

# A DIFFERENT ROAD TO COLLEGE



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A Guide For Transitioning To College For Non-traditional Students

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Open Oregon Educational Resources



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“Move in day” by University of Central Arkansas is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

College: the romantic transition period from high school to work. Right? Every fall, as summer comes to an end, the media is flooded with images of 18-year-olds and their parents flocking to college campuses, loaded with personal belongings, ready to pack into the dorms. The word “college” tends to make people think of young adults, recently graduated from high school, who will be living in residences on campus, studying with friends, and socializing together on the weekends. Individuals who have found and been accepted to the school that is the perfect fit for them. Let the magic begin.

Many young adults will have spent the summer preparing for the transition to college. Bedrooms were cleaned, youthfully acquired belongings sorted and downsized, memories revisited and college planning guides for student success read. Transition guides include topics like: 10 things to do to be ready for college;

dorm living; tips for classroom success; shopping for the things you will need in college; college and drinking; staying connected; and dealing with setbacks. All things the young adults need to know before striking out on their own for the first time. The 18 year old, recent high school senior is seen as the “typical” college student.

However, the student profile for many colleges today is shifting. Young adults with few responsibilities other than college courses, organizational issues, and maybe a few hours of work to earn spending money are becoming a shrinking demographic on many college campuses. Today’s college classrooms are increasingly becoming infused with *non-traditional* students, those over the age of 24 with responsibilities beyond the classroom walls. These are not students who transition directly from high school to post-secondary education. Many are first-generation college students whose parents have not attended college and are not providing the students with first-hand information about the inner workings of college. Besides the basic foundational information surrounding college, non-traditional students need help understanding the information regarding the contextual aspects of college systems.

### **WHY I WROTE THIS BOOK**

Most textbooks available on the topic of college transition/success today focus on the traditional 18-year old student, and the needs of someone living away from home for the first time. The desire to create this textbook comes from years of experience helping GED and other non-traditional students transition to community college and beyond. For over a decade, I have taught a class designed to specifically help non-traditional students build the contextual knowledge of college systems to help them be able to advocate for themselves and navigate the world of college. I have witnessed the struggle and confusion on the part of students trying to understand the contextual aspects of college and develop the confidence needed to take the

transitional step. The content of this textbook will not focus on the needs young adults living away from home for the first time. There will be no shopping list for dorm supplies.

The goal of the book is to help students understand how to select the right college for them and then become acquainted with the inner workings and language of college. The content will be infused with stories about students who have successfully made the transition to college and their advice.

Today's classrooms are increasingly becoming more diverse by age, ethnicity, and life experiences. It is important to recognize that all the faces in the classroom are, the students. While their preparation and pathway to college may have been non-traditional, once they have enrolled in college, they are the students.

### **WHAT MAKES A STUDENT NON-TRADITIONAL?**

Non-traditional students have an ever-growing presence on college campuses, especially community colleges. Non-traditional students can be broadly defined as having one or more of the following characteristics:

- Entry to college delayed at least one year following high school
- 24 years or older
- Having dependents
- Being a single parent
- Being employed full-time
- Being financially independent
- Veterans of US armed services
- Homeless or at risk of homelessness
- Attending college part-time
- Not having a high school diploma

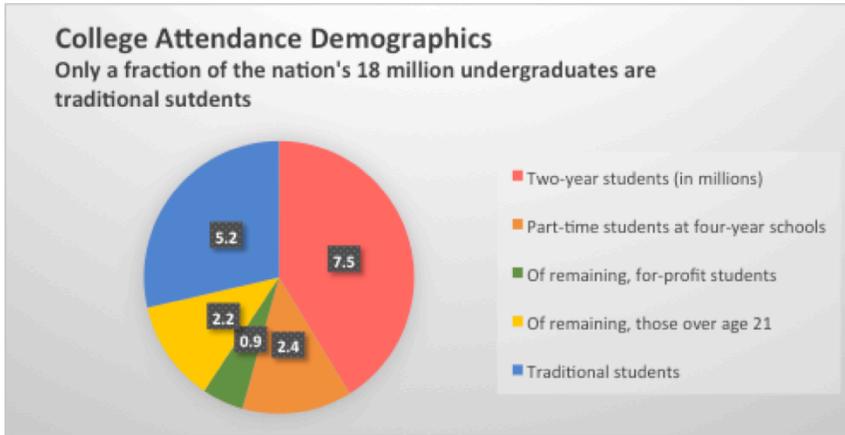
- First-generation college student
- First generation in the US
- English Language Learner
- Dislocated worker.

The degree to which a student is non-traditional can greatly influence college success. The more characteristics from the list a student possesses, the more non-traditional the student may be from the perspective of the college system. However, the student may not view him or herself as non-traditional since several of the characteristics listed are typical adult behaviors, but when it comes to how colleges serves students, the individual is non-traditional in behaviors, needs, and expectations..

Non-traditional students face critical issues surrounding participation in college and ultimately, college success. These critical issues include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Strategies for managing competing needs on their time
- Difficulty navigating confusing institutional environments
- Understanding the culture of college
- Transitional services not in place to the same degree as for “traditional” students
- Knowledgeable support systems
- Personal barriers
- Unpredictable influences on their schedules
- Work first, study second priorities
- Paying for college
- Underprepared foundation skills (Reading, Writing, Math, Computer Literacy, Human Relations, Oral Communication).

## DOES A NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENT SELECT THE SAME COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT AS TRADITIONAL STUDENT?



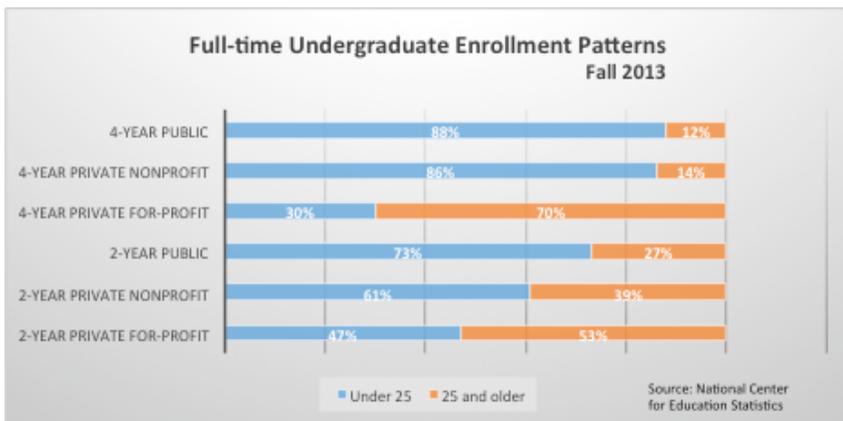
“College Attendance Demographics” by National Center for Education Statistics is in the Public Domain

Data from the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) supports the information highlighted in their 2003 report titled *Work First Study Second*. During the 1999-2000 academic year, 43% of undergraduates enrolled in postsecondary education were age 24 or older. This age is significant because it is used for determining financial independence for Federal Financial Aid programs (fafsa.ed.gov). Financial independence combined with the growing cost of attending college is leading to a growing number of part-time students enrolled in college classrooms. A more recent article in the Wall Street Journal indicates that the number of non-traditional students passed the 50% mark in 2011 (Number of the Week: ‘Non-Traditional’ Students Are Majority on College Campuses).

Research provided in 2012 by the Institute for Women’s Policy Research (IWPR) revealed that 51% of college students qualified as low income and would have to work to cover direct and indirect college expenses. The data shows that almost a third of college students need to work 35 hours/week or more while balancing their course loads, homework, and meeting family responsibilities. A little more than a quarter of non-traditional

students are parents and 15% are likely to be single parents. The face of the college student is changing, as the data shows: Yesterday's Non-Traditional Student is Today's Traditional Student.

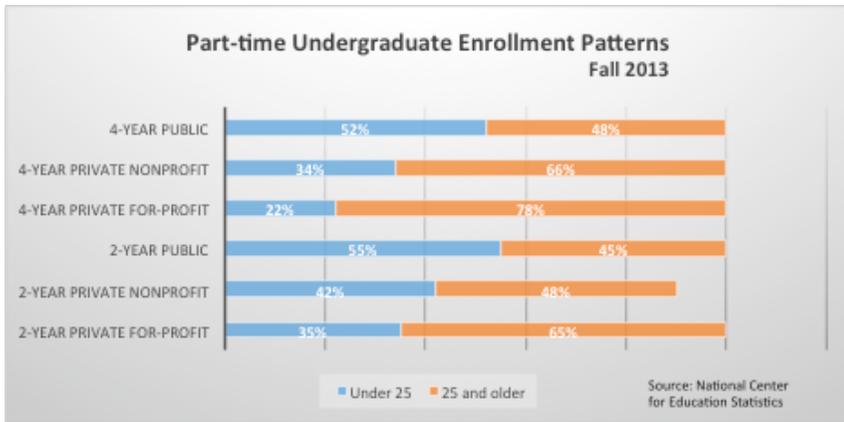
Financial independence influences attendance patterns and suggests a trend in college selection by non-traditional students. In the *Work First Study Second* report, 82% percent of the students were employed while attending college and thought of themselves as “employees who study” rather than “students who work”. A significant difference between employees who study and students who work is how they blend work and college attendance. Not surprisingly, employees who study work full-time and attend college part-time; students who work attend college full-time and work part-time.



“Full-time undergraduate enrollment patterns, Fall 2013” by National Center for Education Statistics is in the Public Domain

Analyzing the data from NCES around college attendance patterns in the fall of 2013, 4-year colleges, both public and private had over 85% of their **full-time** student enrollment composed of young adults (under the age of 25). This trend was *not* true for private for-profit colleges, where young adults represented about 30% of the student population. Students over 24 years old tend to select private for-profit colleges 4-year colleges over public and private 4-year colleges. At 2-year

colleges, the same trend could be seen. Approximately 70% of students attending 2-year colleges, both public and private, were young adults and 30% were over the age of 24. Once again, private for-profit colleges were composed of more non-traditional students. Students over 24 years old made up 53% of their student population.



“Part-time undergraduate enrollment patterns, Fall 2013” by National Center for Education Statistics is in the Public Domain

According to NCES data, during the same time period, students over the age of 24 accounted for nearly 50% of the **part-time** students at public 4-year institutions; nearly 66% of part-time enrollment at private non-profit institutions; and over 75% of part-time students enrolled at 4-year for profit institutions. At 2-year colleges, 55% of the students were young adults at public colleges and 45% were over 24 years of age. Two-year private colleges had only 42% students were young adults and 48% were over 24 years old. At private for-profit 2-year colleges, 35% of part-time students were young adults and 65% were students over the age of 24.

Yesterday’s non-traditional students are becoming today’s *students* and bringing with them a different set of experiences and expectations. Employees who study report being interested in gaining skills to enhance their positions or improve future work opportunities as reasons for attending post-secondary

education. In the Work First Study Second report, 80% of the employees who work reported enrolling in post-secondary education to gain a degree or credential.

Based on the research, non-traditional students are more likely to display the following preferences/behaviors than traditional students:

- Attend community colleges
- Be working towards an associate degree and vocational certificates
- Major in occupational fields such as computer science, business, vocational/technical fields
- Take fewer courses in behavioral sciences and general education.

### **WHY DO THE DEMOGRAPHICS MATTER?**

If you talk to people who have gone to college 10, 15, 20, or even 40 years ago, you will hear similar stories about what their college experiences were like. College systems and structural foundations have not changed much from the past. The change that is happening is in the student demographics and their needs/expectations. It is important for students to realize every college has its own culture. Finding a comfortable match between student expectations and college expectations is essential for student success. Looking at demographics can help students think about what type of student needs would impact college selection and how does that relate their individual needs. For example, working students may need more course offering that are online or have shorter class session. Working students may have skills from their jobs and feel that they don't need certain types of classes as a result. In addition, looking at college selection demographics can help perspective students understand there are many roads to college. Ultimately, college is a dynamic equation. Recognizing expectations from the

student's needs and the college's ability to provide for those needs is a major factor in the student's college success.



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**L**earning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere.  
~Chinese Proverb

What's college for? That's a little question with a big answer! A college education comes in many shapes and sizes. A 2010 report from the National Center for Education Statistics estimates that there are 4,500 different post-secondary degree-granting institutions exist in the US.

These schools may be public, private, religious, small, large, for-profit, community colleges, junior colleges. Considering the variety of college options, there is no single answer to the question, "What is college for?" Brenda Hellyer, Chancellor of San Jacinto College in Houston and Pasadena, Texas, wrote in the Chronicle of Higher Education that students "are seeking more than an education—they are seeking options, opportunities, and guidance."

### HOW DO YOU VIEW COLLEGE? WHAT WILL DEFINE COLLEGE SUCCESS FOR YOU?

People go to college for a variety of reasons. The type of college you select will help set parameters and expectations for your experiences. Before jumping into the details of going to college, it's important to stop and think about the purpose college has in your life. Traditionally, college was a place young adults went after high school to explore courses and majors before settling into a job path. Today, most people generally go to college for one of 5 main reasons:

1. **Job Opportunities:** A college degree is seen as a

minimum qualification for entry into the skilled labor market. Higher education can better prepare you for work, but also increase your flexibility to change jobs and locations. A degree or certificate can act as a springboard for employment.

2. **Security in a Changing Economy:** College experience may give you the ability to better adapt to changing business conditions.
3. **More Money:** a degree or certificate may mean greater expertise to an employer and result in higher wages. Investing in a college degree may make it easier to maintain employment in economically challenging times.
4. **Better Health:** Many jobs that require college degrees are less physically demanding in terms of the labor requirements to perform them. In addition, health insurance options may be better through employers.
5. **Learning Things of Interest:** college is a pathway to exploring new studies and finding personal passions leading to alternative career paths.

**WHAT IMPRESSION DOES THIS TED TALK LEAVE YOU WITH?  
WHICH GENERATION ARE YOU?**



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/collegetransition/?p=5>

Video Link: <https://youtu.be/sgbzbdxTm4E>

An article from 2015 in the Washington Post, What's the purpose of college: A job or an education? says that students entering college today list getting a better job as the most important reason to attend college. In the past, learning about things that interested them was listed as the top reason to attend college. When did the change in priority occur? In his article *The Day The Purpose of College Changed*, Dan Berrett says the change in priority can be linked to Ronald Reagan, when he was Governor of California.

Economic times were tough in 1967 for California. Everyone needed to "tighten their belts." At that time, California was

known for excellent higher educational system. In a speech Reagan gave on Feb. 28, 1967, a month into his term as Governor, Reagan assured people that he wouldn't do anything to harm the quality of their public education system. "But," he added, "We do believe that there are certain intellectual luxuries that perhaps we could do without." Taxpayers should not be "subsidizing intellectual curiosity," he said. By the time Reagan won the presidency, in 1980, practical degrees had become the popular choice. In the 1930s, around the time Reagan went to college, about 8% of students majored in "business and commerce." When he was elected Governor, that share was 12%. By the time he moved into the White House, more students majored in business than anything else. Business, as a major, has held that top spot ever since.

**WHAT FRAMES YOUR VALUE OF EDUCATION?  
WHAT KIND OF RETURN ON YOUR INVESTMENT DO YOU  
EXPECT FROM COLLEGE?**

Deciding to go to college has an "*opportunity cost*." An opportunity cost is based on the economic principle that there are limited resources available and choices must be made. Examples of resources would be things like time and money. If you are spending time doing something, you must give up doing something else you want to do. That is the opportunity cost of your choice. Going to college will have an opportunity cost in your life. An important question to ask in the beginning of your college venture is: what are you willing to trade off for going to college?

