Honolulu National College Fair	April 11, 2017   Honolulu, HI
Houston National College Fair	April 13, 2017   Houston, TX
Dallas/Ft. Worth National College Fair	April 17, 2017   Irving, TX
Austin National College Fair	April 19, 2017   Austin, TX
Inland Empire National College Fair	April 19, 2017   Ontario, CA
Los Angeles National College Fair	April 20, 2017   Pasadena, CA
Orange County National College Fair	April 23, 2017   Anaheim, CA
San Diego National College Fair	April 25, 2017   San Diego, CA
Memphis National College Fair	April 26 to 27, 2017   Memphis, TN
New Jersey National College Fair	April 26 to 27, 2017   Secaucus, NJ
Ventura / Tri-County National College Fair	April 26, 2017   Camarillo, CA
Oklahoma City National College Fair	April 27, 2017   Norman, OK
San Francisco National College Fair	April 29, 2017   Daly City, CA
Nashville National College Fair	April 30, 2017   Nashville, TN
Boston National College Fair	May 7 to 8, 2017   Boston, MA
Providence National College Fair	May 8, 2017   Providence, RI

*Please check with show organizer to confirm dates, location and times or for further information*

# Write your college essay

The admission essay is an important part of any college application. Some schools give more weight to the essay than others, but if an essay is required, you can bet it's going to be used in the admissions decision to some degree. Even if you have a high GPA, the essay provides an easy way for you to distinguish yourself from the other thousand applicants who have similar grades and activities as you. Writing an admissions essay that works will increase your chances of being accepted. To help you out, we have put together this easy list of do's and don'ts for writing your admission essay.

## Do:

- Brainstorm ideas before you write. Choose the idea that best fits you and a topic that you feel will be unique to the other thousands of essays that the admissions officers will read.
- Choose a topic that is specific. Doing so will allow you to go in-depth into one idea rather than trying to cover a broad topic with a short essay. The more in-depth you go, the more unique your essay will be.
- Write multiple drafts of your essay and get feedback on each one from a parent or friend. This will help ensure you cover the topic well, and give you the chance to choose the best of your work.
- Write as well as you can, edit the document and get help if needed. Use a mixture of sharp adjectives and smart wit without sounding too terse, verbose or ostentatious (SAT words!)

## Don't:

- Don't choose offensive topics. Topics that may be offensive are those that surround religion, racism and even personal opinions on world issues. You won't be doing yourself any favors if your essay leaves the admissions officer feeling offended or angry.
- Don't let anyone else dictate the topic of your essay. You can get help brainstorming if you want, but don't write about someone else's chosen topic.
- Don't write a negative essay. The more positive you are with the topic, the more enjoyable the essay will be to read. Avoid negative topics and negative ideas within the body of the essay.
- Don't be arrogant or pedantic with your writing. The admissions officers will see it, and arrogance will work against you in the admissions process.

## NOTES:

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# Focus on yourself

Consider this: *“Reputation is for time; character is for eternity.”*—J. B. Gough

College is a time when you are enjoying your independence, exploring your passions and finding your true calling. But during that time, it’s also very easy to get caught up on the wrong path and acting as a follower instead of taking the lead.

It’s possible to make college a time for discovery while still being true to yourself.

Here are a few suggestions to make the transition a smooth one:

### Keep in touch with old friends

Many always say you are the company you keep. Well, there’s something to be said about your old high school friends. They were your friends for a reason — why stop working on that friendship now? Sure there may be distance between you and even new friends you’ll need to introduce to your home crew, but keeping in touch with your old friends will keep you in touch with the old you.

### Try new things

Although we keep talking about

how you need to stay true to yourself, college is also a time to try out new adventures. Join new organizations, maybe try an intramural sport or even consider taking a class that’s a bit outside your comfort zone. These new experiences will help you find out even more about the real you!

#### OPPORTUNITIES:

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### Set priorities

College should be a fun time in your life—but don’t forget why you are there! Set priorities for yourself in terms of study time, grades, calls home and even hours of sleep. Although there will be lots to get involved in, you need to make sure you are taking care of No. 1 and doing your best when it comes to your school-work.

#### TOP 3 PRIORITIES:

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### Have fun

Lastly, enjoy every minute of this new chapter. Some days will be lots of fun. While others may bring personal conflict and new challenges you haven’t faced before. However, remember to keep in touch with the old you and you’ll make the right choice!

#### BUCKET LIST:

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# Consider a gap year

Not sure what's after high school for you? That's OK. Sometimes students need a break between high school and college. That break, though, formally called a gap year can be a great way to jumpstart the rest of your future. Some students take the year off to work, travel and participate in local and global initiatives.

## Is a gap year for you?

There are a few signs that you're a prime candidate for a gap year:

- ▶ You don't know what you want to do in life.
- ▶ You think you may have financial problems once you start college.
- ▶ You feel burnt out.
- ▶ You're not sure you really want to go to a particular college, or if you should go to college at all.

## Gap year options

- **Travel.** Choose from a structured program or backpack through Europe. Either way, getting out of your comfort zone and experiencing a new part of the world is a great use of a year off.
- **Work.** Maybe you know what



you want to do and there is an opportunity to get real hands-on experience for a year. Becoming an apprentice or taking on a job to prepare you for your career can be a great option.

- **Find yourself.** The time off is a great escape from school. But it's much more than that; it's a chance to figure out what's important to you, where you see yourself in five years, what you never want to do and how to get to your goals!

