

THE FAFSA, AGAIN? FINANCIAL AID & SCHOLARSHIPS WHILE IN COLLEGE IN 4 STEPS



Your student needs to apply for financial aid EVERY YEAR, which means filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as close to October 1 as possible, renewing scholarships with the Office of Student Access & Completion (OSAC) and any other organizations, and applying for new scholarships.

□ STEP 1: FILL OUT THE FAFSA OR ORSAA

By filling out the FAFSA, your student will be considered for grants, loans, and work-study aid. Remind your student to fill out the FAFSA as close to October 1. Eligible undocumented students can complete the Oregon Student Aid Application (ORSAA) for state aid.

□ STEP 2: RENEW SCHOLARSHIPS

If your student received any renewable scholarships through OSAC or any other organization, make sure she files the appropriate paperwork to receive her award for the next year. Make sure your student is meeting any requirement set by the scholarship, such as minimum GPA.

□ STEP 3: APPLY FOR NEW SCHOLARSHIPS

Check for scholarships that may be only for current college students, especially on campus or in your student's department/major at college.

□ STEP 4: KEEP SAVING!

If you are helping to support your student in college, be sure to keep saving each month. Encourage your student to take a part-time job if his studies allow, as well as jobs during the summer or breaks, to help offset college costs. The less loans your student has to take out now, the better!

HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR STUDENT AT COLLEGE

No matter how much you and your student prepare for the transition to college, there will still be challenges. Here are some common first-year scenarios and how you can support your student (*hint: it mostly involves communicating regularly and providing advice and encouragement about the support services available on campus!*)

Source: [College Parents of America, 2013](#)

HOMESICK

College can be a big change socially: your student needs to make new friends, negotiate life with a roommate and once again be at the bottom of the school hierarchy. Your student will likely feel social pressure to make decisions about alcohol, drugs, sex and other social activities. All of these new pressures and experiences may result in your student longing for the familiarity of home.

How you can help: Be supportive by communicating regularly and even sending care packages, but encourage your student to stay at school on weekends instead of coming home. Ask your student about ways to get involved with sports, clubs, student government or other groups.

GETTING SICK

Catching a cold is probably inevitable, which makes being away from home even harder.

How you can help: Most colleges have an on-campus health center – so remind your student to look up operating hours and make an appointment! If your student is too sick to go to class, encourage her to write a polite, professional e-mail to the professor explaining the absence.

FAILING A CLASS

It shouldn't be a surprise that college is different than high school when it comes to academics, but it still might catch your student off guard. Grades may be determined by just a couple of tests or assignments, so just one poor test score may harm your student's overall grade.

How you can help: Be sure to ask about class and assignments in your regular communication. Make sure they are *going* to class, too. Remind your student about tutoring help and professor's office hours. A last-ditch option is to drop or withdraw from the class before a certain point in the term – but that should be avoided if at all possible!

STRUGGLING FINANCIALLY

Even if your student has figured out how to cover tuition and housing, there are many additional costs he might encounter, from quarters for weekly laundry to late-night pizza runs.

How you can help: Remind your student about the importance of budgeting and having a way to track his expenses. A part-time job may help: most colleges have online and physical job boards to find both work-study and regular jobs on- or off-campus.

COLLEGE MYTHS (AND REALITIES)

MYTH: Going to college will make my student feel like they are "too good" for family and hometown.

REALITY: Colleges strive to provide an environment where students can grow to meet their full potential. As your student learns new ideas, has new experiences, and meets new people, he probably will change. However, try to stay positive and know that your student is learning and growing to be the best person he can be.



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WINTER

FOR PARENTS OF FIRST YEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS

COLLEGE ACADEMICS: A REALITY CHECK

By now your student should have received first term grades. (*Remember: the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires that all financial and academic information go directly to the student, so you won't receive any notice of your student's grades.*) If it was a rude awakening to the rigors of college, then review these ways to help your student get back on track.

GET UP & GO TO CLASS

College students are notoriously sleep-deprived and an "early" morning class can be easy to skip. With lax attendance policies and lectures available online, there are many tempting reasons to not go.

How you can help: Send an alarm clock in a care package. Check in after your student has a class to ask about something interesting he learned.

GET HELP

New subjects and lots of material can be a challenge for students to keep up.

How you can help: Encourage your student to use tutoring help, professor's office hours, and classmates to seek advice. If your student has a documented learning disability, she can seek out special services on campus, too.

BE HEALTHY

It's hard to learn and be engaged without proper nutrition, sleep, or poor health.

How you can help: Send healthy snacks in a care package and ideas for cheap and easy recipes. Encourage your student to eat breakfast, try a new sport or activity, and get enough sleep.



BE ORGANIZED

Time management and organization of materials and assignments are critical for student success.

How you can help: Make sure your student has a system for managing deadlines and assignments – an online calendar, notebook, or other method.



BE INVOLVED

Research shows that students who are engaged on campus are more likely to perform well academically.

How you can help: Encourage your student to seek out a club or organization that interests them.