Opportunity costs are tied to the idea of return on investment. Once you make an investment of your time and money in college, what investment are you hoping to get in return? How you define success in relationship to your college experience impacts how you see the concept of return on investment. Some ways to gauge return on investment include: job opportunities after college, immediate financial benefit to earned wages, social network/connections made while attending college,

development of communication and other “soft skills,” and personal enrichment and/or happiness.

Short-term rewards compared to long-term rewards are another way to look at return on investment. For example, it takes much longer to become a CEO (Chief Executive Officer) of a company than it does to get a well-paid job at the same company. Different skills would be required from the CEO and it may require more investment to acquire those skills. Frances Bronet, the Dean of the School of Architecture at the University of Oregon, conducted a survey of former engineering graduates when she taught at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. She asked former graduates what they felt they had missed in their education. The results were very different depending on how recent their graduation was. Students who had graduated 1 year ago felt that they needed more technical skills. People who had graduated 5 years ago felt that they needed more management skills, and people who had graduated 10-20 years ago felt that they needed more cultural literacy because their work now involved more working with other cultures.

Deciding to go to college is a big decision and choosing a course of study can seem overwhelming to many students. Considering the changing world we live in, knowing what direction to go is not easy. According to Richard Riley, secretary of education under Bill Clinton, “We are currently preparing students for jobs that don’t exist using technology that haven’t been invented in order to solve problems that we don’t even know.”

**SIR KEN ROBINSON: DO SCHOOLS KILL CREATIVITY? (TED TALK)**

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Video link: <https://youtu.be/iG9CE55wbtY>

**PERSONAL INVENTORY QUESTIONS:**

1. Why are you here?
2. Why college, why now?
3. How do you define college?
4. What do you imagine college life to be like?
5. How do you know when you are ready for college?
6. What have you done to prepare for college?
7. What do you think college expects from students?
8. What does going to college mean for your future?
9. Using the list of 5 reasons students attend college

provided in this chapter, rank your reasons for going to college.

10. In your opinion, is it a good idea for academic counselors to steer high school kids towards either a 4-year degree or vocational training? Should students be steered towards careers that would be a good “fit” for them?
11. Opportunity Cost Analysis: Create a pie chart identifying how you currently spend your time (daily/weekly).

#### **SUGGESTED READINGS:**

The Day The Purpose of College Changed by Dan Berrett (1/26/2015)

What’s College For? Commentary Chronicle of Higher Education (4/22/2013)

How To Assess The Real Pay Off Of A College Degree by Scott Carlson (4/22/2013)

What’s The Purpose of College: A Job or An Education by Jeffery J. Selingo (2/2/2015)



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*B*etween saying and doing many a pair of shoes is worn out.  
~Italian Proverb

Before you enroll a college, it is important to understand your educational goal. Knowing your goal will help you decide the type of college you will need to select to reach that goal.

**SCOTT DINSMORE: HOW TO FIND AND DO WORK YOU LOVE  
(TED TALK)**



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Video link: <https://youtu.be/jpe-LKn-4gM>

Before getting too far into the topic of choosing to attend college, stop for a moment and think about the following questions:

- What is your educational goal?
- What are the top 5 criteria you would use in selecting a college?
- What kind of degree or certificate will you need to achieve your educational goal?
- Do you want to be full-time or part-time student?
- Will you need to work while you are going to college? How much?
- What are your priorities from a college?
- What do you expect from your teachers?
- What kind of support services do you need from a college?
- What class size would make you feel comfortable?
- Do you need support in improving your basic skills in Reading, Writing, Math or Speaking English?
- What are you willing to pay for your college education?
- How do you plan to finance your college education?

It is important for potential students to realize that every college has its own culture. Finding a comfortable match between student expectations and college expectations is essential for student success. Ultimately, college is a dynamic experience and the student is half the equation. The culture of a college plays a key role in finding a good match. It is important to take the time you need to make the decision about the college that is right for you. Rushing the process can lead to an unsuccessful match-up. Following a friend or family member to the same college they selected may also lead to a mismatched situation.

If possible, try to visit the college in person to get a feel for the campus and the setting. Are you looking for an urban, suburban, or online setting? The distance you travel to attend college will impact many aspects of your college participation. Location is an important aspect of the overall college selection process. The process of finding the right college for you will depend on your educational goal and your expectation for services from a college.

### 10 FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN FINDING THE RIGHT COLLEGE MATCH FOR YOU

1. **Cost**

How important is the tuition cost to your decision?

Tuition example: The average yearly tuition at Lane Community College is \$4,275.00 as of this writing (find the most up-to-date info on the Lane College Tuition, Fees and Payments page). The average yearly tuition at the University of Oregon is \$8,190.00 as of this writing (find up-to-date info on the University of Oregon Cost of Attendance page).

2. **Flexible Pacing For Completing A Program**

How convenient and flexible are the class times and locations? Are there evening and weekend offerings? Online or Hybrid courses?

3. **Your Work Schedule**

How will your employment affect your ability to attend classes?

4. **Open Access**

What are the enrollment requirements of the college?

5. **Teaching Quality**

Who will teach the classes you take and is the college accredited?

6. **College Size**

How big a campus are you comfortable with and what size classes do you expect?

7. **Support Services**

Will you want child care, computer labs, health services, parking, tutoring, financial aid, scholarships, or other services?

8. **Academic Reputation**

What do you know about the academic quality of the college?

9. **Variety of Certificate/Degree Options**

Are you interested in career pathway options or transferring credits to another school? Are you planning to use the college you select to attend as a stepping-stone to another college or program?

10. **Opportunity to play sports or participate in club activities**

How important is it to you to have activities to participate in outside of your course work?

Where can a student find out information about the factors to consider when selecting a college when evaluating a specific college? Many students would suggest Google or another online search engine, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media, which may be helpful, but the place to learn the specific details of college is in their college catalog.

**THE MOST IMPORTANT BOOK ON CAMPUS: THE COLLEGE CATALOG**

A college catalog is the place a college puts all the information regarding the specific details and rules of the school. The purpose is to have all that information in one easy place for prospective students and current students. A school's catalog contains all the information you need to know about living and learning at the school of your choice, so it can help streamline your college or degree research process. College catalogs are a long-standing tradition that pre-dates the Internet and websites. Many colleges are trying to find a way to make the information more available to students on websites and other social media.

The information in college catalogs changes as degree

programs, school rules, and student expectations change. These changes make the catalog just as useful to current students as it is to new students. Catalogs are usually published every year, so make sure you're using the most current version. Specific topics covered include:

- Overview of the college's history
- Availability of financial aid and specific financial aid programs
- Academic expectations
- Degree programs and course descriptions
- Tuition, housing, and meals costs/estimates
- Campus life information
- Mission statement/statement of faith for religious affiliations
- School policies and student services offered

### FINDING COLLEGE CATALOGS

Most colleges give students access to the catalog on the school website. In addition, you may be able to pick up a printed copy on campus. Some colleges do a better job of making the transition to online information delivery and accessibility better than others. Finding easy-to-use online college catalogs may be frustrating to new college students. For this reason, some students prefer printed catalogs as they get acquainted with the framework of college systems.

### WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A CERTIFICATE, ASSOCIATE DEGREE, AND A BACHELOR'S DEGREE?

The main differences between certificates, associate degrees, and bachelor's degrees boil down to these 5 factors:

1. **Time:** How long does it take to earn the credential?

2. **Tuition:** How many courses/units/credits will it take to obtain the credential and how much will that cost? This factor may vary from school to school.
3. **Admissions requirements:** What the college expects your skill level to be prior to starting coursework.
4. **Level of study/Amount of Coursework:** Will you study something very specific or something more general?
5. **Career opportunities:** A certificate usually means you have completed a specialized form of training. It may demonstrate technical knowledge in a field and generally it is faster to complete than a degree. Sometimes a certificate can be a benchmark that applies toward a degree.

Associate degrees are commonly referred to as “2-year” degrees. If you can fix something or fix people, an associate degree may be what you are looking for. For example, health professionals, Information Technology, many high tech jobs, and culinary arts are examples of careers that do well with associate degrees. Associate degrees may be used as a stepping stone and transferred meet some of the general required classes for bachelor’s degrees.

Bachelor’s degrees are commonly referred to as “4-year” degrees. A bachelor’s degree extends learning and usually requires around 120 credits (about 40 courses) or more to complete, which is approximately twice as long as an associate degree takes to earn. These numbers vary based on whether the college operates on a semester or quarter schedule. If you want to pursue a career in teaching, engineering, architecture, business, or finance, a bachelor’s degree may be required.

#### **WHERE CAN YOU FIND OUT WHAT EDUCATIONAL LEVEL IS NEEDED FOR A CAREER?**

The table below lists several types of careers. Evaluate each career and determine what kind of educational background a person would need for the jobs listed. Some careers may be

suiting to multiple levels of education and you may select more than one choice if applicable.

Try using a college catalog and/or online search engine to find the information needed to fill in the table below. Some answers will vary based on state regulations for the career.

---

|                                 | Vocational | Certificate | Associate Degree | Bachelor's Degree | No Specific Educational Requirement |
|---------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Truck Driver                    |            |             |                  |                   |                                     |
| Massage Therapist               |            |             |                  |                   |                                     |
| Energy Management Technician    |            |             |                  |                   |                                     |
| Environmental Engineering       |            |             |                  |                   |                                     |
| Early Childhood Education       |            |             |                  |                   |                                     |
| Fitness Specialist              |            |             |                  |                   |                                     |
| Dance Teacher                   |            |             |                  |                   |                                     |
| Computer Information Specialist |            |             |                  |                   |                                     |
| Computer Game Designer          |            |             |                  |                   |                                     |
| Dental Assisting                |            |             |                  |                   |                                     |
| Food Service Management         |            |             |                  |                   |                                     |

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You may have noticed that the answers to the educational requirements for the careers listed in Table 1 may vary and some careers have multiple layers to their skill requirements and degree requirements. Early Childhood Education, for example,

has a career pathway option. Students can earn a certificate and then go on to earn an associate degree and even transfer to earn a bachelor's degree depending on the job aspiration of the student.

### WHAT IS A CAREER PATHWAY?

A Career Pathway Certificate opens doors to your employment and educational goals. Each certificate requires just a few courses and is self-paced. The first certificate gives you a competitive edge when applying for an entry-level position.

### CAREER PATHWAYS: LANE COMMUNITY COLLEGE



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Video link: <https://youtu.be/Mz9DWekMvew>

The Early Childhood Education program at Lane Community College is an example of a program that has a career pathway

option that stacks to an associate degree. Career pathways can help students earn a certificate quickly and improve employment options, as well as serving as the beginning steps to an associate degree. Read the course catalog information linked above to see how the programs intertwine and give students multiple options.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of each of these educational outcomes? Fill in the table below based on your opinion.

Advantages

Disadvantages

Vocational Training

Certificate

Associate Degree (2-yrs)

Bachelor's Degree (4-yrs)

---

**BASED ON WHAT YOU KNOW SO FAR ABOUT CERTIFICATES  
AND DEGREES, WHAT WILL YOU BE SEEKING AS YOUR  
EDUCATIONAL CREDENTIAL?**

Now that you have thought about what kind of certificate or degree you might need, where could you go to get that credential? Colleges can come in several forms. Some things to consider about the design of the college:

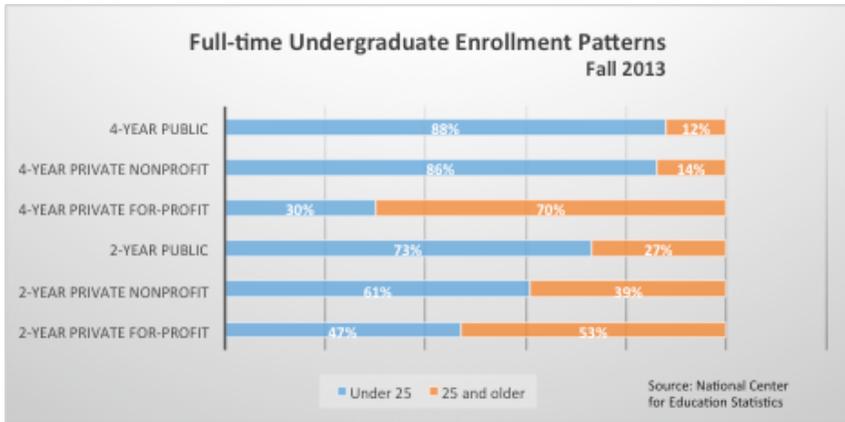
- Profit or non-profit
- Private or public
- 2-year degrees or 4-year degrees
- Accredited or non-accredited
- Transferable credits or non-transferable credits

**WHERE ARE YOU MOST LIKELY TO ATTEND COLLEGE? LET'S  
LOOK AT THE STATISTICS!**

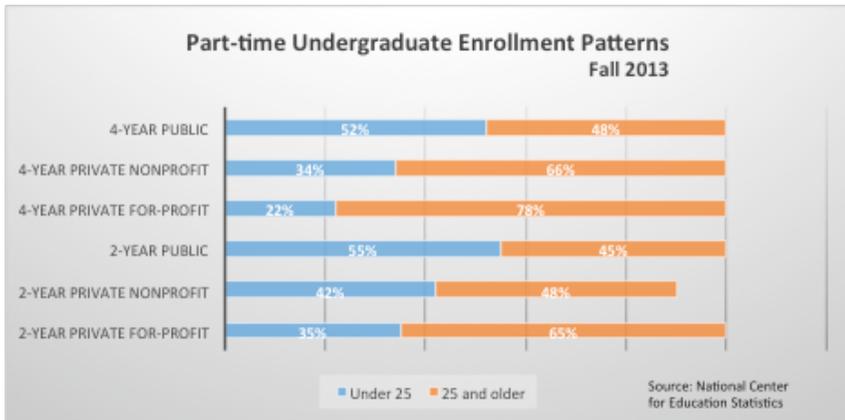
Statistics show demographic differences in student populations between public and private; and for-profit and non-profit colleges. The culture of the colleges may vary greatly based on these qualities.

Examine the following 2 charts. Based on your age and whether you plan to attend college on a full-time or part-time basis, what kind of college are you most likely to attend? Do you

agree or disagree with the statistical prediction about the college you will attend?



“Full-time undergraduate enrollment patterns, Fall 2013” by National Center for Education Statistics is in the Public Domain



“Part-time undergraduate enrollment patterns, Fall 2013” by National Center for Education Statistics is in the Public Domain

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITY

Using your favorite Internet search engine, find out how many colleges are located in your area. You may be surprised by the results. In the Eugene, Oregon area, for example, you will find

at least 6 colleges that vary greatly in their missions and student populations. One local college in Eugene only has 38 students. Can you figure out which one that is? Would that college be the right one for you?

### **MAKING THE CHOICE**

Ultimately, as a student, you will have to select a college that feels “right” to you. Complete the table below based on what is important to you as a college student.

Want

D

Cost

Flexible pacing

Interaction with teachers

Support services

Academic reputation

Certificate/degree options

Access to technology

Convenience/flexibility

Location

Setting/commute time

Community/social interaction

Student Clubs/sports

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**HOW DOES THE PHILOSOPHY OF SAM BERNES RELATE TO  
YOUR DECISION TO GO TO COLLEGE?**



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Video link: <https://youtu.be/36m1o-tM05g>

### **SUGGESTED READINGS**

2012 National Research Report: The Factors Influencing College Choice Among Non-Traditional Students

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Watch the movie *Accepted*, starring Justin Long and Blake Lively, directed by Steve Pink. It was made in 2006, and pokes fun at the idea of college. It also brings up some great points about what is important in college and some things to think about.

Here are some things to think about while watching the movie.