## Benefits of the gap

- The experience can help you decide on a major or help you realize your career aspirations!
- If you already know what you want to do, a gap year can help you get realworld experience.
- After 12 years of school, a gap year can be a nice break from school and help alleviate burnout, which will mean you are more

energized when you decide to enroll in college.

## Finding gap year info

If you're considering or planning a gap year, the admissions counselor at the college you hope to attend can help you with information on deferring entrance.

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## Read more!

Get more tips on how to apply to college at [LINKForCounselors.com](http://LINKForCounselors.com)

# Take a college tour

Sure, you can tour a campus online these days. But there's nothing better than a campus tour when you're trying to get a feel for the college or university. In order to make the most of your college tour you have to be prepared. Follow these steps and you'll be a college tour pro!

## Be prepared

Research its outstanding programs, faculty-student ratio, educational mission — even its mascot. Know the competitive sports teams and major rivals. Prepare yourself with all of the pertinent, public info about the college.

### SCHOOL NOTES:

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## Read while you wait

Once you arrive on campus, check out the bulletins, pick up a copy of the college newspaper or magazine and don't forget to grab a few brochures from the admissions office. This will help familiarize you with the campus basics, so you can focus on more in depth questions while touring.

### Questions to ask the tour guide:

- Why did you choose this college?
- What was your best experience here?
- Why did you stay after freshman year?
- What's your plan for after graduation?

## Ask questions

Sometimes the excitement of the tour can lead to lots of distractions, which means you may forget to ask questions. Be sure to create a list of questions before the tour and keep them handy the day of. Reference it regularly to make sure you've got all the answers. If a question hasn't been addressed, ask it!

### YOUR QUESTIONS:

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## Talk to students

Some of your best feedback will come from students who are actually at the college! They are living

the life you may live everyday, so who better to give you insight on the day-to-day activities on campus? Visit the campus coffee shop or commons and ask students what the campus is really like (It's OK to leave the tour guide and/or parents behind on this one!)

## While on the tour

Your tour guide will be an actual student at the college you are visiting, so be prepared to ask questions.

## After the tour

Write down five impressions of the school. Consider the campus personality, diversity of the student body, the size of the lecture halls and student interaction. These little mental reminders will help you compare colleges later.

### FIRST IMPRESSIONS:

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## Find your match

Get matched up with your perfect college at **LINKForCounselors.com**





# Plan for graduate school

It's never too early to start thinking about graduate school. In fact, planning for grad school is a lot like preparing for your undergraduate degree. So check out these tips about the application and admissions process—they may sound familiar!

## Good grades matter

As you know, when you apply to college they ask for high school transcripts, which showcase how you did in your classes and what your overall GPA was. The same goes for graduate school. As part of the application process you will need to share your undergraduate transcript with your prospective graduate school. Most programs require a minimum of 3.0. So be sure to keep your grades up during college!

## Prep for the GRE

Remember the SAT? Well, to apply for graduate school you need to take the GRE. The GRE test scores provide graduate schools a way to evaluate applicants. You can choose to take the general test or a more specific subject test depending on what you'll be studying. Just like the SAT, though, your GRE score isn't the only thing admissions departments will be considering. So do your best, but remember it's only part of the application.

## Ask for help

Sure, the application process can be a bit daunting, but you don't have to go it alone! Talk to your admissions counselors at your school and be in touch with the admissions staff at your future graduate school. Schedule time to meet with faculty and also talk to graduate students. There is a great support network available; you just have to ask for help!

## Find your passion

During your undergraduate years you have the chance to try on all kinds of different careers, through a variety of courses, extracurriculars and even internships. But graduate school gives you the opportunity to focus on what your passion really is and allows you to specialize your studies and become a subject-matter expert.

## Ask about 5-year programs

Many colleges offer programs through which you can earn both

a bachelor's and a master's degree in five years. This option saves you time, as a bachelor's degree takes four years and a master's typically takes an additional two to three. You will also save money by only paying for five years of school, not six or more. Not to mention you'll save the energy it takes to apply to grad schools while you're an undergrad

### NOTES:

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# Get scholarships!

Think you have to be the star quarterback or have straight A's to get a scholarship? Think again. The reality is that there are huge numbers of scholarships, grants and other prizes available to students with less-than-stellar grades or athletic abilities, but with other great qualities. By following these tips, you can increase your chances of tapping into the billions of dollars available every year to students just like you!

### Find out what's available

When it comes to searching for scholarships remember this: make your search thorough and ambitious. The Internet, local library, your school, local businesses and service organizations all offer opportunities to locate many different types of awards. And some of these awards can be for large sums of money with very little competition simply because people don't know they are available.

**SCHOLARSHIPS I FOUND:** \_\_\_\_\_

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### Tap into the Web

There are several large Internet-based scholarship databases, such as [www.NextStepU.com/Scholarship](http://www.NextStepU.com/Scholarship), that match your personal profile to potential scholarships. These databases list hundreds of thousands of awards. The number of criteria you enter varies by site and may be limited, so it's worth a shot to alter your personal profile. The database may find additional scholarships for you that it may not have with previous search criteria.

### Check with your high school guidance office

Many scholarship committees mail their application materials straight to your high school! Most schools have a scholarship file available, so ask! Also check with the schools that you wish to attend, as many of them offer scholarships and grants that may not pop up in the databases or in your high school.

### Canvas your community

The local library should have scholarship directories listing awards, too. Also check with local businesses and service organizations, as many of them may have awards available to students in the local community. Have your mom and dad check with their employers; some organizations

offer awards to children of their employees.

### Apply

Once you've found as many scholarships as you can that you are eligible for, start applying. Put the applications in order by deadline and apply for as many as possible, even if the award amount seems small or your chances seem slim. Even a few small awards will shrink your college costs.

### Stay organized

Keep track of your submissions so that you make deadlines and have all your materials together.

**SCHOLARSHIPS I APPLIED TO:** \_\_\_\_\_

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### Prepare well

Finally, prepare for any interview portions of your applications. Be ready to answer questions about your background, achievements, goals, finances and values. Remember that good social skills go a long way, from the introductory handshake to the thank-you note after the interview.

# High School Seniors College Checklist for Spring



By Jolyn Brand

The college application process is a long and arduous one. Once the final acceptance decision has been made, you and your student may want to take a break. Of course your student will need to be working to maintain his grades through the end of senior year, but he should also begin to think about next year. Completing some of these college checklist during the spring will mean a more relaxed and less stressful summer and will also help your student begin to make the transition from high school student to college student.

## February - April

**1.** Let the college know! Make your deposit. May 1 is the national “Intent to Register” date. Your student should make her deposit as soon as she knows where she wants to go, but no later than May 1. It is unethical to deposit at more than one institution.

**2.** Let the other schools know that you will not be attending. They will want to be able to fill that space with someone else.

**3.** Fill out housing application and submit deposits. This is often done separately from the tuition deposit. Ask how residence halls are assigned. Can roommates be requested? Should your student make a request? Are there forms to be completed?

**4.** Revisit the campus if you can. It will look different now that it is your student’s own campus.

## May

**5.** Inquire about the need for placement tests. Some students are exempt due to high TAKS or SAT scores. Others may need to take the THEA or Compass.

**6.** Attend any events scheduled for accepted students. Now is the time to begin to make connections. Ask about summer orientation dates and requirements. Some colleges offer ‘fish’ (freshmen) week.

**7.** Review financial aid packages and clarify anything that is unclear. Accept aid or scholarships that were offered, and deny any that you don’t want or need (such as loans). Inquire about the disbursements dates of these offers as well. If the disbursement dates are after tuition due dates, you may have to pay some of it upfront and get reimbursed later.

**8.** Begin to complete other required forms. Make doctor’s appointments and schedule the meningitis vaccine if still needed.

**9.** Investigate and plan for additional costs.

Are there additional fees that your student should be planning for? Parking? Travel costs? What is the typical cost of textbooks? Are there alternatives to ordering from the college bookstore? Plan now to prevent surprises later. Read more about 'hidden costs' here.

**10.** Ensure that your high school is sending a final transcript to the selected college.

## June

**11.** Ask how and when class enrollment and schedules are completed. Be sure to review the degree plan, AP credits and pre-requisites before class registration opens. The most-desired classes fill up quickly. Students who are unsure can request a meeting with an academic advisor to review the degree plan.

**12.** Find out how and when e-mail accounts are assigned and whether there is a school Portal or announcement system. Some students got email accounts when they applied to the college, others need to set one up now.

**13.** Connect with current students. Your student can get started right away connecting with the life of the college and with other students. Check Facebook for pages for incoming students.

**14.** Review health insurance and ask whether your student may waive required college insurance if she is covered by your plan.

**15.** Find the college calendar and mark important dates. You may want to make Family Weekend hotel reservations right away.

**16.** If your student will need any special services – disability services, food accommodations, special housing – this is a good time for your student to communicate with school personnel. It will be busier further along in the summer.

## July

**17.** Review the college's meal plan options. Be sure it's clear what is and is not included in the dining card purchases.

**18.** Families should also decide on a "discretionary spending account" and how that will be handled. Students will have unexpected needs while away at college and they should know beforehand whether every need or purchase needs to be cleared with the parents ahead of time. Usually, a credit card or debit card can be procured in the student's name by the parent's bank. Discuss budgets and limits BEFORE the first statement shows up.

**19.** Start a shopping list for dorm items. Be sure to review what is and is not allowed before shopping. Some colleges allow fridges, others don't. Same with microwaves and hot plates. If the roommate has already been selected, the student may want to establish who is bringing what so you don't end up with two microwaves and no printer.

**20.** Inquire about campus mail or P.O. boxes. Sending packages or mail to students living in dorms is much easier with a P.O. Box nearby.

Be patient. At some schools, work with incoming students may not begin until after the end of the current school year. College personnel are still busy with the current students. Although they may be happy to speak with your student, they may ask her to call again later.

Encourage your student to handle the above suggestions and make contacts and calls rather than you. This is the perfect time for your student to begin to take charge of his college experiences. He may need you to guide him, but insist that he do as much as possible himself.

*Jolyn Brand is the founder of Brand College Consulting ([brandcollegeconsulting.com](http://brandcollegeconsulting.com)). She has a passion for helping students find, apply and get accepted to colleges that are a good fit for their interests and abilities. She works with students in the Houston, Texas area and across the country. She can utilize Skype and college planning software with parents and students.*



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**Institutional Designation:** Private/For-Profit

**Tuition Costs:** Actual tuition and housing costs will vary depending on program, number of credits enrolled, and living arrangements. Prospective students should contact a Student Financial Services professional at the school for details.