1. What are some reasons a college might not admit someone who was interested in attending that school?
2. According to the movie, who should go to school and why?
3. How do students pay for college in the movie? Do you think that is a typical payment method?
4. How did South Harmon Institute of Technology get started in the movie? Can a college just “spring up” overnight?
5. How does a college get started in the “real world”?
6. What is a “mission statement”?
7. What makes a college “real”?
8. According to the movie, what is the reason a person goes to college?
9. What obstacles do students face when they first enter college?
10. Can students buy textbooks at places like Amazon.com?
11. Are college students typically close in age?
12. Can students be involved in running a college? Explain ways you think students could be involved in college policies/procedures.
13. Should colleges be open to everyone who wants to attend that school? Why or why not?

14. Do you think taking a tour is a good way to find out about a school?
15. What is meant by the term “accreditation”?
16. Do all college classes apply towards degrees?
17. Do all colleges measure students’ progress with grades?
18. What is the purpose of an education?
19. Do you think the students at South Harmon were “engaged” learners/students actively participating in their education?

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*T*he doors we open and close each day decide the lives we live.  
~Flora Whittemore

**WHEN YOU ENVISION YOURSELF AS A COLLEGE STUDENT,  
WHAT DO YOU SEE?  
WHAT WILL YOUR DAILY LIFE BE LIKE?**

**JANE MCGONIGAL: GAMING CAN MAKE A BETTER WORLD  
(TED TALK)**



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view it online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/collegetransition/?p=91>

Video link: <https://youtu.be/dE1DuBesGYM>

After watching the Jane McGonigal's TED Talk, think about the following questions:

- What are gamers good at?
- What is the importance of "10,000" hours?
- Are gamers goal oriented?
- How do gamers feel about tests and being measured?
- What happens when a gamer makes a mistake?
- How do gamers handle frustration?
- How do gamers feel about change?
- Can the skills of a gamer be applicable to the skills a college student will need?

College is constant change. Not just in terms of studying and learning new material, but also in terms of how it is structured. If the college is on the quarter system, a student's classes, teachers, and the hours a student needs to be on campus will change every 11-12 weeks – 4 times a year. Semesters divide an academic year into thirds and may have short intensive sessions in between the main semesters. People sometimes use the words quarters and semesters as if they are synonyms because both divide up a school year, but they represent different units of time.

Dividing up the academic year provides an opportunity for varied learning and developing specialties, but it also means new faces in classes, unknown expectations from new teachers, and juggling a new schedule. It means you may have new routes to travel on campus as you make your way to a different building if your college has a large campus. If a student is working along with going to college, it may mean negotiating new work hours with a boss and coworkers. All of these changes can feel like

chaos that comes in like a tidal wave. Every term it can feel like starting over, especially for students who are not in a specific program yet. The beginning of a college experience can seem blurry to a new student trying to navigate the system.

*“There’s no blinking light to say, hey, look over here, this changed!”*

*~Amber McCoy, Lane Community College Student*

Many students come to college with at least some high school experience and expect college to be similar. After all, many classes have similar names: Biology, Algebra, Writing, Chemistry, and so on. However, the expectations that accompany those titles may be very different. College classes tend to cover course material at a faster pace and expect students to carry more of the burden of learning the material on their own outside of classroom activities.

Compared to college, high school has a straightforward curriculum. High school is segmented and chronological. Students generally go to school at the same time each morning and finish at a similar time in the afternoon. Students are assigned counselors to guide them. High school students usually don’t have to buy textbooks for their classes. There are clear deadlines and the teacher monitors progress and potentially shares progress with parents. The academic benchmarks of quizzes, tests, and projects are concrete indicators of progress. Teachers may monitor students’ use of smart phones in class and help students maintain focus on classroom materials. The high school a student attends is picked for him or her, either by geographic location or their parent’s choice.

College is about choice. Initially, the choice is where to go to school. The student has to find the right “fit” on his or her own and figure out the process of college admission. There are forms to fill out, submit, and process. Students may have to learn the steps for admission and enrollment for more than one college, and the process can vary from school to school. Students are expected to be able to complete the application process on their

own. Students must determine if college placement tests are required and if so, when they must be taken.

The next choice for the student as part of the enrollment process is what to study in terms of declaring a major. The major a student declares may impact financial aid awards. If a student is unsure of what to study and doesn't choose a major, financial aid may not be given to the student.

A student can choose to attend classes part-time or full-time. College class times try to accommodate a variety of student needs and may occur during the day, evening, online, or a combination of classroom and online (Hybrid). Unless the student has someone to be accountable to, probably no one will check to see if attendance happens or if a student cruises the Internet or social media while in class.

Monitoring of time and its use will be student driven. Understanding the workload associated with a college schedule can be a surprise to the new college student. The first year of college can have a steep learning curve of time management and self-responsibility. For the first time college student, starting college can feel like pushing a big rock up a steep hill all alone.

#### **HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU HAVE IN YOUR LIFE FOR SCHOOL? WHAT IS CONSIDERED HALF-TIME OR FULL-TIME STATUS?**

The answer to this question may vary from college to college. Lane Community College's website uses the following definitions:

- **Full-Time Status:** 12 or more credits per term (limit of 18 per term)
- **3/4 Time Status:** 9-11 credits per term
- **Half-Time Status:** 6-8 credits per term

An average student full-time credit load is between 15-18 credits. This means that a student will be in the classroom 1 hour per credit. Based on the 15-credit schedule, a student would be in the classroom 15 hours/week. Students mistakenly think that

is all there is to it. A schedule requiring a student to be in class 15 hours/week sounds much easier than high school where students typically attend 6-7 hours a day or 30-35 hours/week. College has hidden expectations for students in terms of outside of class “homework.” What does that mean? College classes expect 2-3 hours of homework, and sometimes more, per credit. That means for 1 hour in class, a student can expect to spend 2-3 hours on homework or more. A 15-credit load expects a student to put in 30-45 hours outside of class each week on homework.

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN TERMS OF YOUR LIFE?

| <i>Activity</i>  | <i>Hours Required/Week</i>                      | <i>168 hours in a week</i>          |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| Full-time attendance   | 15 in class                                     | -15                                 |
| Homework   | 30 plus hours                                   | -30 (minimum)                       |
| Sleeping   | 6hrs/ day x 7 days                              | -42                                 |
| Eating   | 1.5hrs /day x 7                                 | -10.5                               |
| Work   | 20hrs/week                                      | -20                                 |
| <b><i>Subtotal</i></b>   | <b><i>117.5 hrs</i></b>                         | <b><i>168-117.5 = 50.5hrs</i></b>   |
| Fill in the blanks with what else you would need to do each week | How many hours will each item take to complete? | Add the hours into the spaces below |
| <b><i>Total hours</i></b>  |   | <b><i>50.5-</i></b><br>-----=-----  |

Many students enter college with uninformed expectations. First-generation college students are at a disadvantage without family to help them understand the context of college, what to expect as a college student, and what college life is like. As a

result, first-generation college students may be less prepared to handle the challenges they encounter. Students tend to be idealistic in their expectations of college. Pre-college characteristics and experiences play a role in shaping expectations.

**TEE JAY: GOING BACK TO SCHOOL AS AN ADULT STUDENT  
(NON TRADITIONAL)**



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Video link: <https://youtu.be/UhifZr21qxY>

**THINGS TO THINK ABOUT:**

- How prepared are you to go back to school?
- How much time can you devote to college?

- How would you rate your time management skills?
- How do you feel about reading/homework?
- How are your technology skills?
- What kind of support do you have for going to college?
- Who is your support system?
- Make of a list of the resources you have to support your college lifestyle.
- What strengths do you bring with you that will help you succeed in college?
- What skills will you need to improve?
- What tips did you gain from watching the video?

**HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU ARE ACADEMICALLY READY FOR COLLEGE?  
IF YOU ARE ACCEPTED INTO COLLEGE, DOES THAT MEAN YOU ARE READY?**

College readiness is not clearly defined. Traditionally, completing high school was viewed as preparation for college, but course completion in high school does not guarantee college readiness. For example, English classes in high school may focus more on Literature where as entry-level college courses may stress expository reading and writing skills. If you have gone the route of getting your GED, did you work to dig deeper into the subjects and develop your skills, or just try to pass the tests as soon as possible? How did you handle attending classes and participating in classroom activities?

Another measure of college readiness has been standardized test scores. The problem with using a standardized test to determine readiness is its inability to measure the *soft skills* college courses require. Soft skills include qualities like accepting feedback, adaptability, dealing with difficult situations, critical thinking, effective communication, meeting deadlines, patience, persistence, self-direction, and trouble-shooting, to name a few. Meeting deadlines, for example, is a key to college

success. The skills and behaviors needed to thrive in college may be different from those it takes to be admitted. Being accepted into college does not necessarily mean you are ready to face the challenges and frustrations that might lie between you and your goal.

Answering the question about being academically prepared for college is tough. Test scores and grades are indicators of readiness, but don't guarantee success in college courses. Soft skills are important to college success, but without basic academic skills, soft skills alone won't be enough. Most colleges use some type of placement test to try to place students into courses that will be appropriate for their skill levels. Usually, colleges have minimum placement test scores in Reading, Math, and Writing, requiring students to demonstrate they are able to handle the minimal expectations of college courses in terms of basic content areas. The degree or certificate associated with the student's goal also influences the academic readiness required for success. Recognizing the importance of balancing the academic and soft skills, and how that relates to student goals is essential for college success and beyond.

**ANDY WIBLE: STRENGTHENING SOFT SKILLS (TEDX TALK)**

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Video link: <https://youtu.be/gkLsn4ddmTs>





enrollment in classes? And that's just the beginning of the potential for confusion! How can a student know the answers to these questions?

Learning to speak the "language of college" can seem even harder than learning a foreign language because as a new student, you have no idea what words you need to learn. If you travel to a foreign country, you know there are core vocabulary words you will need. Things that will get you the food you like and services you need. Basic needs like bread and water can be correlated among different languages. A dog is a dog all over the world and not confused with a cat. The vocabulary of college is not so straightforward.

One of the first decisions a student may need to make is if they are planning to attend college as a credit or non-credit seeking student. Even more confusing, non-credit students can also be referred to as "continuing education" students. For example, a student wants to take a drawing class. One of the first questions that may be asked is whether the student wants to take the class for credit or non-credit? Both types of students can take drawing classes. If a student doesn't know what a credit is or what one is worth, it's hard to answer the basic question in order to register for the drawing class, and the registration process is very different depending on the answer to the question of credit or non-credit. How can a student know if he/she wants to be a "credit student" or not?

### WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A CREDIT AND NON-CREDIT STUDENT?

According to Lane Community College's web site the difference between credit and non-credit students is:

**Credit Students** are working towards either a career/technical certificate or degree program at Lane, or are taking courses that will be eligible to transfer for a program at another college or university. In some cases, students take courses that are offered for credit for personal reasons or skills updating, even if they do not need the college credit.

**Noncredit or Community Education Students** are taking courses for personal or professional interest. These courses do not offer college credit, but in some cases community education students can earn continuing education units, certification or other evidence of class completion to meet personal or professional requirements. The terms “Continuing Education” and “Community Education” are used interchangeably at Lane, and do not refer to credit students who wish to continue with credit coursework. Noncredit classes are offered at many different locations. Noncredit community education students can take advantage of many college services.

Even this definition does not necessarily make clear to students whether to take courses for credit or non-credit. For example, if a student’s goal is to pass the State of Oregon Board certification exam for Massage Therapy, then at Lane Community College that program will be located in the non-credit side of the college, but at nearby Chemeketa Community College, the Massage Therapy program is located in the credit side of the college. Students at both schools will take the same State Board Exam, but their academic preparation will not be transcribed in the same way.

One important difference between credit and non-credit/continuing education courses is whether or not a student will be able to use Federal Student Aid to pay for the courses. Check with the specific college you are interested in attending to see whether or not you can use Federal Student Aid for tuition in the program you want to study. Another important difference may be in the transferability of the course work to other institutions. A student may find credit classes are easier to transfer than non-credit classes. The importance of this factor would depend on the long-term goal of the student. The key to answering the question of credit or non-credit lies in determining what program of study a student will pursue and how the college of choice classifies that program. Learning to speak the language of the college is part of learning the school’s culture. It is important to remember that not all colleges use the same words in the same way.

**COMMONLY USED ACADEMIC VOCABULARY USED AT LANE  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Below is a list of commonly used terminology at Lane. Without using the Internet or college catalog, see how many words you know the meaning of. Write the meaning in the space adjacent to the term.

---

Academic Year

Registration

Enrollment

Admission

Student Number

Probation

Credit Hour

Term

Tuition

General Education/Gen Ed

Elective

Degree

Certificate

Career pathway

Financial Aid

FAFSA

Stafford Loan

Scholarship

Grant

Federal Work Study

Transcript

Non-Credit/Continuing Education

Audit

Grade Options

Course Number

College Level Course

Pre-College Level Course

Lower Division Course

Upper Division Course

Prerequisite

Co-requisite

Learning Community

ExpressLane & myLane

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\*A list of the definitions to the vocabulary words listed is provided at the end of the chapter.

As a college student, you will need to come up with a strategy for learning lots of information, like the specific language of your school. Tim Ferris has a TED Talk about mastering skills by deconstructing them. When you deconstruct something, it means to take something large, and break it down into smaller parts. It also means to identify why you might fail before you start and make a plan to stop failure before it happens.

Axis of Awesome is a comic music group that has created a funny video demonstrating simplicity and seeing the common factor among songs.

**TIM FERRISS: HOW TO FEEL LIKE THE INCREDIBLE HULK  
(TED TALK)**



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Video link: [https://youtu.be/iPE2\\_iCCo0w](https://youtu.be/iPE2_iCCo0w)

**AXIS OF AWESOME: 4 CHORD SONG**

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Video link: <https://youtu.be/5pidokakU4I>

**BASED ON THE IDEAS OF SIMPLIFYING AND DECONSTRUCTING A TASK IN ORDER TO LEARN IT, THINK OF HOW THOSE IDEAS COULD BE APPLIED TO MASTERING THE LANGUAGE OF COLLEGE.**

- Can you see any ways to simplify the task of learning 30 words?
- Are there any connections between the words that you can see?
- Will you need all the words all the time?
- Will you need some words more frequently than others?

- When and where might you need each of the works?
- Can you think of any words not included in this list that would be helpful to know in relationship to your college vocabulary?