**Average Student Aid Package:** Financial aid is available for those who qualify. Students who require financial assistance should first complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) and meet with a financial aid officer. Students may also apply for a number of scholarships focusing on their specific areas of career interest.

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** Check out "Scholarships" at [artinstitutes.edu](http://artinstitutes.edu) to get more info about grants and scholarships for which you may be eligible.

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** Varies by location

At The Art Institutes system of schools, students can choose from bachelor's and associate's degree programs in one of eight competitive areas of study. The experience is challenging, the lessons are hands-on, and the journey leads toward one specific destination: a career in the creative arts.

The Art Institutes is a system of over 50 schools throughout North America. Programs, credential levels, technology, and scheduling options vary by school and are subject to change. Not all online programs are available to residents of all U.S. states. Several institutions included in The Art Institutes system are campuses of South University or Argosy University. Administrative office: The Art Institutes, 210 Sixth Avenue, 33rd Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15222 © 2015 The Art Institutes. All rights reserved. Our email address is [materialsreview@aii.edu](mailto:materialsreview@aii.edu).

**See [aiprograms.info](http://aiprograms.info) for program duration, tuition, fees and other costs, median debt, salary data, alumni success, and other important info.**

**Telephone:** 800-894-5793



**BAYLOR**  
UNIVERSITY

AVIATION SCIENCES

## BAYLOR INSTITUTE FOR AIR SCIENCE

**Location:** Waco, TX

**Website:** [www.baylor.edu/aviation](http://www.baylor.edu/aviation)

**Year Founded:** 1845

**Type of Institution:** Baylor University is a private christian university that blends nationally ranked interdisciplinary research with an international reputation for educational excellence.

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 15:1

**Tuition Costs:** \$21,000

**Room & Board:** \$6,000

There is only one choice when you are searching for a professional aviation program coupled with a stellar education from a world-class, faith-based university. At Baylor University's Institute for Air Science, we offer you an aviation Bachelor's degree along with opportunities to enjoy a fulfilling college experience and student life on a tradition-rich campus. Soar to new heights and discover Baylor's one-of-a-kind spirit of community and faith!

**Telephone:** 254-710-3563

**Email:** [bias\\_office@baylor.edu](mailto:bias_office@baylor.edu)





## CENTRAL ARIZONA COLLEGE

**Location:** 8470 N. Overfield Road,  
Coolidge, AZ 85128

**Website:** [www.centralaz.edu](http://www.centralaz.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1962

**Type of Institution:** Community College

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 15:1

**Institutional Designation:** Accredited by Higher Learning Commission

**Tuition Costs:** \$84 per credit hour for Arizona residents / \$168 per credit hour for out of state residents

**Room & Board:** [www.centralaz.edu/reslife](http://www.centralaz.edu/reslife)

For more than 45 years, CAC has been serving and educating the diverse communities of Pinal County, AZ. With five campuses and three centers located throughout the county, CAC provides accessible, educational, economic, cultural and personal growth opportunities for all ages. The college offers nearly 150 degrees and certificates, on-line and university transfer courses, career training and personal enrichment classes. An on-campus living environment featuring residence life options is available at the Signal Peak Campus.

**Telephone:** 800-237-9814



## D'YOUVILLE COLLEGE

**Location:** Buffalo, NY

**Website:** [www.dyc.edu](http://www.dyc.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1908

**Type of Institution:** D'Youville is an independent, urban, coeducational institution. It provides health care, business education, liberal arts and professional programs.

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 12:1

**Tuition Costs:** \$23,900

**Room & Board:** \$11,180

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$20,124

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 82%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$8,801

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$1,500

D'Youville's programs cover everything from health care to business education with a strong liberal arts core in the curriculum. The success of D'Youville's programs is reflected in the high placement rate of graduates being employed or continuing in advanced studies. This reflects an excellent return on investment. D'Youville remains focused on meeting the demands of the professional job market and the needs of students. It offers a competitive tuition and lives up to its motto, "Educating for Life."

**Telephone:** 800-777-3921

**Email:** [admissions@dyc.edu](mailto:admissions@dyc.edu)





## ERSKINE COLLEGE

**Location:** Due West, SC

**Website:** [visit.erskine.edu](http://visit.erskine.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1839

**Type of Institution:** Private, Christian, 4-year, liberal arts college

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 12:1

**Tuition Costs:** \$32,540

**Room & Board:** \$10,900

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$37,560 (SC)

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** >95%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$22,570

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$1,500

Forbes ranks Erskine College #1 among Christian colleges in South Carolina and #1 among NCAA Div. 2 schools in the Southeast (Forbes 2015 America's Top Colleges). As the first Christian college in the state, Erskine has provided excellent education in a nurturing atmosphere for over 175 years. Erskine's small size and rich tradition of scholarship create an ideal atmosphere for students who desire close working relationships with faculty. The results of this intensely relational approach are demonstrated by Erskine's exceptional rates of acceptance and completion in both research and professional graduate programs, with several programs achieving near 100% placement.

**Telephone:** 864-379-8838

**Email:** [admissions@erskine.edu](mailto:admissions@erskine.edu)



*Believe in the possibilities.*

## GANNON UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Erie, PA

**Website:** [www.gannon.edu](http://www.gannon.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1925

**Type of Institution:** University

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 14:1

**Institutional Designation:** Private - Religious

**Tuition Costs:** \$28,590-\$30,310

**Room & Board:** \$10,270-\$13,500

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$20,989

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$17,030

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$2,300

Gannon University in downtown Erie, Pennsylvania, is a caring community of dynamic faculty and staff who educate motivated students in an environment inspired by Catholic values. Enrollment at Gannon exceeds 4,400 students, and personal attention for each student is provided with a student-to-faculty ratio of 14:1. U.S. News & World Report's "America's Best Colleges" continues to cite Gannon as a top tier university in the northern region of the United States. Additionally, Gannon has been ranked in the annual guide's Great Schools, Great Prices category, which affirms Gannon's mission of providing a quality education at an affordable price.

**Telephone:** 814-871-7407

**Email:** [admissions@gannon.edu](mailto:admissions@gannon.edu)



## HAMPTON UNIVERSITY

### HAMPTON UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Hampton, VA

**Website:** [www.hamptonu.edu](http://www.hamptonu.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1868

**Type of Institution:** Private

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 10:1

**Institutional Designation:** Hampton University, coeducational

**Tuition Costs:** \$20,526

**Room & Board:** \$10,176

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$5,632

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 35%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$5,050

At Hampton University “Inspiration to Impact” are more than words. We offer a rich academic environment that cultivates leaders. Through global scientific collaborations and modern research projects, our professors and students are asking questions and finding answers. We offer our students innovative courses that lead to 48 bachelor’s; 24 master’s programs; and doctoral or professional degrees in nursing, physics, atmospheric/planetary sciences, business leadership and administration, educational leadership and management, physical therapy, and pharmacy.

**Telephone:** 757-727-5000

**Email:** [admissioncounselor@hamptonu.edu](mailto:admissioncounselor@hamptonu.edu)



## HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY®

prideandpurpose

### HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Hempstead, NY

**Website:** [hofstra.edu](http://hofstra.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1935

**Type of Institution:** University

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 13:1

**Institutional Designation:** Private, Non-profit

**Tuition Costs:** \$42,160 (includes tuition and fees)

**Room & Board:** \$13,800

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$27,058

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 62%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$16,062

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$2,950

Hofstra University offers students the complete college experience — a vibrant, active campus with hundreds of cultural and social events annually, small classes with experienced faculty, access to state-of-the-art technology and facilities — all less than an hour away from New York City.

**Telephone:** 516-463-6700

**Email:** [admission@hofstra.edu](mailto:admission@hofstra.edu)





## LYNN UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Boca Raton, Florida

**Website:** [www.lynn.edu](http://www.lynn.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1962

**Type of Institution:** Lynn University is an Independent, nonprofit, coeducational, residential institution.

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 18:1

**Tuition Costs:** \$34,400

**Room & Board:** \$11,640

Lynn University is an independent college based in Boca Raton, Florida, with approximately 3,000 students from 100 countries. U.S. News and World Report ranks Lynn among the top three most innovative and international schools in the region. Lynn's Dialogues curriculum and award-winning iPad program help graduates gain the intellectual flexibility and global experience to fulfill their potential in an ever changing world.

**Telephone:** 561-237-7900

**Email:** [admission@lynn.edu](mailto:admission@lynn.edu)



## MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Huntington, WV

**Website:** [www.marshall.edu](http://www.marshall.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1837

**Type of Institution:** Public

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 19:1

**Institutional Designation:** Master's Large

**Tuition Costs:** \$7,154 WV resident; \$16,382 non-resident

**Room & Board:** \$10,126

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$11,163

Marshall University is a mid-sized, public institution with multiple campuses and educational centers in West Virginia. Founded in 1837 and named in honor of the 4th Chief Justice John Marshall, the university is headquartered on a 100-acre campus in the heart of Huntington, WV, the second-largest city in the state. Students find that Marshall combines the best of the opportunities of a large institution with the personal care and attention expected with a school of a much smaller size.

**Telephone:** 1-877-goherd1

**Email:** [recruitment@marshall.edu](mailto:recruitment@marshall.edu)





## MERCYHURST UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Erie, PA

**Website:** [www.mercyhurst.edu](http://www.mercyhurst.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1926

**Type of Institution:** 4-year, Catholic, liberal arts

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 14:1

**Tuition Costs:** \$32,430

**Room & Board:** \$11,000-\$13,000 (depending on residence hall)

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$20,000

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** More than 90% of students receive financial aid

Mercyhurst University, founded in 1926 by the Sisters of Mercy, is a fully accredited, four-year, Catholic comprehensive institution, in Erie, Pa. The university offers more than 100 majors, minors and concentrations as well as unique post-baccalaureate, advanced certificate and master's degree programs. In addition, Mercyhurst provides certificate and associate degree offerings at branch campuses in North East, Corry and the Booker T. Washington Center. Inspired by our motto, "Carpe Diem" (seize the day), our faculty and students are busy making a difference on and off campus — from "the Hill" to the far corners of the world.

**Telephone:** 800-825-1926 x2202



## NAROPA UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Boulder, CO

**Website:** [www.naropa.edu](http://www.naropa.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1974

**Type of Institution:** Private liberal arts

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 9:1

**Institutional Designation:** Nonprofit

**Tuition Costs:** \$31,620 per year

**Room & Board:** \$11,880 per year

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$37,041

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 89%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$27,600

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$7,676

Naropa University is a private, liberal arts university in Boulder, Colorado offering undergraduate and graduate degree programs in the arts, early childhood education, environmental studies, peace studies, psychology and religious studies. Naropa is a leader in the contemplative education movement, a teaching and learning approach that integrates Eastern wisdom studies and traditional Western scholarship.