**LIST THE IDEAS YOU COME UP WITH IN THE SPACE BELOW:**

**CORE ACADEMIC VOCABULARY USED AT LANE COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE**

| <b>Word</b>                  | <b>Sample Definition</b>  |
|------------------------------|---|
| Academic Year                | The academic year at Lane begins with Summer term and ends with Spring Term   |
| Registration                 | The process of signing up for classes using myLane.   |
| Enrollment                   | Refers to who is eligible to attend the college and the series of steps that a student must take to complete the process  |
| Admission                    | The process of completing an application to the college (usually completed online via the college web site)   |
| Student Number               | Lane does not use Social Security numbers to identify students. Students are given an “L” number after the admission process is completed.  |
| Probation                    | A student who does not achieve satisfactory academic progress will be placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation may be required to meet with a counselor or advisor before they can register for the next term.  |
| Credit Hour                  | At Lane, one credit is generally equivalent to one hour of class per week over an academic term. The average number of credits for a full time student is 12-15 credits per term. Part-time students enroll in fewer than 12 credits per term.  |
| Term                         | A term, or quarter, is a unit of academic time. At Lane, we have four terms per year. Fall, Winter, and Spring terms are each 10 weeks of instruction, plus one week of final exams. During Summer Term courses may be four, six, eight, or twelve weeks in length.   |
| Tuition                      | Money charged for instruction. Tuition charges are different for credit and non-credit classes, and for residents and non-residents of Oregon (including international students).   |
| General Education/<br>Gen Ed | Refers to general education core required classes for transfer degree options.  |
| Elective                     | A course that does not meet any specific requirement for a degree or certificate. Unless there is a restriction, when an academic major requires an “Elective,” students may choose any credit class in the catalog.  |
| Degree                       | Degrees usually require that students complete a set of courses, often known as “core requirements.” Lane offers associate degrees in many areas. The number of credits need to complete a degree may vary. Generally, associate degrees require around 90 credits in the quarter system.                     |
| Certificate                  | Getting a certification usually means that you completed a specialized form of training. Also, it can mean that you have the technical knowledge of a specific field. Generally it is faster to complete when compared to getting a degree, as most certification programs take less than a year to complete. |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Career pathway                         | Career Pathway Certificates of Completion (CPC) are between 12-44 credits and are fully embedded in an Associate of Applied Science degree or One Year Certificate. They acknowledge proficiency in specific technical skills and are a “milestone” toward completion of a more advanced program. CPCs help students qualify for entry level jobs, enhance their current program, or advance in their current field of employment.        |
| Financial Aid                          | Financial aid is any grant or scholarship, loan, or paid employment offered to help a student meet his/her college expenses. Such aid is usually provided by various sources such as federal and state agencies, colleges, high schools, foundations, and corporations.   |
| FAFSA                                  | Federal Student Aid provided by the US Department of Education  |
| Stafford Loan                          | Stafford Loans are available both as subsidized and unsubsidized loans. Subsidized loans are offered to students based on demonstrated financial need. The federal government pays the interest on subsidized loans while the student is in school and during authorized deferment.   |
| Scholarship                            | A scholarship is a financial gift awarded to a student on the basis of academic achievement and promise. Many scholarships are based on merit; however, some are based on various criteria or financial need. Scholarships do not have to be repaid. Scholarships are worth seeking!  |
| Grant                                  | Unlike loans, grants—which can come from the state or federal government, from the college itself, or from private sources—provide money for college that doesn’t have to be paid back.   |
| Federal Work Study                     | Federal Work-Study provides part-time jobs for undergraduate and graduate students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay education expenses. The program encourages community service work and work related to the student’s course of study.  |
| Transcript                             | A college transcript is your school’s documentation of your academic performance. Your transcript will list your classes, grades, credit hours, major(s), minor(s), and other academic information, depending on what your institution decides is most important. It will also list the times you were taking classes (think “Spring 2014,” not “Monday/Wednesday/Friday at 10:30 a.m.”) as well as when you were awarded your degree(s). |
| Non-Credit/<br>Continuing<br>Education | These courses do not offer college credit, but in some cases community education students can earn continuing education units, certification or other evidence of class completion to meet personal or professional requirements. Noncredit classes are offered at many different locations. Noncredit community education students can take advantage of many college services.  |

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Audit                    | If you choose a grade option of “Audit” you may attend class but no credits are earned. The grade recorded on your college transcript is U, which has no effect on your grade point average. The tuition charges for audit are the same as for all other grade options, i.e., you will be charged the full tuition for courses that you choose to audit.            |
| Grade Options            | When you register for a class, myLane will always assume that you wish to receive a letter grade (A, B, C, D, or F) for the course. If you prefer to take a class for a Pass/No pass or Audit grade option, you must change your grade option using ExpressLane within the first eight weeks of a full-term class.  |
| Course Number            | The CRN is a five-digit number that identifies a specific section of a course. Credit courses have a course number that includes letters and numbers (e.g. WR 121, ART 115).<br><br>Non-credit course numbers have letters and numbers in the format XART 5785. The “X” before the subject and the four-digit numbers identify the course as non-credit.            |
| College Level Course     | College level courses have course numbers 100 and greater.  |
| Pre-College Level Course | Pre-college credit courses have course numbers below 100, and do not transfer to a 4-year institution.  |
| Lower Division Course    | Courses with course numbers between 100 and 299. These are generally freshman and sophomore level courses.  |
| Upper Division Course    | Courses with numbers 300 and above. These types of courses are offered at colleges with Bachelor’s degree options and above.  |
| Prerequisite             | Some classes require that you take one or more other classes first. Consult the course descriptions in the catalog to see the prerequisites for any class you plan to enroll in. At Lane, if you try to register for a class that has a prerequisite that you have not completed, you will see the following error message in myLane: ” PREQ and TEST SCORE-ERROR.” |
| Co-requisite             | Requires a student to take 2 separate classes that are linked together as part of a program or Learning Community.  |
| Learning Community       | Learning Communities are linked courses with the same students and connected content.   |
| ExpressLane & myLane     | ExpressLane is Lane Community College’s web-based tool for registration, making payments, viewing transcripts, checking your financial aid status, and much more. myLane allows students to interact with the college from any computer connected to the Internet.  |

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**IMAGE CREDIT**

Created by Alise Lamoreaux using the Visual Poetry app.



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*The great majority of men are bundles of beginnings.*  
~Ralph Waldo Emerson

Planning a class schedule is an opportunity for students to take the lead in their educational experience. For some students it will be the first time planning a college schedule. The amount of freedom to choose classes can be exciting and frightening all at the same time!

Before beginning, there are some key factors to consider:

1. Have you met with an academic advisor or counselor?
2. Will you be going to school full-time or part-time?
3. Have you taken college placement tests?
4. Are there specific courses you are required to take?
5. How many days a week do you want to be on campus?  
Will you be taking online classes?
6. Do any of the classes you want to take have prerequisites or co-requisites?
7. Do any of the classes have additional requirements such as labs or other components?
8. How much time will you have to devote to school-related activities during the term?
9. What are your learning styles and habits?
10. Are you a morning person or a night person?
11. Have you balanced required classes with less intensive electives?
12. Do you need any special accommodations for the classes you have selected?
13. Do you have alternative courses in mind in case the classes you want are not available?

## BALANCING COLLEGE, WORK, AND LIFE

Attending classes, studying, working, and finding time for family, friends, and yourself can be a hard schedule for college students to balance. How a student organizes their class load can affect their overall success when starting college. Class names may remind students of high school classes and how classes were scheduled in those years. College classes may only meet once a week or as many as 5 times a week. Not all classes are worth the same amount of credit or have the same attendance requirements. Some classes like Biology or Spanish will probably have additional lab requirements, which means a student will need to spend additional time on campus for those labs. Writing classes will require time outside of class preparing, editing, and revising papers. Many teachers require electronic submission of papers/projects. A student may need to build in extra time for meeting submission deadlines.

As a new college student, it is a good idea to take fewer classes in the beginning as you learn what college classes will mean to your daily life. Students who work full-time might want to start with 1 or 2 classes. You may find that you can handle more as you learn to manage your class time and work time. A counselor or advisor can help you with this decision. Be sure to include classes that interest you as well as required classes.

Something to think about:

| <b>Employment Obligations</b> | <b>Suggested Load</b>            |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 40 + hours/week               | 3 – 4 credit hours (1 course)    |
| 30 – 40 hours/week            | 3 – 6 credit hours (1-2 courses) |
| 20 – 30 hours/week            | 6 – 9 credit hours (2-3 courses) |
| 20 hours/week or less         | 12-15 credit hours (4-5 courses) |

## WHERE IS CLASS INFORMATION LOCATED?

The college *catalog* will have descriptions of specific classes and the college *schedule* for each term will be the place to find the

offering. Not all classes are offered every term and some must be taken in sequence.

### HOW TO READ THE COURSE NUMBERING SYSTEM

Courses are identified by a subject and a number. To search for courses when planning your class schedule, you will generally use the subject and number to identify the course rather than the course title.

---

|         |        |                                 |
|---------|--------|---------------------------------|
| WR      | 115    | Introduction to College Writing |
| ↑       | ↑      | ↑                               |
| Subject | Number | Course Title                    |

---

At Lane Community College, courses also have a 5 digit CRN (Course Registration Number) that identifies specific sections of the class being offered. You will use that number to register for your classes.

If you have selected a specific program of study, consult the college catalog for directions on the sequence of courses to take. For example, the Retail Management One-Year Certificate program at Lane Community College has requirements that must be met before a student can enroll in the certificate program. A student must place into Writing 121 or 122; Math 065; and take BT 108 (Business Proof Reading) before starting the program. The program takes a student 4 terms or about 15 months to complete. The courses a student should take each term are listed.

**SAMPLE FALL TERM:**

| <b>Course Number</b>                           | <b>Course Description</b>  | <b>Number of Credits</b> |
|--|--|--------------------------|
| BA 101   | Introduction to Business   | 4 credits                |
| CS 120   | Concepts of Computing Information Processing   | 4 credits                |
| MTH 060  | Beginning Algebra or higher  | 4 credits                |
| Choice of:<br>COMM 100<br>COMM 111<br>COMM 130 | Basic Communication<br>Fundamentals of Public Speaking<br>Business and Professional Speech | 4 credits                |
|  |  | <b>Total Credits: 16</b> |

**KNOW KEY DATES AND DEADLINES!**

Organization is an important part of being a successful college student. One important aspect of organization is knowing the important dates for your classes and the college in general. Academic deadlines matter! Deadlines in college may **not** be flexible. They can have consequences for financial aid and grading that cannot be undone. A student needs to be aware of key dates throughout the term. The responsibility for knowing important dates lies with the student. The course syllabus that you get for each class you take will have important dates for that specific class. The college will put important dates to know on an academic calendar for the school.

Examples of key dates to know for a college:

- When does the term/semester start and end?
- Are there holidays or campus closures during the term?
- When is the last day to drop a class with a complete refund?
- When is the last day to make changes to your schedule?
- When is the last day to drop a class?
- When is the last day to change grading options?

- When is finals week and what is the schedule like during that week?

For an example of an academic calendar, see the Lane Community College Academic Calendar.

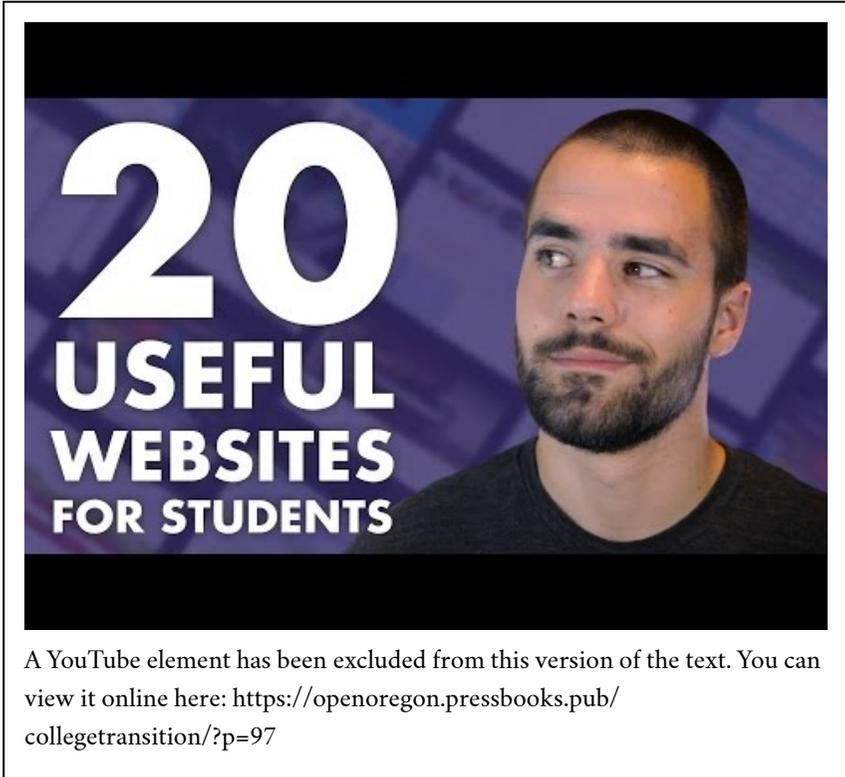
### **USING TECHNOLOGY TO STAY ORGANIZED**

Many students use smartphones and tablets in their daily lives. There are several websites that can be very helpful to students.

The US News article *5 Apps That Can Help Students Manage College Life* includes suggestions about apps for students that can help with daily planning, capturing information in class, creating to-do lists to help with procrastination, making study flash cards, and other organizational issues. This list is just a place to start you thinking about ways you can simplify tasks and maximize productive study time.

*College Info Geek* has great videos for students on YouTube. Several recommended videos are below.

**COLLEGE INFO GEEK: 20 USEFUL WEBSITES EVERY STUDENT SHOULD KNOW ABOUT**



Video link: [https://youtu.be/p3O\\_Y5vb9Cg](https://youtu.be/p3O_Y5vb9Cg)

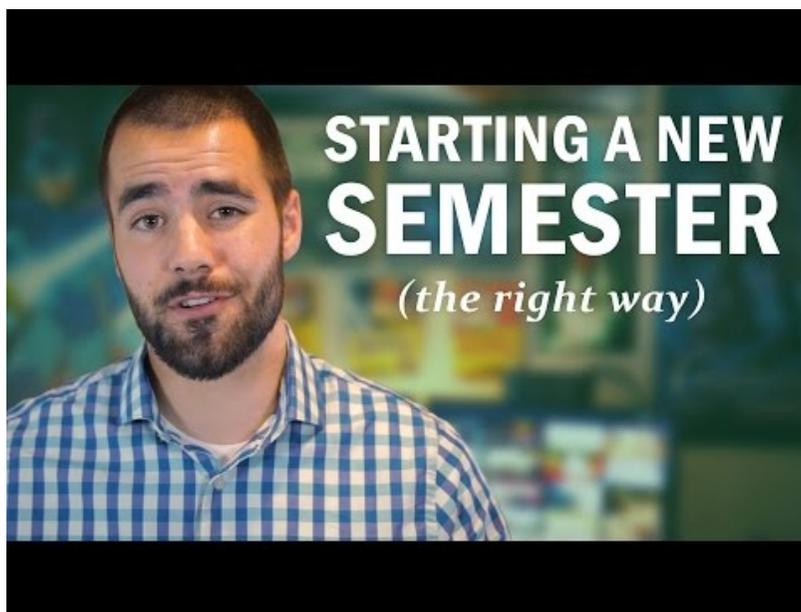
**COLLEGE INFO GEEK: HOW I ORGANIZE MY NOTES,  
HOMEWORK, AND SCHOOL FILES**



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Video link: <https://youtu.be/yoheFZaYvLU>

## COLLEGE INFO GEEK: HOW TO START A NEW SEMESTER OR SCHOOL YEAR THE RIGHT WAY



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Video link: <https://youtu.be/Ey-cAHDme2s>

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*A journey of a thousand sites begins with a single click.*

*~Author Unknown*

A college website can be like a cookbook, full of great information and ideas, and can be completely overwhelming. Where do you start? Looking at the pictures? Reading about the author? Can you taste the food in your mind just by looking at a picture? Can you imagine a food just from the list of ingredients? Is the number of ingredients needed to make the recipe exciting or paralyzing? How experienced a cook you are can impact your reaction to the cookbook.

As you begin navigating new information, remember, Julia Child wasn't always a great chef! In fact, when she got married, she could barely cook. Experience doesn't matter. An open mind does. Let the joy of discovering be your guide.

*Take risks and you'll get pay offs. Learn from your mistakes until you succeed.*

*It's that simple.*

*~Bobby Flay, Master Chef*

The role of a college website has changed substantially over the past few years. Student expectations for easy, accessible information drives colleges to get as much information online as possible. It also can lead to a battle for what information makes it onto the home page and how many clicks it will take to find what the student is looking for.

Student services are increasingly utilizing the college website to communicate with students and expecting that students will be proficient in navigating the college website. Students expect to easily locate information; this is helped when the college uses logical organization to the information architecture

and design of the website. College websites can be very frustrating to new users, especially if the new user is a first-time college student and is unfamiliar with the underlying structure of the college system. The people creating the college web site may be very familiar with the way they system works and not see the structure as confusing.