**Telephone:** 1-800-772-6951 or 303-546-3572

**Email:** [admissions@naropa.edu](mailto:admissions@naropa.edu)





## NIAGARA UNIVERSITY

**Location:** In historic Lewiston, New York, four minutes from Niagara Falls, 20 minutes from Buffalo and 90 minutes from Toronto

**Website:** [www.niagara.edu](http://www.niagara.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1856

**Type of Institution:** private, four-year, comprehensive, Catholic, co-educational university

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 13:1

**Institutional Designation:** Private, religious (Vincentian), Masters Large

**Tuition Costs:** \$29,500

**Room & Board:** \$12,700

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$27,232

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 86%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$22,618

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$1,705

Founded in 1856, Niagara University is a comprehensive institution, blending the best of a liberal arts and professional education, grounded in a values-based Catholic tradition. Its colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Education, and Hospitality and Tourism Management offer programs at the baccalaureate, master's and doctoral level.

As the first Vincentian university established in the United States, Niagara prepares students for personal and professional success while emphasizing service to the community.

**Telephone:** 800-462-2111 or 716-286-8715

**Email:** [admissions@niagara.edu](mailto:admissions@niagara.edu)



## THE OCEAN CORPORATION

**Location:** Houston, Texas

**Website:** [www.oceancorp.com](http://www.oceancorp.com)

**Year Founded:** 1969

**Type of Institution:** Vocational/Trade School

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 30:1

**Institutional Designation:** Single Campus/Full Academic Year/Proprietary

**Tuition Costs:** \$21,000

**Room & Board:** No on-campus housing and meal plans available

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$15,541

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 78%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$4,862

The Ocean Corporation has trained men and women for exciting new careers since 1969. Students train at The Ocean Corporation to become commercial divers and industrial NDT inspectors. We have been in the business for over 40 years and we know the "nuts and bolts" of both industries. Our hands-on training takes less than 8 months to complete and will give you the competitive edge you need to succeed.

**Telephone:** 800-321-0298

**Email:** [admissions@oceancorp.com](mailto:admissions@oceancorp.com)



## PENN COLLEGE™

### PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

**Location:** Williamsport, PA

**Website:** [www.pct.edu/link](http://www.pct.edu/link)

**Year Founded:** 1914

**Type of Institution:** 4-year college

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 17.6 to 1

**Institutional Designation:** Public

**Tuition Costs:** \$16,080 (PA); \$22,890 (out-of-state)

**Room & Board:** \$10,412 (depending on housing and meal plan selected)

Pennsylvania College of Technology, a special mission affiliate of Penn State, is a national leader in applied technology education and is ranked among the top 10 public regional colleges in the north by U.S. News' Best Colleges. Penn College offers more than 100 bachelor, associate, and certificate majors in careers ranging from manufacturing, design, transportation, and construction to hospitality, health, business, and natural resources. Business/industry connections, small classes, industry-standard equipment, and faculty with work experience contribute to strong graduate placement rates. The full college experience awaits those desiring on-campus housing, Greek Life, student organizations, and NCAA Division III athletics.

**Telephone:** 800-367-9222

**Email:** [pctInfo@pct.edu](mailto:pctInfo@pct.edu)



### REGENT UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Virginia Beach, VA

**Website:** [www.regent.edu](http://www.regent.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1977

**Type of Institution:** Private, Liberal Arts, Christian

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 19:1

**Tuition Costs:** On Campus: \$15,900/year (24-36 credits/yr.); Evening/Online: \$395 per credit hour

**Room & Board:** Room: \$2,150 - \$5,785 per semester; Board: \$2,520 avg.)

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$11,889

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 60%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$6,709

Regent University prepares students with the knowledge to excel and the faith to live with purpose. Our 20,000+ alumni, from more than 110 countries, are changing the world as accomplished professionals. Named a top-20 school nationally for online bachelor's programs (*U.S. News & World Report*, 2016), Regent is among the most affordable undergraduate Christian colleges (CCU 2016). Fully accredited, challenging programs are available online and on campus. New classes begin every eight weeks.

**Telephone:** 866.910.7615

**Email:** [admissions@regent.edu](mailto:admissions@regent.edu)





## SALISBURY UNIVERSITY

**Location:** Salisbury, MD

**Website:** [www.salisbury.edu](http://www.salisbury.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1925

**Type of Institution:** 4-year, public comprehensive

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 16:1

**Institutional Designation:** A Maryland University of National Distinction

**Tuition Costs:** \$8,128 in-state; \$16,474 out of state

**Room & Board:** \$10,240 (based on "all day, every day" meals and double occupancy renovated dorm)

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$7,143 (need-based)

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 52.4% (need-based)

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$2,514 (non-need-based), \$5,644 (need-based)

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$1,888

Nationally recognized for academic excellence, Salisbury University is a proud member of the University System of Maryland offering 42 undergraduate majors, 14 graduate programs and 2 doctorates in nursing practice and education. SU is ranked among the nation's "Best Value" colleges by Kiplinger's Personal Finance, Money, Forbes and The Princeton Review and U.S. News & World Report. Washington Monthly also named SU among America's "Best Bang For The Buck" Colleges. Sea Gull athletes have earned 19 NCAA Division III national team championships. Founded in 1925, SU is just 2.5 hours from Baltimore and Washington, D.C.