Adding to potential confusion can be the lack of ability to view the entire home page of the college depending on the size of monitor or mobile device the student is accessing the website from. Students are increasingly using smart phones and tablets as their primary viewing device for the Internet. Sometimes key information a student needs may be just out of view on the screen. The experienced user knows to make adjustments, but new users may not. Knowing where and how to get started may not be as easy as the “start here” button.

Logical arrangement of information for the college’s needs may not be a logical progression of information for the students’ needs. From the college perspective, students come in different groups/classifications. Here are some examples:

- New
- Returning
- Transferring
- Students needing accommodations
- Local residents
- Veterans
- International
- Credit
- Non-credit/Community Education
- Adult Basic Education

Each of these groups can have variations on what their first steps should be. Students aren’t necessarily used to thinking of themselves in terms of these classifications/groups. It can be

difficult for first time students, who may fit into more than one of these groups, to decide which one is the place to start.

Most college websites have a “Getting Started” type button on the home page. After clicking that button, a student begins to make a decision about what category of student he or she is. To an experienced user, this is not an obstacle, but to the first-time college student it may be a barrier. For example, if a student had been getting a GED at the college, which probably falls on the non-credit side of the college structure, is the person a new or returning student when it’s time to sign up for credit classes? The person may be new to credit classes, but not to the college in general. Where does the person fit? The answer may vary from college to college.

In addition, some college websites may not be mobile friendly so that students who are trying to use smartphones or tablets may face additional obstacles. Despite the potential difficulties, today’s college students need to become savvy users of the college website and recognize the role it will play in the communication process.

### **WEBSITE CHALLENGE:**

*Pick 2 different colleges and examine their websites. Try to find the following information on each of the websites.*

1. Can you find the Mission Statement/Strategic Plan/Vision of the college?
2. What does the statement say and why is it important to know a college’s mission/plan/vision?
3. What are the steps you would take to enroll at the college?
4. How many locations does the college have and where are they?
5. How long would it take you to travel to the location of that college?
6. What term are you planning to attend the college for the

- first time? Is there an application deadline you must meet?
7. Where can you find important dates and deadlines for the term?
  8. How long does a person need to live in Oregon to be considered a resident of the State in terms of college tuition at the colleges you are investigating?
  9. Does the college have a student conduct code? (A document about student rights and responsibilities)
  10. Does the college have placement tests a student needs to take prior to starting college?
  11. Does the website explain what type of tests are required and is there a cost?
  12. What are the test scores used for?
  13. Is financial aid available for students who attend the college?
  14. Does the website have student success stories and/or student success tips?
  15. Identify a program that you might like to study at the college.

### *Website Challenge Reflection*

1. How comfortable were you navigating the college websites?
2. Did the websites' organization make sense to you?
3. What was your strategy for finding the information you were looking for?
4. What information would you consider most important to you as a student?
5. What suggestions do you have for making the website easier to use?

The college website will be part of your communication system with the college you attend. Your college website makes you part of a learning community.

- What other social media does the college use?
- As a student, how can you use the college website, social media, and the Internet in general to strengthen your learning community and connections?

**JOHN GREEN: PAPER TOWNS AND WHY LEARNING IS AWESOME (TED TALKS)**



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Video link: <https://youtu.be/NgDGlcxYrhQ>



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*Great ideas need landing gear as well as wings.*

*~C.D. Jackson*

Congratulations! You are accepted to college. Now what? Before you can begin signing up for classes, most colleges will require you to take a College Placement Test (CPT).

#### **SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT:**

- What is the purpose of the CPT?
- Can a student fail the CPT?
- Where is the CPT given?
- What does a student need to do to sign up to take the CPT?
- How much does it cost to take the CPT?
- Can a student re-take the test if he or she is not happy with the score?
- How long is the placement test score valid?
- Can a student study for the CPT?

The College Placement Test is an entrance examination that is a required part of the admissions process for many community colleges and other schools in the United States. The placement test can be referred to as CPT or CTP exam. CPT exams are not scored on the basis of pass or fail. The CPT exam tests students in subjects like reading, writing, and math. The test results help place each student in the most appropriate level of classes. The

goal is to place students into classes that are not too difficult or too easy.

Community colleges tend to rely on placement testing because students entering these colleges have a variety of backgrounds and skill levels. The test results may mean a student can skip introductory level classes or that students need to refresh or build skills in a specific area. However, if a student gets a low score on the tests, he or she may need to take extra classes to be able to register for a certain class in a specific program.

Across the college campus, in many different classes, a student will be asked to read and write on a daily basis as part of the class activities. Even a Speech class will require writing! As a result, many classes have a *prerequisite* requirement for writing. If Writing 121 is a prerequisite to starting a class, and a student scores into Writing 115, the student will need to take 2 classes, Writing 115 and Writing 121, before gaining entrance to the class with a prerequisite.

Many students have not taken a math class recently, or been using more than basic math in their daily lives, and may need to refresh or build their skills to be able to handle the course requirements of college. Also, certain programs emphasize specific math skills in order for students to be successful in those programs of study. Culinary Arts students must be proficient with the math skills needed for menu planning and food cost analysis. Those are different skills than a Nursing student. A Nurse needs to be proficient in math related to dosage and other measurements. The purpose of the placement tests is to help students identify their abilities. It is important for students to take the placement tests seriously since the test scores will influence course selection. Scoring well on placement tests can save a student time and money.

**WHICH STUDENT IN THE VIDEO REFLECTS YOUR ATTITUDE ABOUT COLLEGE PLACEMENT TESTS?**



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Video link: <https://youtu.be/gxQbDAWHcUI>

**CAN A STUDENT STUDY FOR COLLEGE PLACEMENT TESTS?**

Students often wonder if they should study for CTP exams. Studying and becoming familiar with the type of test you will be taking is a good idea. If a student is unhappy with the CPT exam score, retesting options usually exist, but vary from college to college. Check the policy of the college you are choosing to attend. Poor performance on a CTP may end up costing the student extra time and money. If the student has to take extra classes to build the skills needed for college that may change the timeline for the student's goal and target completion.

Community colleges often have free or low-cost options for

improving a student's skill level for college course through an Adult Basic Education program. Check to see what options exist at the college you have selected in terms of improving CPT scores. Many first-generation college students find attending Adult Basic Education classes to be very helpful for getting ready for the rigors of college expectations. Along with improving academic skills, a student can also become familiar with the culture of the college before becoming a full-time student.

The CTP exam is a general term and not the name of a specific test. Colleges may use different standardized tests as their CPT. Two of the most common tests are Accuplacer and Compass. As of June 18, 2015, ACT, the company who makes Compass, said in the article *Finding A New Compass* that it will discontinue making the test and phase out its use. If the college you have selected has been using Compass as its CPT, changes may be happening for that college. ALEKS is an assessment system that is gaining momentum with the departure of Compass. ALEKS stands for Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces.

Sometimes it can be challenging to figure out which standardized test is being given by the college. If you have difficulty finding the name of the test the college is using, try the search engine on the college website for the keywords "college placement test."

It is possible to study for these tests as well as becoming familiar with the format of the tests. Some college website may have study resources listed to help students prepare for the CTP exam. Check with the college you select to see if resources are suggested.

At *Lane Community College*, Accuplacer is the CPT given. Accuplacer is an "adaptive" test. It gives you one question at a time. You must answer every question it presents. When you get a question correct, the computer adapts by giving a harder question worth more points for the next question. A wrong answer gives you an easier question worth fewer points for the next question. Lane Community College offers a list of free online study resources for placement tests.

Thinking about college placement tests and taking them can be stressful for students.

**KELLY MCGONIGAL: HOW TO MAKE STRESS YOUR FRIEND  
(TED TALK)**



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Video link: <https://youtu.be/RcGyVTAoXEU>

- How does the information provided by Kelly McGonigal in her TED Talk apply to preparing for and taking college placement tests?
- What tips can you take away from her talk that might help you with college related stress?

**SUGGESTED READING**

Why Writing Matters Project  
Finding A New Compass

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*B*

*udget: a mathematical confirmation of your suspicions.  
~AA Latimer*

**EXPENSES YOU MAY ENCOUNTER:**

- How much is the degree or certificate you want to earn going to cost?
- What factors go into the cost of the college?
- What costs are included in tuition?
- What costs are not included in tuition?
- What is college worth to you?
- How much money can you afford to spend on college?
- Where can you get financing for college if you need help paying for it?
- How much money do you think you could afford on a monthly basis to pay back a loan related to financing college?
- What is the current interest rate on student loans?
- Are interest rates all the same?
- What do you think your life will be like after college?

Paying for college is an undeniable component of the educational process. While there are political discussions underway about making college free, at this point in time, students must pay for college themselves or with the help of others. Understanding the factors that combine to create the overall cost of a college

education can help a student make decisions about the college that is right for him or her.

Today's colleges are in a competitive market for students. Thinking about the services you as a student need or want from a college environment can help define what is personally important and what you are willing to pay for. The following video from John Green and Hank Green (who you may recognize from the Crash Course series on YouTube) provides a quick look at factors affecting the cost of college.

### VLOGBROTHERS: WHY IS COLLEGE SO EXPENSIVE?



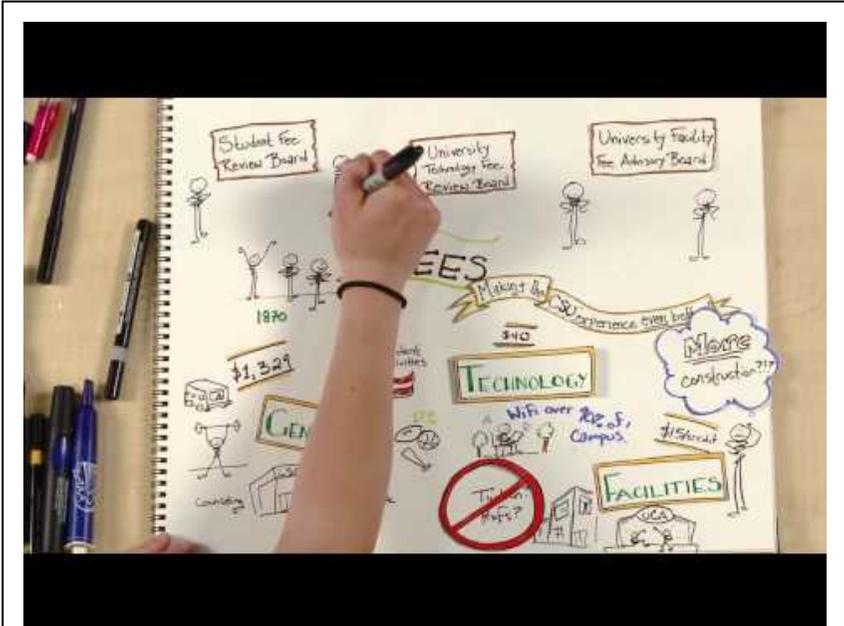
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Video link: <https://youtu.be/5-luFSt5xWA>

The President of Colorado State University made a video explaining how tuition money is spent at that school. His

information is specific to his school, but the overall explanation is applicable to many colleges. Watch what he has to say:

### COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY: WHERE DO MY TUITION DOLLARS GO?



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Video link: [https://youtu.be/w\\_DNf92IyAY](https://youtu.be/w_DNf92IyAY)

### COLLEGE COSTS CAN BE MEASURED BY 7 MAIN CATEGORIES:

1. **Tuition:** The price you pay for taking college classes is based on the academic program you choose. Tuition is also affected by selecting a school in the state where you live, and by whether the school is public, private, for-profit, or non-profit.

2. **Fees:** Academic programs may have additional fees beyond tuition costs. For example, a student majoring in culinary arts will need specialized tools to participate in that program. Services the college provides to students can have associated fees. For example, a student health center may have a basic fee that all students must pay whether they use the service or not. Some colleges have dining fees that give students food cards to use on campus. Student fees are not fees students can opt out of. It is important for students to examine a college's fee structure and maximize the services that are being paid for by fees.
3. **Books and supplies:** The cost of books and the supplies students will need to complete a program can vary greatly. Books and supplies can add \$1000 or more to the annual tuition cost. This is an important factor that is easily overlooked by students. Finding classes that offer low cost book option/open source materials can help reduce the overall cost of college. Often times, students will end up financing the cost of books and supplies with financial aid. It is important to remember that an additional \$1000 financed with aid or credit cards can quickly add up to an unanticipated cost of college.
4. **Transportation:** Getting to and from college costs vary significantly based on how close a student lives to the college campus and the transportation method selected. Some colleges may have a transportation fee as part of the student fees that might provide mass transit (trains or buses) options for getting to school. Colleges may also have parking fees for those students who drive to the campus. Seasonal

weather conditions are another factor in transportation choices. As a student estimating cost of college, remember to think about the entire school year.

5. **Living Expenses:** Where will you be living while attending college and with whom? The answer to this question determines a major factor in the overall cost of attending college. Living with family may be less expensive for some, but many times is not an option for students. Answers to the question of where you will live and how much it will cost vary greatly. One thing to think about is how much did it cost you to live last year? Will going to school change that and if so, how? Will you have to eat or spend money on groceries/meals differently than in the past? If the college you choose has a dining fee built into your tuition costs, don't overlook using it. Staying healthy is an important part of college success.
6. **Personal expenses:** Another wide open category of cost, but don't forget you will still need basic health care and hygiene. And you will still have social events and family commitments. Students tend to underestimate how much money will be needed for personal expenses. For example, many students today cannot survive without smart phones, computers, and data plans.
7. **Opportunity Cost:** Choosing to spend time and money going to college has an opportunity cost. If you are spending time and money on your education, you will not be spending that same time and money somewhere else. One example of this relationship is employment. Attending classes and doing homework may mean you can't work at a job as much as you want to. It

may also mean you will have less time to spend with friends and family. If you have a long commute to school, that may impact other aspects of your daily life. The following video examines the opportunity cost of college.

### **VLOGBROTHERS: IS COLLEGE WORTH IT?**



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Video link: [https://youtu.be/t\\_N7MAr98CI](https://youtu.be/t_N7MAr98CI)

### **FINANCIAL AID BASICS**

Most students will need some form of financial aid to help pay for college. Before accepting an offer of assistance, it is important for a student to understand what each possible offer means and what the student's responsibility will be after accepting the offer.

The Office of US Department of Education offers financial assistance to students in the forms of grants, loans, and work-study programs. Filling out the FAFSA application is the first start towards receiving financial aid for college.

The video below from Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) debunks myths about who is eligible for financial assistance for college.