**Telephone:** 410-543-6161

**Email:** [admissions@salisbury.edu](mailto:admissions@salisbury.edu)



## TALLAHASSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Location:** Tallahassee, Florida

**Website:** [www.tcc.fl.edu/link](http://www.tcc.fl.edu/link)

**Year Founded:** 1966

**Type of Institution:** Community college

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 24:1

**Institutional Designation:** Level II accreditation

**Tuition Costs:** In-state = \$101/credit hour.

Out-of-state = \$387/credit hour

**Room & Board:** No on-campus housing

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$5,601

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$1,812

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$4,000

TCC consistently places as one of the nation's top producers of Associate in Arts degree recipients among 2-year colleges. TCC is the top transfer school to neighboring Florida State University and Florida A&M University, due in large part to the TCC2FSU and TCC2FAMU guaranteed transfer programs and the college's affordable in-state and out-of-state tuition.

Tallahassee, the capital city of the beautiful "Sunshine State," is recognized as one of the top college towns in the nation.

**Telephone:** 850-201-8555

**Email:** [admissions@tcc.fl.edu](mailto:admissions@tcc.fl.edu)





## TEXAS A&M KINGSVILLE

**Location:** Kingsville, TX

**Website:** [www.tamuk.edu](http://www.tamuk.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1925

**Type of Institution:** Public

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 20:1

**Institutional Designation:** Four-year

**Tuition Costs:** \$8,048 per year (in-state for 15 semester credit hours)

**Room & Board:** \$4,012 per semester or \$8,024 per year

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$13,215

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 77%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$6,680

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$2,933

Texas A&M University-Kingsville is the fastest growing public doctoral university in the nation. Degree offerings include well-known programs in engineering, agriculture and music, and new programs in veterinary technology and criminal justice. Classroom learning is enhanced through hands-on research opportunities at both the undergraduate and graduate level. Recognized for excellence in affordability, financial aid, athletics and more, Texas A&M-Kingsville offers a complete college experience.

**Telephone:** 361-593-2315

**Email:** [admissions@tamuk.edu](mailto:admissions@tamuk.edu)



**NEW YORK SCHOOL OF  
CAREER & APPLIED STUDIES**  
A DIVISION OF TOURO COLLEGE

*Where Knowledge and Values Meet*

## TOURO COLLEGE, NEW YORK SCHOOL OF CAREER AND APPLIED STUDIES (NYSCAS)

**Location:** NYC

**Website:** [nyscas.touro.edu](http://nyscas.touro.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1971

**Type of Institution:** Comprehensive higher education system

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 19:1

**Tuition Costs:** \$14,600

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$9,000

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 90%

NYSCAS is ideally suited to reflect, and respond to, the challenges of this new era. Our tradition of academic excellence has given us the foundation and confidence to reach for new and unimaginable knowledge, while the diversity of our University system community makes it possible for students, faculty, alumni, and neighbors to interact with — and thus be transformed by — the multiplicity of human perspectives. At the same time, our numerous locations in the world's most global city offers us a unique laboratory in which to study the evolution of modern society, attract and learn from the remarkable people who make New York home and, in doing so, fulfill our responsibilities as active, engaged citizens.

**Telephone:** 212 463-0400 ext.5500

**Email:** [admissions.nyscas@touro.edu](mailto:admissions.nyscas@touro.edu)





## UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-VICTORIA

**Location:** Victoria, Texas

**Website:** [www.uhv.edu](http://www.uhv.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1973

**Type of Institution:** 4-year public, university

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 17:1

**Institutional Designation:** Bachelor's and master's

**Tuition Costs:** \$7,115 (full-time, in-state, undergraduate)

**Room & Board:** \$7,662

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$9,952

**Average Percentage of Financial Need Met:** 60%

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$4,068

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$2,065

The University of Houston-Victoria offers courses leading to 70 bachelor's and master's degree programs and concentrations in the schools of Arts & Sciences; Business Administration; and Education, Health Professions & Human Development. UHV provides face-to-face classes at its Victoria, Texas, campus as well as a teaching site in Katy, Texas, and online classes that students can take from anywhere. Since its founding in 1973, UHV has provided students with a quality education from excellent faculty at an affordable price.

**Telephone:** 877-970-4848

**Email:** [recruitment@uhv.edu](mailto:recruitment@uhv.edu)



## UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA WILMINGTON

**Location:** Wilmington, North Carolina

**Website:** [www.uncw.edu](http://www.uncw.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1947

**Type of Institution:** 4 year public

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 18:1

**Institutional Designation:** Masters Comprehensive University

**Tuition Costs:** In-State • Tuition & Fees \$6,952

Out-of-State • Tuition & Fees \$20,920

**Room & Board:** \$10,060

The University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW) is divided into 5 academic units: the College of Arts and Sciences; the College of Health and Human Services; the Watson College of Education; the Cameron School of Business; and the UNCW Graduate School. Through these institutions, 54 undergraduate degrees and 33 graduate degrees are offered.

The "US News and World Report" consistently ranks UNCW within the top 15 overall universities and within the top 10 public universities in the South. The "Princeton Review" recognized UNCW among the Best in the Southeast.