### FEDERAL STUDENT AID: MYTHS ABOUT FINANCIAL AID

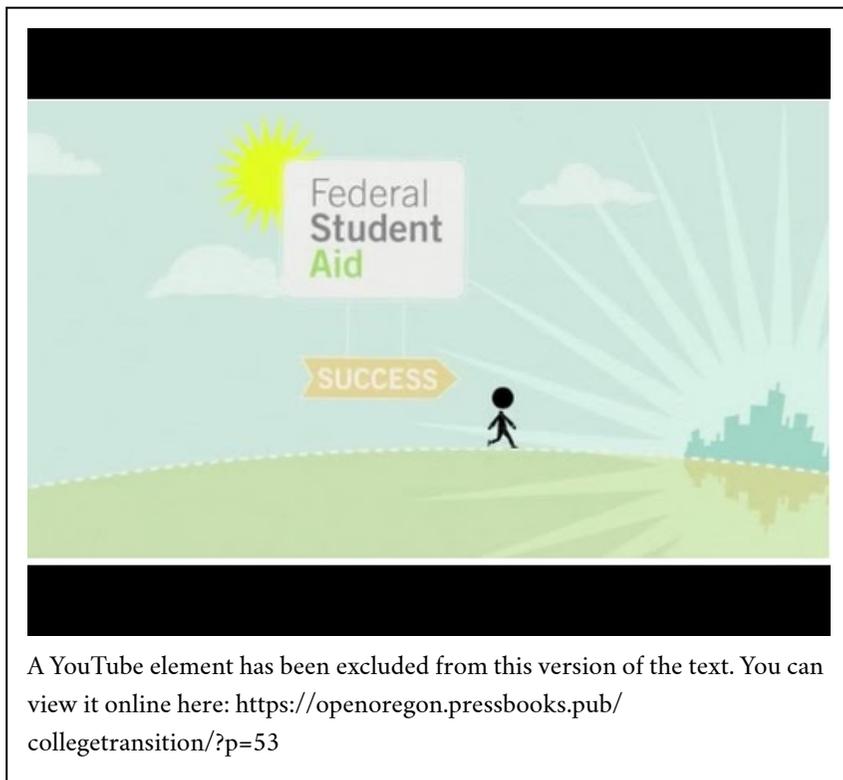


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Video link: [https://youtu.be/K8JuaYVJ\\_LE](https://youtu.be/K8JuaYVJ_LE)

The following 2 videos created by Federal Student Aid provide an overview of your options and what it means to borrow money for college. FAFSA is the best place to get information about student aid for college. A student can contact them directly and the contact information is on the website.

## FEDERAL STUDENT AID: OVERVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL AID PROCESS



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Video link: [https://youtu.be/H\\_iS7gmQd9o](https://youtu.be/H_iS7gmQd9o)

**FEDERAL STUDENT AID: RESPONSIBLE BORROWING**

The illustration is divided into two vertical panels. The left panel has a red background and contains two green circles with white dollar signs (\$) and a stack of five white horizontal bars representing money. The text 'WHAT YOU NEED' is written in white above the stack. The right panel has a light blue background and shows a black silhouette of a person holding a yellow sign with a red star and the word 'LOAN' in black. A horizontal dashed white line separates the two panels at the level of the top of the money stack.

A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/collegetransition/?p=53>

Video link: <https://youtu.be/mTHtn0FRMWw>

Understanding interest rates and how they impact student loans is essential. Many students shy away from doing the math to understand what their responsibility will be in repaying a loan. It is also essential that students understand the difference between a *subsidized* and *unsubsidized* loan. Both types of loans may be offered to a student in an award letter for financial aid. Many of the horror stories about the burden of college debt on students when they graduate from college could be avoided if students better understood options for financing their college education and examined their college selection process in greater detail.

*Wall Street Survivor* has a short explanation of how interest and compound interest work. The video demonstrates the difference

between a flat/annual interest rate and a compound interest rate. Compound interest can make you very happy as an investor, but it works against you as a borrower. **Subsidized** loans **do not** add interest while a student is attending college. The interest is not compounded while the student is attending college. **Unsubsidized** loans begin charging interest as soon as you take out the loan, like a car loan would. Watch this video to gain some basic information about interest rates.

### WALL STREET SURVIVOR: WHAT ARE INTERESTS RATES



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Video link: <https://youtu.be/GHHesANT6OM>

**Formula for Compound Interest** (the formula *unsubsidized* loans will use)

$$A = P(1 + r)^t$$

P= amount borrowed    r= interest rate    t = time (years of the loan)

### EXAMPLE #1

Community College Annual In-State tuition is approximately \$4,000 for each year of college

\*Stafford **unsubsidized** loan rate for 2015-2016 is 4.29%

| First Year of College    | Second Year of College   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| $A = 4,000(1 + .0429)^2$ | $A = 4,000(1 + .0429)^1$ |
| A = 4,350.56             | A = 4,171.60             |

Total cost for loan over 2-year period:

\$4,350.56 + \$4171.60 = \$8, 522.16 (money borrowed first will accrue interest the longest)

The interest accrued on the loan in a 2-year period is \$522.16

### EXAMPLE #2

Community College Annual In-State tuition is approximately \$6,000 for each year

\*Stafford **unsubsidized** loan rate for 2015-2016 is 4.29%

| First Year of College    | Second Year of College   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| $A = 6,000(1 + .0429)^2$ | $A = 6,000(1 + .0429)^1$ |
| A = 6525.84              | A = 6,257.40             |

Total cost for loan over 2-year period:

\$6525.84 + \$6,257.4 = \$12,783.24 (money borrowed first will accrue interest the longest)

The interest accrued on the loan in a 2-year period is \$783.24

### EXAMPLE #3

College offering Bachelor's Degree In-State Tuition at approximately \$10,000 each year

\*Stafford **unsubsidized** loan rate for 2015-2016 is 4.29%

---

| First Year            | Second Year           |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| $A=10,000(1+.0429)^4$ | $A=10,000(1+.0429)^3$ |
| A= 11,829.63          | A=11,343.00           |

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| Third Year of College | Fourth Year of College |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| $A=10,000(1+.0429)^2$ | $A=10,000(1+.0429)^1$  |
| A=10,876.40           | A=10,429.00            |

---

Total cost for loan over 4-year period:

$$\$11,829.63 + \$11,343.00 + \$10,876.40 + 10,429.00 = \$44,478.03$$

The interest accrued on the loan in a 4-year period is \$4,478.03

The key difference between unsubsidized and subsidized loans is the amount of debt a student will leave college owing. Unsubsidized loans charge students interest while they are attending college, so the interest is growing on the loan during that time. A student might think they are borrowing \$4,000.00 or \$6,000.00, but unsubsidized loans add interest to the amount borrowed that adds up over time. Subsidized loans do not add interest while the student is attending college, so \$4,000.00 really is \$4,000.00, no extras added.

Another important thing to remember when borrowing money for college is that if you add the cost of books and supplies or other needs onto the loan you have taken on for tuition, and you have unsubsidized loans, that extra money also grows over time with interest. While the tuition may have been \$4,000.00/year, the amount financed was more than that. Example 4 demonstrates this scenario.

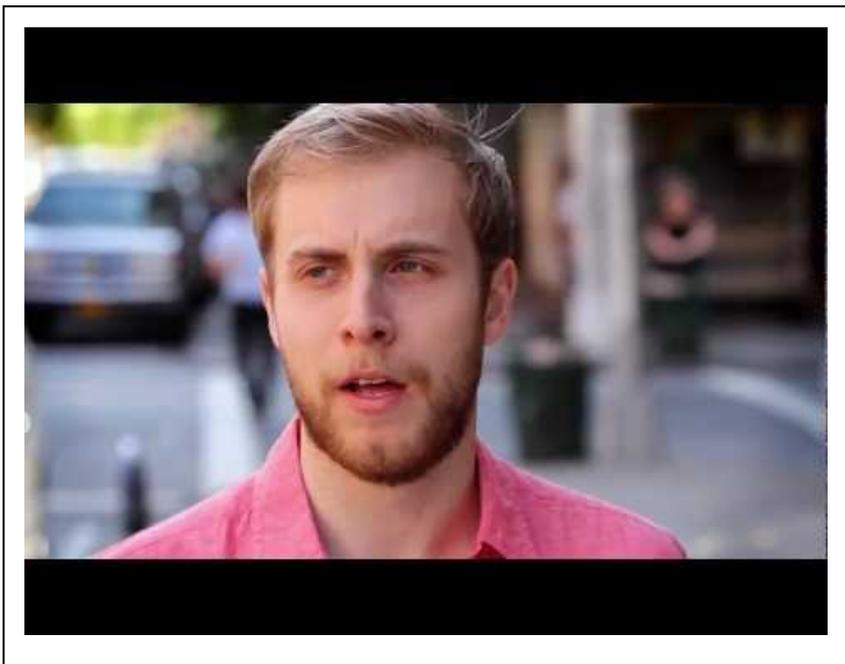
**EXAMPLE 4**

| <b>Year 1</b>   | <b>Year 2</b>   |
|---|---|
| Community College tuition =<br>\$4,000.00   | Community College tuition =<br>\$4,000.00   |
| Books and supplies = \$1000.00<br>New computer = \$1000.00<br>Total Loan amount = \$6000.00 | Books and supplies = \$1500.00<br>Other fees = \$350<br>Total Loan amount = \$5850.00 |
| $A = 6,000(1 + .0429)^2$<br>A= 6525.84  | $A = 5850.00(1 + .0429)^1$<br>A= \$6,100.96   |

Instead of owing \$8, 522.16 like in Example #1, total cost for loan over 2-year period:

$\$6525.84 + \$5850.00 = \$12,626.80$  which is \$4,104.64 more for the same time period and degree. Be watchful when adding even small amounts of money to your loan balances. It can add up quickly!

**VOICES OF DEBT: THE STUDENT LOAN CRISIS – DON'T MAJOR  
IN DEBT**



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/collegetransition/?p=53>

Video link: <https://youtu.be/uPcSYrPx3Ao>

### LOAN CALCULATOR

Students need to remember that they are consumers when it comes to taking on loans for college. Not thinking about what the debt means after college only compounds the issues. It is important to think about how much could you afford to pay monthly on a student loan once you have completed college. It's easy to do the math on loan costs. *The Smart Student's Guide to Financial Aid* has a free loan calculator that will do the work for you. All you have to do is plug in the numbers. The loan calculator will also give you an estimate of what your annual salary will need to be to be able to repay the loan. Of course, the loan calculator will not know your other financial commitments, so be sure to look at the monthly payment and decide if you afford that additional expense. College debt is considered a partial economic hardship if it requires you to use more than 15% of your discretionary income.

Here are 2 examples using the same colleges costs as the previous examples:

---

|                              |                 |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Loan Balance:                | \$10,000.00     |
| Adjusted Loan Balance:       | \$10,000.00     |
| Loan Interest Rate:          | 4.29%           |
| Loan Fees:                   | 0.00%           |
| Loan Term:                   | 10 years        |
| Minimum Payment:             | \$50.00         |
| <b>Monthly Loan Payment:</b> | <b>\$102.63</b> |
| Number of Payments:          | 120             |
| Cumulative Payments:         | \$12,315.47     |
| Total Interest Paid:         | \$2,315.47      |

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|                              |                |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Loan Balance:                | 4,000.00       |
| Adjusted Loan Balance:       | \$4,000.00     |
| Loan Interest Rate:          | 4.29%          |
| Loan Fees:                   | 0.00%          |
| Loan Term:                   | 10 years       |
| Minimum Payment:             | \$50.00        |
| <b>Monthly Loan Payment:</b> | <b>\$50.00</b> |
| Number of Payments:          | 94             |
| Cumulative Payments:         | \$4678.45      |
| Total Interest Paid:         | \$678.45       |

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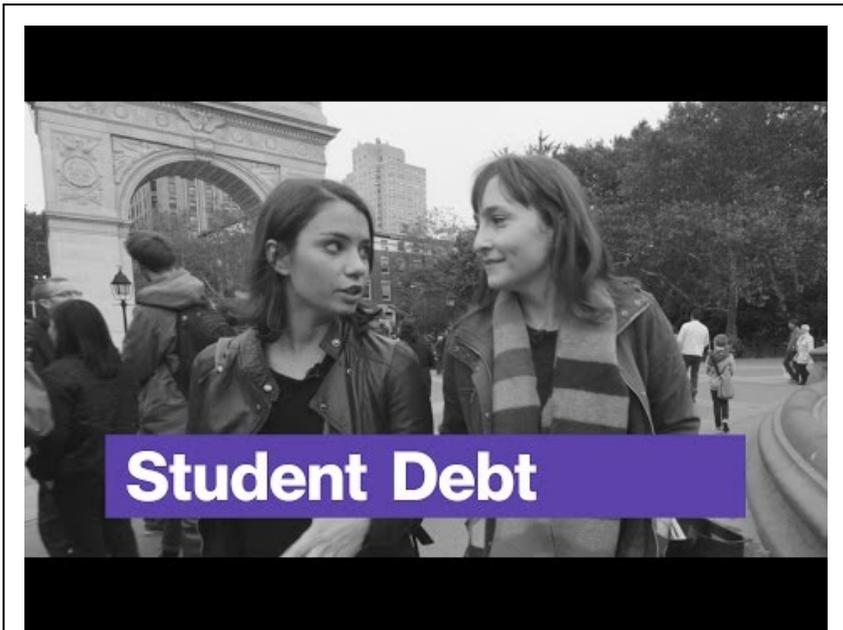
Note: The minimum monthly payment must be at least \$50.00; so on the \$4,000.00 loan the number of monthly payments was shortened. Also, there isn't a prepayment penalty for repaying loans early. If you pay as little as \$25 more each month on the loan you can shorten the duration of the loan by almost 3 years.

It is also important to realize that even if you don't finish college, you will have to repay a loan taken out for college.

According to an article titled *The Feds Don't Care If You Dropped Out of College. They Want Their Money*, students who dropped out of college and ultimately didn't obtain a degree or certificate, generally don't earn higher wages after leaving school. Statistics show that students who start college but don't finish struggle with student debt.

The US government backs loans that are taken out through FAFSA/Federal Student Aid. Repayment is expected. The government has the authority to garnish wages and withhold tax returns as part of repayment of loans that are not paid. Government-backed debt cannot be forgiven in bankruptcy, except under rare circumstances.

### **BLOOMBERG: WHY IT'S SO HARD TO GET RID OF STUDENT DEBT**



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Video link: <https://youtu.be/LW6EnhdlYk4>

The cost of going to college seems to be constantly increasing. Understanding the opportunity cost both now and in the future needs to be an important part of a student's decision process when selecting a college and a major. Do the math! There are plenty of resources to help you. Follow your dreams, but be informed.

Financial aid vocabulary is a specialized language that students participating in the process must understand. Try free flashcards that can make learning financial aid vocabulary fun!