**Telephone:** 910-962-3243

**Email:** [admissions@uncw.edu](mailto:admissions@uncw.edu)





## UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST

**Location:** 1409 Walnut Grove Avenue,  
Rosemead, CA 91770

**Website:** [www.uwest.edu](http://www.uwest.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1991

**Type of Institution:** 4 year private

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 10:1

**Institutional Designation:** WASC accredited

**Tuition Costs:** \$\$5,256/semester

**Room & Board:** \$3,069/semester

**Average Student Aid Package:** \$8,857

**Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded:** \$7,740

**Average Work-Study Aid Awarded:** \$3,300

University of the West offers programs in Business, English, Psychology, Liberal Arts, and Religious Studies. Our experienced and committed faculty and staff provide personalized attention for students to succeed in and out of the classroom. With a community representing more than 40 countries, UWest fully embraces a diverse array of cultures and perspectives. In addition, UWest dedicates efforts to provide accessible education by offering a selection of private scholarships of up to \$10,000.

**Telephone:** (626)571-8811

**Email:** [admission@uwest.edu](mailto:admission@uwest.edu)



# UTICA

## COLLEGE

## UTICA COLLEGE

**Location:** Utica, NY

**Website:** [www.utica.edu](http://www.utica.edu)

**Year Founded:** 1946

**Type of Institution:** 4-year, private, residential college

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** 11:1

**Tuition Costs:** \$19,996

**Room & Board:** \$10,434

Utica College is seizing the initiative among America's colleges and universities in addressing affordability. Starting in Fall 2016, Utica is resetting its tuition to under \$20,000 per year, and that's before scholarships and financial aid. Specializing in professional education with a strong foundation in the liberal arts, UC offers innovative, career-driven programs in 16 of the 20 most desired majors and an 11:1 student to faculty ratio. An excellent educational value just got better.

**Telephone:** 800-782-8884

**Email:** [admiss@utica.edu](mailto:admiss@utica.edu)



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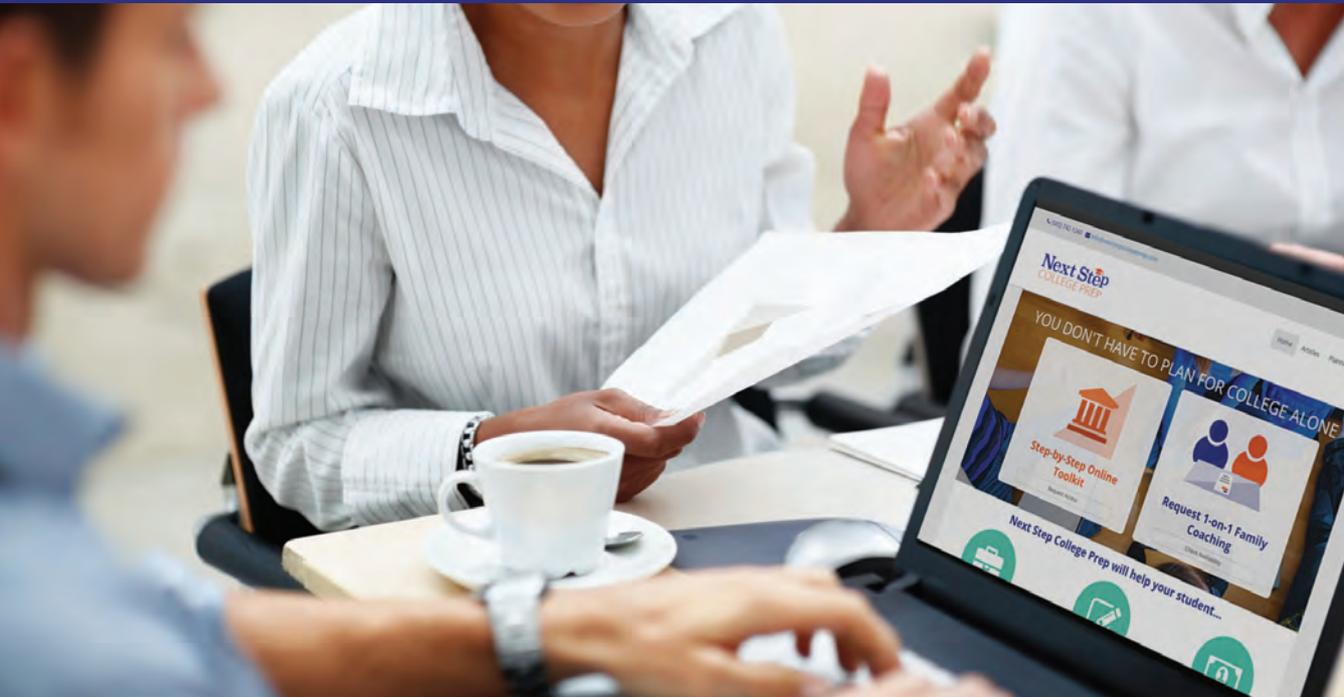
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Contact us at [Jason@linkforcounselors.com](mailto:Jason@linkforcounselors.com) to find out how you can participate.



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**[NEXTSTPCOLLEGEPREP.COM/CURRICULUM](https://nextstepcollegeprep.com/curriculum)**

**For more information or to sign up for access to the Online Toolkit and College and Career Planning Curriculum, email [Info@NextStepCollegePrep.com](mailto:Info@NextStepCollegePrep.com) or call (585) 742-1260.**

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