**COMMON FINANCIAL AID VOCABULARY DEFINITIONS**

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| <i><b>Terminology</b></i>                  | <i><b>Definition</b></i>  |
|--|---|
| <b>Award package</b>                       | The way colleges and universities deliver their news about student eligibility for financial aid or grants. The most common packages include Pell Grants, Stafford Loans, and Work Study.   |
| <b>Borrower</b>                            | A person or group that obtains funds from a lender for a particular period of time. A borrower signs a “promissory note” as evidence of indebtedness.   |
| <b>Campus-Based Financial Aid Programs</b> | The three major aid programs are funded by the federal government, but the disposition of the funds is handled by colleges’ financial aid offices. The aid programs are: the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, the Federal Perkins Loan, and Federal Work-Study (FWS).          |
| <b>Cost of education</b>                   | This includes tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, transportation, and miscellaneous expenses. A student’s financial aid eligibility is the difference between the cost of education and the Expected Family Contribution as computed by the federal government using the FAFSA. |
| <b>Default</b>                             | A failure to meet a financial obligation, especially a failure to make a payment on a loan. Defaults are recorded on permanent credit records and may result in prosecution and/or loss of future borrowing possibilities.  |
| <b>Dependent Student</b>                   | A student claimed as a dependent member of household for federal income tax purposes.   |
| <b>Expected Family Contribution (EFC)</b>  | The amount of financial support a family is expected to contribute toward a child’s college education. This amount is part of the formula used by the federal government to determine financial aid eligibility using the FAFSA form.   |
| <b>Federal Direct Loan</b>                 | A group of federal loan programs for which the lender is the federal government. Included in these programs are government-subsidized loans for students and unsubsidized loans for both students and parents.  |
| <b>Federal Pell Grant Program</b>          | This is a federally sponsored and administered program that provides grants based on need to undergraduate students. Congress annually sets the appropriation; amounts range from approximately \$400 to \$3,000 annually. This is “free” money because it does not need to be repaid.            |
| <b>Federal PLUS Loan</b>                   | A nonsubsidized loan program for parents of undergraduate students under the Federal Education Loan Program umbrella.   |
| <b>Federal Perkins Loan Program</b>        | A federally run program based on need and administered by a college’s financial aid office. This program offers low-interest loans for undergraduate study. Repayment does not begin until a student graduates.   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Federal Stafford Loan</b>                            | A federal program based on need that allows a student to borrow money for educational expenses directly from banks and other lending institutions (sometimes from the colleges themselves). These loans may be either subsidized or unsubsidized. Repayment begins six months after a student's course load drops to less than halftime. Currently the interest rate is 0 percent while in school and then is variable up to 8.25 percent. The loan is typically repaid within ten years. Be sure to know the interest rate at the time of borrowing. |
| <b>Federal Work-Study Program (FSW)</b>                 | A federally financed program that arranges for students to combine employment and college study; the employment may be an integral part of the academic program (as in cooperative education or internships) or simply a means of paying for college.   |
| <b>Financial Aid Award Letter</b>                       | Written notification to an applicant from a college that details how much and which types of financial aid are being offered if the applicant enrolls.  |
| <b>Financial Aid Package</b>                            | The total amount of financial aid a student receives for a year of study.   |
| <b>Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)</b> | This is the federal government's instrument for calculating need-based aid. It is available from high school guidance departments, college financial aid offices, and the Internet ( <a href="http://www.fafsa.ed.gov">www.fafsa.ed.gov</a> ). The form should be completed and mailed as soon after January 2 as possible.   |
| <b>Gap</b>  | The difference between the amount of a financial aid package and the cost of attending a college or university. The student and his/her family are expected to fill the gap.  |
| <b>Gift Aid</b>   | Grant and scholarship money given as financial aid that does not have to be repaid.   |
| <b>Grants/scholarships</b>                              | These are financial awards that are usually dispensed by the financial aid offices of colleges and universities. The awards may be need- or merit-based. Most are need-based. Merit-based awards may be awarded on the basis of excellence in academics, leadership, volunteerism, athletic ability, or special talent.   |
| <b>Lender</b>   | One who provides money on the condition that the money be returned, usually with an interest charge.  |
| <b>Merit awards, merit-based scholarships</b>           | More "free" money, these awards are based on excellence in academics, leadership, volunteerism, athletic ability, and other areas determined by the granting organization, which can be a college or university, an organization, or an individual. They are not based on financial need.   |
| <b>PIN</b>  | Personal identification number.   |

|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Student Aid Report (SAR)</b>  | Report of the government's review of a student's FAFSA. The SAR is sent to the student and released electronically to the schools that the student listed. The SAR does not supply a real money figure for aid but indicates whether the student is eligible. |
| <b>Subsidized Student Loan</b>   | The government is paying the interest on the loan while the student is in college at least part-time (six credits).   |
| <b>Tuition</b>                   | Amount of money charged to students for instructional services. Tuition may be charged per term, per course, or per credit.   |
| <b>Unsubsidized Student Loan</b> | The interest is accruing while the student is in college. The government is not paying the interest on the loan.  |

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### MAKING IT PERSONAL:

1. What is the tuition cost for the college/program you want to enroll in?
2. What additional fees can you expect to pay along with tuition?
3. What kinds of services will you get from the additional fees you pay?
4. Can you estimate the cost of books and supplies for your chosen program?
5. Are you more likely to be a full-time student or a part-time student?
6. What is your plan for paying for college?
7. If you were to take out loans, how much money do you think you would need to borrow?
8. Who is ultimately responsible for your college expenses?
9. Have you filled out the FAFSA application?
10. What do you feel like you need more help with in relation to financing college?

**SUSAN DYNARSKI: WHY FINANCIAL AID IS BROKEN AND A  
SIMPLE SOLUTION TO FIX IT (TED TALK)**



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Video link: [https://youtu.be/UEvdL\\_FodYU](https://youtu.be/UEvdL_FodYU)

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*When the world says, "Give up," Hope whispers, "Try it one more time."*  
~ Author Unknown

A scholarship is a financial investment in someone's potential to succeed. It's based on past experiences, the possibility of making a difference, and the embodiment of the core values of the organization or person sponsoring the scholarship. As a student applying for scholarships, think about what can you do to demonstrate that you are a worthy investment. What story can you tell that will make someone want to invest in you?

**DESCRIBE A PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT AND THE STRENGTH AND SKILLS YOU USED TO ACHIEVE IT. (USE NO MORE THAN 150 WORDS)**

Last year I volunteered with the Art Support Services. Art support is a part of Burning Man's infrastructure that facilitates everything involving massive art installations. Being my second year I went from being a simple volunteer to a volunteer trusted with the duties and responsibilities of a radio. My job entailed communicating with the artists, figure out where they were in the building process then decide what heavy machinery they needed. Next I would radio Heavy Equipment to inform them of the artist's needs. The most important skill I gained was appropriate radio communication. I learned how to change channels and proper radio etiquette. On the radio I used terms like "ten-nine", "copy that", or "affirmative" a personal favorite. Having a radio was a huge feeling of accomplishment, because I got to play a part in coordinating all the pieces that made the art come together.

~ Student #1

- What kind of person would you say Student #1 is?

- Does the person seem dependable?
- Would this person follow through on a task he or she was given?
- What qualities stand out for you about this person when you read this personal statement?
- Would you invest in this person's future?

Coming back to school after twenty-five years is an accomplishment I'm very proud of. I didn't graduate from high school when I was supposed to, so the first strength I used was faith that I could come back and do it now. I definitely needed a little courage, going from a forty year old server in a restaurant to a first time college student was a big change. In order to figure out what I wanted to study I researched online, bounced ideas off of friends and even talked to strangers on the street. I tried to keep an open mind and think creatively about my options, and then used my experience and perspective to narrow down the long list of potential interests. Once I decided on a career path and school, I quit my job and moved to a new city, relying heavily on discipline, humor and hope. I can't tell you how many times I thought about staying in Portland and working at my old job forever, but now that I'm in school, I'm really grateful that I didn't.

~Student #2

- What kind of person would you say Student #2 is?
- Does the person seem dependable?
- Would this person follow through on a task he or she was given?
- What qualities stand out for you about this person when you read this personal statement?
- Would you invest in this person's future?

A few years ago I gathered together a group of children from my neighborhood and together we wrote an adaptation of "The Frog Prince." We then built a stage in the back yard and spent weeks painting sets and creating costumes. When we had finished all the preparations, we pulled couches and chairs into the backyard and

invited our whole neighborhood over to watch our play. It was amazing to help guide and motivate the children as they performed their creation; it took an enormous amount of organization and delegation skills to make our production go smoothly. It was incredible to be able to help our community come together and watch neighbors that had lived next to each other for years finally forging connections and becoming friends. It was wonderful to be able to see the children growing in their confidence and sharing their creation with our community.

~Student #3

- What kind of person would you say Student #3 is?
- Does the person seem dependable?
- Would this person follow through on a task he or she was given?
- What qualities stand out for you about this person when you read this personal statement?
- Would you invest in this person's future?

After sorting through several scholarship applications, the scholarship committee have selected 3 finalists for their scholarship. The scholarship committee must pick only one student to give a scholarship to. As a member of the scholarship committee, you must make a choice as to who wins the scholarship. Which student would you select and why? What criteria would you use to make your selection?

Thinking about applying for scholarships can seem like an overwhelming prospect, and students have many excuses for not applying. There are so many scholarships available for college that knowing where to start is the first obstacle to the process. Remember, scholarships are the gift of money for college. A gift does not have to be paid back like a loan does.

Scholarships are offered to students who meet a specific requirement established by the sponsor, who may be an individual or an organization. Scholarships can be offered through local, state, or national sponsors. Each scholarship will

have its own requirements based on the purpose of the scholarship. Scholarships are a good way to help pay for college without increasing student debt. Students may apply for multiple scholarships. Receiving a scholarship will affect the student's overall financial aid award because all the student aid added together cannot be more than the cost of attending college. However, it is important to realize that scholarships are gifts and do not have to be repaid, so trying to include a scholarship your overall financial aid package is a good idea.

### COMMON EXCUSES FOR NOT APPLYING FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

- Scholarships are only for people with good grades or athletic skills
- There aren't scholarships for someone like me
- You have to be a good essay writer to win a scholarship
- There is too much competition to even try
- Finding scholarships to apply for is hard and takes too much time
- Scholarship awards are for small amounts of money, so it's not worth it
- Scholarships are only for high school graduates
- GED graduates can't get scholarships

Finding scholarships requires research and effort on the part of the student, but the effort can have a financially rewarding outcome. Searching for scholarships today is much easier than in the past. Students used to have to comb through books in counselors' offices and photocopy applications to be put in the mail, snail mail!

The Internet has changed the search process. In today's scholarship search process, a student can use several websites to help find the treasure. *Never* pay for help to search for scholarships. Websites that charge fees to find scholarships may

be scams. The Scholarship Fraud Prevention Act of 2000 was passed to help increase the penalties for people convicted of scholarship fraud. Before this Act was passed, the Federal Trade Commission was limited to closing operations defrauding consumers. Now the government has the power to incarcerate or fine perpetrators of scholarship fraud.

Free help can be found through the college you have selected to attend as well as through several great websites. Check with student support services at your college to see what services are offered. *Scholarship Junkies*, *Unigo*, *Fastweb*, and *Fin Aid* are examples of online resources for finding scholarships to apply for. *Unigo* even has a section for scholarships that don't require an essay.

## 25 STRANGE, CRAZY, AND OBSCURE SCHOLARSHIPS



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Video link: <https://youtu.be/-VZKL5bcFvI>

In the State of Oregon, the *Oregon Office of Student Access and Completion* (OSAC) is a place to start the scholarship application process. OSAC was established in 1959 by the Oregon Legislature to help fund post-secondary education. OSAC requires students to fill out the FAFSA before applying to OSAC. Each year OSAC awards over \$118 million to Oregon residents seeking a college education. According to their website:

As a national leader in public/private partnerships of scholarship and innovate outreach programs, OSAC administers the following programs: Scholarships, the Oregon Opportunity Grant, the Chafee Grant, the Childcare Grant, ASPIRE (Access to Student assistance Programs In Reach of Everyone) as well as smaller funding programs.

### **MISTAKES TO AVOID WHEN APPLYING FOR COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS**

Scholarship committees want to give their money away to deserving students. It's your job to properly sell yourself so they know why you are the right choice. Build a profile that can't be ignored, one that showcases your originality, your character and your drive to be successful. Avoid these common mistakes students make. Get your application done right!

### **DEADLINES**

One of the major reasons student fail to earn scholarships is due to missing the application deadline. Deadlines matter and once they pass, the opportunity for that scholarship has ended for that year. It is important to pay attention to the time zone the deadline occurs in. The scholarship website may be located in a different time zone than you are. If the deadline says 11:30 pm EST (Eastern Standard Time) that is 8:30 pm PST (Pacific Standard Time). If the scholarship says it's due by March 15th, it means it. On March 16th you will not be able to submit the application. This is a harsh reality for some students who put off working on their scholarship applications.

**FILL OUT THE APPLICATION CORRECTLY**

The directions on a scholarship application are not suggestions. These are the basic requirements that you need to fulfill in order to be considered for a scholarship. If you do something careless like emailing your application when you are supposed to mail it or not bothering to format your application correctly, you may not get the scholarship.

**FILL OUT THE APPLICATION COMPLETELY**

Scholarship committees request specific information because they need it. If the scholarship committee does not receive all of that information from you, the scholarship committee will likely look at your application, see that it is incomplete, and move it to the disqualified pile. If your application is submitted online and the information is incomplete, the application will not make it past the computer screening.

**MAKE SURE YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP**

Read the requirements of the scholarship carefully. If there is a specific aspect of the scholarship that you do not meet, find a different scholarship to apply for.

**FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE SPONSOR OF THE SCHOLARSHIP**

Use the Internet to find out as much as possible about the sponsor of the scholarship. If it is a company or organization, find out what their mission is and what they care about. If the sponsor is a person or in memory of a person, what was the person's passion?

**PROOFREAD YOUR APPLICATION**

Always have someone proofread your application before you send it in. This will help reduce any spelling or grammar errors or other mistakes that may be in your application before you send it. If you want to earn some money, you'll want your application to be as polished as possible!

### SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY MISTAKES

Word count is probably the most common scholarship essay mistake. If the application asks for a word range, hit the range. If it asks for a specific word count, hit the word count as closely as possible. This shows you're capable of paying attention and satisfying specific requirements. Another common mistake is falling off topic. You want your essay to stand out from all the others. It needs to be unique, but it needs to address the topic given.

### EMAIL ADDRESS

While a cute or risqué email address can seem clever among your group of friends, it can send the wrong message to a scholarship committee, or the professors at your college. When applying for scholarships, avoid email addresses that use nicknames, profanity, that are offensive, or that have sexual connotations. Instead, create a professional email address to use for scholarship applications and professional correspondence. Keep it simple and straight forward by using variations of your first, middle, and last name.

### PERSONAL STATEMENTS & ESSAYS

Many scholarship applications request a personal statement or essay to gain a perspective on the student in a more personal way. This is an opportunity for a student to build a unique picture of him or herself. OSAC uses 4 topics in their application. At Lane Community College, the Foundation (the source of scholarships specific to Lane) uses the same 4 topics in their applications. A student may use the same answers for both OSAC and Lane Community College's applications. Check the college you plan to attend and see if you can find their essay questions. Chances are good, if it's an Oregon school, it will use the same questions as OSAC.

OSAC's application limits the number of *characters* you can use in a response. This is different from a word limit. Be sure

to find out if the application you are completing uses words or characters in the directions for space limitations of answers.

- Explain your career aspirations and your educational plan to meet these goals. Be specific.
- Explain how you have helped your family or made your community a better place to live. Provide specific examples.
- Describe a personal accomplishment and the strengths and skills you used to achieve it.
- Describe a significant change or experience that has occurred in your life. How did you respond and what did you learn about yourself?

Sometimes students worry that they don't have a good answer to the questions posed by the scholarship application. Your answer doesn't need to be a world-saving event. It needs to show your personality and qualities that will be worth investing in. The examples at the beginning of the chapter demonstrate real-life events that answer the question being posed. Finding small stories to tell will make better statements when you only have limited characters to use.

**ZACH KING: THE STORYTELLER IN ALL OF US (TEDX TALK)**

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Video link: <https://youtu.be/VMlpxqe0I1c>

The final message in Zach King's video is that everyone has ideas that matter and thoughts and ideas that inspire people. The personal statements and essays in a scholarship application are the place a student can set him or herself apart from the other applicants. Sitting down and writing an inspiring essay in 1000 characters or 150 words can seem like an impossible task.

One way to get started is to write something less structured. Try writing a random autobiography about yourself. This can be a fun way to start thinking about yourself and your experiences in order to find topics to use for personal statements and essays. It's your story – you can't get it wrong. Instructions and examples for writing a random autobiography are in the next chapter.

**LICENSES AND ATTRIBUTIONS**

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## RANDOM AUTOBIOGRAPHY INSTRUCTIONS

**B**egin by making some lists:

- Make a list of the towns and states you have visited or lived in. Put a note about what you saw or did there.
- List animals you've touched or petted. When? Where? What did it feel like?
- List the historic events you have witnessed. These can be neighborhood, city, state, national or international.
- List things you've lost.
- List some odd things you have experienced.
- List places you have shopped and things you have bought.
- List memorable things you have seen happen in your classroom, or with particular students.
- List a few favorites, whatever comes to mind.
- List places that are special to you and a few details about each.

Complete the following sentence starts:

- I was expected to
- I've held
- I lost
- I tell you sincerely

- Once
- Twice
- I bought
- I love
- I've been scared
- I've seen
- I'm
- I learned
- I've heard
- I've had some
- I witnessed
- I will testify
- I have stories
- I found

Remember... if you don't apply for scholarships, you won't get them. Your college has resources to help you perfect your essays. At Lane Community College students can visit the Scholarship office for help with essays. There are experienced people to help you. If you can't make it to campus, there are also websites like *Scholarship Junkies* that can help with essays online. Chances are, you have a story to tell that will inspire someone.

If you need inspiration, read the student examples below.

**RANDOM AUTOBIOGRAPHY  
BY QUINN B.**

I was the expected guest  
I've held the trust and compassion of many  
I lost the negativity in my heart  
I tell you sincerely, I am not as I was

Once I have loved  
Twice I have traveled  
I bought affection and admiration  
I love to offer all that I have  
I've been scared to find myself among others who have lost  
I've seen happiness in the faces of man  
I am eager to further live out my life through exploration and  
discovery  
I learned to never take for granted the compassion of others  
I've heard songs that tell stories  
I've had some time to ponder  
I once took a ride from a mysterious man  
And only one person believes themselves to be the lesser of the  
two evils  
I have been drowned in desperation and resuscitated by a  
profound acceptance  
I witnessed art in a foreign city  
I will testify to the beauty of my home  
I have stories to tell strangers who will become my friends  
I found myself in Damascus

**RANDOM AUTOBIOGRAPHY  
BY BRADY H.**

I was expected to drop-out  
I've held myself to a higher standard  
I lost respect from my family  
I tell you sincerely that I'm serious about changing my life  
Once I've been criticized  
Twice I've been shaped into the man I am now  
I bought things that further my passions  
I love striving for greatness  
I've been scared of failure  
I've seen said failure first hand  
I'm not giving up  
I learned this isn't easy  
I've heard it's impossible

I've had set backs in my life  
 I once thought about giving up  
 And only one person can truly hold me accountable, that's me  
 I have been upset with some choices I've made  
 I witnessed that with a little time you can work your way back  
 from anything  
 I will testify that you can literally do anything as long as you  
 believe whole heartedly that you can  
 I have stories about times that I've had no hope  
 I found hope in the midst of those stories

**RANDOM AUTOBIOGRAPHY  
BY CRYSTA R.**

My teachers in the K-12 system expected me to fail.  
 I've held all 3 of my friends' kids when they were born.  
 I lost all of my teeth except for the top canine tooth, my friends  
 called me a vampire.  
 I tell you sincerely that even though I look mad all the time I'm  
 not.  
 Once I hated reading.  
 Twice I bought books on learning Korean.  
 I love K-pop.  
 I've always been afraid of the dark.  
 I've seen discrimination towards my mom .  
 I'm shy  
 I self taught myself some Korean, Japanese and Chinese.  
 I've heard 4 languages in my house at one time.  
 I've had to get a restraining order on my dad on my 15th  
 birthday.  
 I almost died more than once.  
 And only one time have I been late on returning a movie.  
 I have always loved photography, it started because I didn't want  
 my picture taken.  
 I witnessed first hand what drugs and alcohol do to a family.  
 I will testify that have stories only my friends know.  
 I found that there more to life than staying stuck.

**RANDOM AUTOBIOGRAPHY  
BY KELLY G.**

I've held microphones, one job for 20 years and a friend's hand  
while she had an abortion  
I tell you sincerely how I feel if you really want to know  
I've lost friends to car wrecks, alcoholism, drug abuse and  
sometimes all of the above  
Once you make it into my inner circle, you're there for life  
I have played music in front of hundreds of people at one time  
I found a friend of mine passed out in a bush on the side of the  
road while I was driving home one night, I recognized him by his  
butt  
I have witnessed domestic violence, frat boy riots (yes, more than  
one) and a homeless man  
wearing pink, leopard print spandex head to toe and a feather  
boa smoking crack in the street and then dancing to Prince

**RANDOM AUTOBIOGRAPHY  
BY ASHER L.**

I've been scared  
I've been scared, scarred, and torn down to my basic parts  
But I am re-building myself  
No longer spaz, tweak, or the class clown  
No longer running from my problems, because I can't run from  
the things inside  
No longer am I escaping reality through drugs or anger  
I'm doing what's best for me  
And honoring my friends' lost lives  
I will not let myself be defined by my past choices  
But instead by my aspirations  
The scars on my back are no longer referred to as such  
They are my stripes  
My tiger stripes, each one from a battle won  
In school, my abuse was of a different kind  
It came from me  
I listened to all the teachers, who told me to sit down

To be quite  
To pay attention  
After years, it wore me down  
Like the mighty mountain  
Eroding away under the torrent of abuse  
Falling like rain  
I lived this self-destructive life for years  
Preferring an intact family with no bed  
Or roof over our heads  
To the dysfunctional one  
Connected only by blood, and tears shed  
But I was given a chance that not many others could receive  
Now I have a new family  
One I chose myself  
That I earned  
The same ones who support me  
And helped me understand college isn't something to dream  
about  
Fantasize about  
And put on the highest shelf by myself  
Like a parent hiding a cookie jar from a toddler's grubby hands  
No  
I can do this  
Because I AM scared  
But I'm NOT scarred

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*E*

*xcellence is not a skill. It is an attitude.*

*~Ralph Marston*

Many students never expected to find themselves in college. Maybe as high school students there were factors in their lives that left them underprepared for college. Maybe a good paying job came along and the person went straight into the work force. Maybe a health problem kept them out of school. Perhaps an unstable home life limited the person's options. But now, something has changed and college is in the future. Chances are that gaps in the skills needed to be successful in college will show up. Knowing and using the resources available to bridge those gaps will be important to college persistence.

Imagine life as a college student. You have signed up for a required class in the program you have selected. The professor of the class requires a graphing calculator along with textbooks for the course. You show up to class with your required materials and the calculator. The professor starts class by having students get out their calculators. You look down at the device and have no idea how to use it. The professor says that you are expected to know how to use the calculator since it is commonly used in high school, so reviewing its use won't be part of the class. Now what do you do?

- What would your first reaction to this situation be?
- How would you solve this problem?
- What resources can you think of to help you?
- What obstacles for college success might you encounter?

- How do you feel about asking for help when you need it?

Colleges have an entire system of free resources in place to support students in a variety of ways. Students may feel pressure to succeed on their own because of the independent nature of many college related decisions. As a student, educating yourself about all the resources available at the college you have selected to attend can help you feel part of a community that wants to see you succeed. Asking for help from appropriate resources is not a sign of failure or lack of independence. Many college students hesitate to ask for help and end up in situations that could have been prevented by talking to the right person and knowing important deadlines. Learning to network is a valuable skill to develop while in college.

Community colleges are concerned about providing students with support services. Community college students are frequently commuter students who spend less time on campus than students who are in residency. They are likely to be working and have family obligations. Almost 30% of community college students are parents, according to 2014 data from the Institute for Women's Policy Research (Fact Sheet: 4.8 Million College Students are Raising Children). Unstable child-care arrangements, for example, can impact a student's persistence in college.

All of these challenges put students at risk of stopping their educational plan due to life events. Community colleges try to develop comprehensive student support systems to help students overcome the obstacles of life and persist in college. Making students aware of the support systems and how to gain access to the services available is a constant challenge. Students often struggle to match their problem to the right support service, are hesitant to ask for help, and/or wait until the problem is too big to handle. Student persistence and success is the goal for both the students and the college.

- As a student, what kind of support services do you need from a college?
- What is the best method for you to access support services?
- Have you evaluated the support services available at the college you plan to attend?
- How would you rate your social media skills?

Several different models for delivering student support services exist due to the wide variety of students who enroll in community colleges. Many community college students have multiple competing priorities (family, work, school) for their time. Student service models offering an integrated approach to delivering services make it easier for a busy student to access the services they might need. When selecting a college, how student services are delivered and how easily you could access them should be considered.

Technology has introduced more options for connecting and networking with other students and college faculty/staff. Social media, networking, email, text messages, and the college website all help students communicate with peers and college faculty/staff.

### **15 KEY COLLEGE RESOURCES TO KNOW ABOUT**

- Academic Advising
- Counseling/Personal Guidance
- Financial Aid & Scholarship Assistance
- Tutoring Options
- The Library & Librarians
- The Health Center
- Career & Employment Services
- Center for Accessibility/Disability Resources

- Multi-cultural Center
- Student Organizations
- Trio Services
- Services for Specific Student Groups
- Information Technology Services
- Faculty Office Hours
- Child care options

The language of college can complicate a student's ability to ask for help and utilize student support services. It can be hard to figure out from the name of a service exactly what kind of help would be provided by that service. For example, what's the difference between an advisor and a counselor? Don't they both give advice? If counselors aren't advisors what are they?

Past experiences may inhibit students from accessing support services. Asking for help can feel embarrassing. In high school, students primarily use tutors when they are not doing well in a subject. Students bring that perspective to college with them. In college, tutors can be a key part of a student success plan. In college settings, free tutors staff a variety of centers designed for student success. Writing and math are typical subjects where students need extra support to learn class materials and complete assignments. Students new to college may not realize the top students in their classes are likely to be using tutoring services. Tutors are like assistant teachers. Sometimes it is hard for students new to college to understand the role of tutors and let go of past notions about who uses a tutor and why. Some colleges offer tutoring services online as well as on campus. The college website is the place to find out about the offering related to tutors for the college you select.

Students with limited time to spend on the college campus may look for tutoring help online via videos to watch. Several excellent websites can be found. Also, there are a variety of apps for smartphones and tablets designed to help students. Support for student success can come in many forms.

Watch the following TED Talk by Sugata Mitra and see the impact the Internet is having on education around the world. As you watch the video, think about yourself as a student/learner and how you could find learning assistance online.

**SUGATA MITRA: NEW EXPERIMENT IN SELF-TEACHING (TED TALK)**



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://openoregon.pressbooks.pub/collegetransition/?p=144>

Video link: <https://youtu.be/dk60sYrU2RU>

**Website Challenge:**

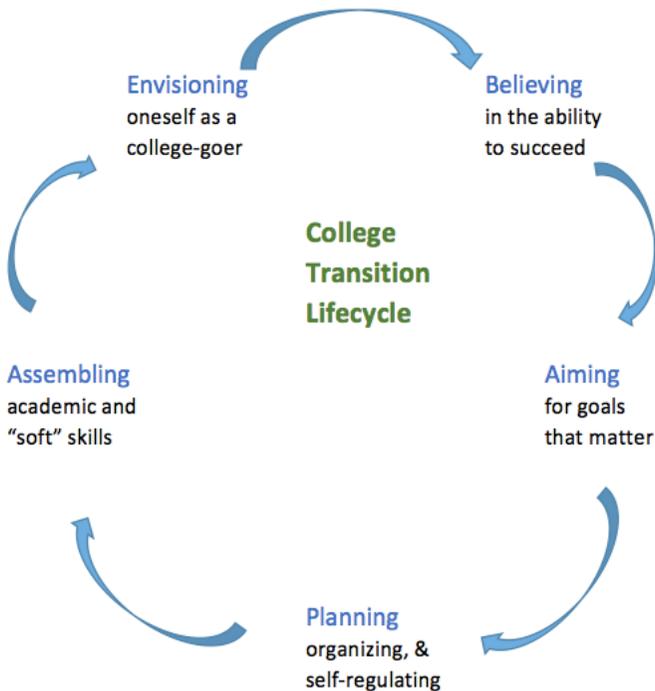
Pick 2 different colleges and examine their websites. Try to find the following information on each of the websites.

1. Do the 2 colleges you selected have the same definition of advisor and counselor?
2. Do both colleges offer the 15 key resources listed above? If not, what couldn't you find?
3. How comfortable were you navigating the college websites to find student services?
4. What are 3 student support services you might use and how would they benefit you?
5. Did the websites organization make sense to you?
6. What was your strategy for finding the information you were looking for?
7. What information would you consider most important to you as a student?
8. What suggestions do you have for making the website easier to use?

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*Once you choose hope, anything is possible.  
~Christopher Reeves*



Which comes first, hope or goals? A strong argument can be made for both sides. Believing you can set goals is the first step in setting goals. Transitioning to college involves a series of events that constantly interact. It is a cycle from term to term and year to year. As college student you will always be revising and planning, envisioning goals and making plans. Obstacles will cross your path and the support systems you have in place will be crucial to your success.

**DISCOUNTED DREAMS**

The documentary *Discounted Dreams* is about students who attend community colleges in various parts of the US. The documentary focuses on four students. As you watch the video, identify the obstacles each student must overcome in order to be successful in college. Based on your observations, what is each student doing that will facilitate his or her success? Also note ways in which you think the student could improve his or her chances of being successful in college.

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| <b>Student's Name &amp; Major</b> | <b>Obstacles Faced</b> | <b>Success Behaviors</b> | <b>Suggested Improvements</b> |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|

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After watching *Discounted Dreams*, answer the following questions:

1. Which student mentioned in the video did you relate to the most and why?
2. Describe the strengths and weakness each of the 4 individuals featured in the documentary.
3. What advice would you offer each person that could help them be more successful in school?

4. Why does Jose finally get the “break” he needs to continue school?
5. Why didn't Jose stop going to school when he already had a good job as a result of his partial education?
6. What obstacles do you face as you transition onto college?
7. What information have you gained through reading A Different Road To College and watching this documentary that will help you succeed in college?
8. What was your reaction to watching this documentary?

## NOTES FOR INSTRUCTORS

I have been asked to write a description of how I use this book in my class setting. Currently, I teach a Hybrid class. Students are with me 2 hours/week in the classroom and have assignments online to do outside of class. My students are primarily individuals seeking their GEDs or people who have taken our College Placement Test and have not scored high enough to enter college, so they are in the process of improving their skills to re-test. Most of my students are first generation college students. The class does have a reading skill prerequisite equal to that of gaining entrance into a GED class at our college.

I use the chapters in the book after I have had a class session on the topic of each chapter. The chapters provide greater depth on each topic than I have time for during our class meeting. I have built into the chapters, skills students need for the GED test, for example, reading charts and graphs or calculating compound interest. During the class sessions, I try to show the charts/graphs that will be in the chapter the student needs to read and discuss the information that is visually presented. I try to help students evaluate the information and think about what is being presented. If there is a calculation presented in the chapter, I make sure students understand how the numbers are arrived at what variables are changing.

Chapter 9, Hidden Money: Scholarships, has examples of student essays. I have the students read those essays in class and discuss who they would select to give a scholarship to and why. It helps students to understand the selection process through role playing.

Each chapter has self-reflective type questions included to guide students to think about the key components presented in

each chapter. The questions may serve as ‘springboards’ into the chapter topic. In addition, those questions serve as each week’s homework and are submitted to me online. Students could create journals for the class, but my goal also involves helping students be able to function with our college’s online class platform.

This book was designed to be based on Community College’s in Oregon and was part of a grant from [openoregon.org](http://openoregon.org).

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Alise Lamoreaux has a long history of teaching non-traditional students who are preparing for the GED and transitioning to college. She teaches a class called, “Everything You Want to Know About College, Before You Start” along with Hybrid GED courses at Lane Community College. Alise is known for her

willingness to learn and use new technologies in the classroom, such as digital storytelling, learning management systems, and other online resources. She is an advocate of student success. Throughout the years, she has demonstrated her willingness to teach other professionals how they might also implement innovative technologies in the classroom. This year, she took on the challenge of writing an open source textbook, through a grant she received from [openoregon.org](http://openoregon.org), titled, *A Different Road To College: A Guide for Transitioning Non-traditional Students*. This free resource is designed to engage students in seeing themselves as college students and understanding the complexity of what that means to their lives, as well as helping to unlock the contextual complexities of the culture of college.