



The College Survival Guide

Stay Positive. Work Hard.
Make it Happen.

“Don't be afraid. Be focused. Be determined.
Be hopeful. Be empowered.”

Michelle Obama



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Financing Your Education

Congratulations, you've been accepted to college!

Obtaining higher education is a big achievement but can also bring on a lot of stress if you aren't aware of how to cover the cost of your education. When you decide to attend college, you must take a lot in to consideration, such as:

- Cost of attendance: are you attending locally or going away? What is the cost of dorming on campus? Will you stay at home with family?
- Transportation cost
- The cost of textbooks and supplies each semester
- Choosing between a meal plan and preparing your own food
- Cell phone bill

The following are some resources that you should be aware of when thinking of how to pay for your college education:

Financial Aid (FAFSA)

You will need to apply for FAFSA each year that you intend to attend school. Applications can be submitted as early as January 1st of the year that you are applying for funding. In order to qualify for financial aid you must be registered as a full-time student (12+ credits) and maintain a G.P.A of 2.0. Here is the link to apply: <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>

Federal Grants

Student grants are monetary gifts to people who are pursuing higher education. Unlike student loans, grants do not have to be paid back.

Tuition Assistance Program (Tap): TAP is a grant that helps all New York State residents pay tuition at approved schools in New York state. Students can be awarded up to \$5,000 for the year. Students must maintain a 2.0 G.P.A in order to continue receiving this funding and must reapply every year. Because TAP is a grant, students do not have to pay this money back to the government once they have completed their education. Here is the link to apply: <https://www.hesc.ny.gov/>.

GRANTS

SCHOLARSHIPS

LOANS

Education Training Voucher (ETV): is an annual federal grant awarded to youth who are in foster care or have aged out of foster care and are enrolled in college or a vocational training program. Students are awarded up to \$5,000 per year. The student must enroll in school before age 21 and can receive support up until age 21. The student must maintain a 2.0 G.P.A throughout their studies. The funds can be used for tuition, book fees, and other qualified living arrangements. Here is the link to apply: <https://www.fc2sprograms.org/>.

Federal Pell Grant: A Pell Grant is a needs based grant for undergraduate students.

Scholarships

Apply for other scholarships: scholarships are a great way to cover educational cost. Stay up to date with the scholarships that may be offered to you by staying in contact with your academic advisor at school and read all of the emails that they send you.

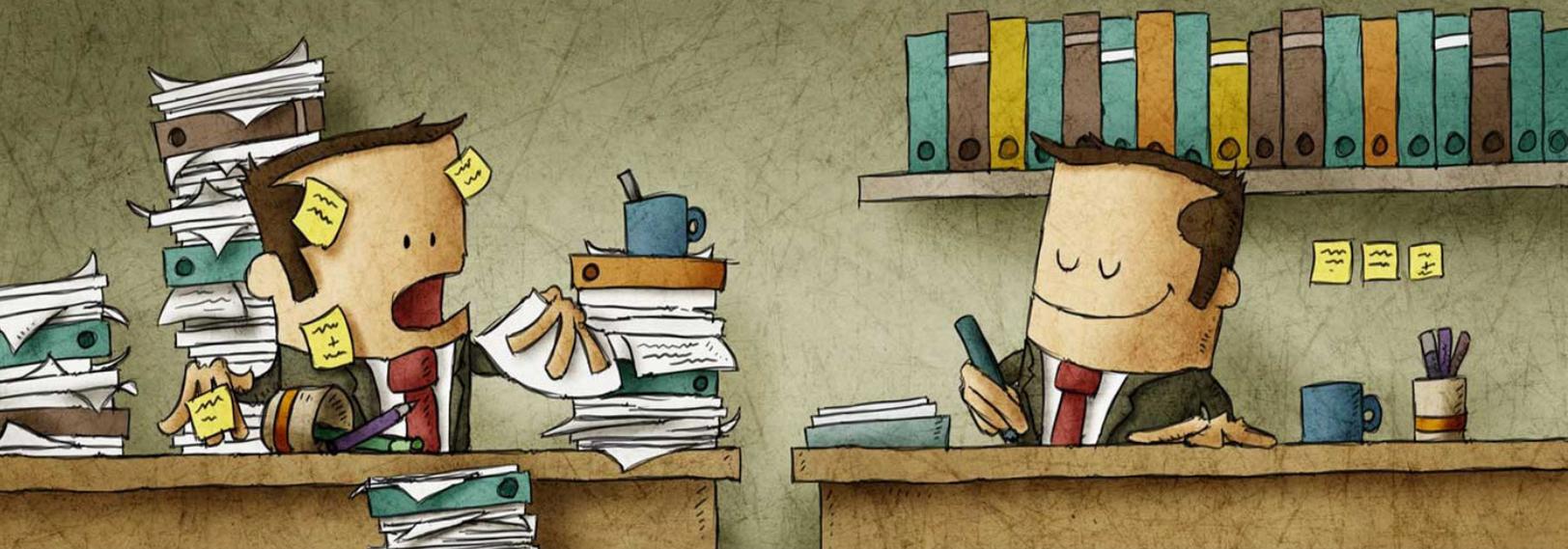
Student Loans

If financial aid, grants, scholarships, and other awards are not enough to cover your school's tuition cost you can apply for student loans. Be careful when deciding to apply for student loans because they incur interest charges and must be paid back. There are two different student loans that you can apply for:

Subsidized Loan: a federal student loan for which the borrower is not generally responsible for paying the interest while in-school grace, or in a deferment period.

Unsubsidized Loan: a federal student loan for which the borrower is fully responsible for paying the interest regardless of the loan status.

Here is the link to apply: <https://studentloans.gov>.



Time Management & Study Skills

Making the transition from a high school senior to college freshman is no easy task.

Walking across a college campus on the first day of classes will be one of the most exciting yet nerve-racking days of your life. When you enter college, your number one goal is to gain as much knowledge as possible and perform to the best of your ability. You want to aim and achieve the goal of obtaining a 4.0 GPA. The question is how you maintain being a model student without completely dismissing your personal life. The following are some tips that you can use to develop great time management and study skills that allow you to still have fun in college.

Tip #1: Utilize your daily planner

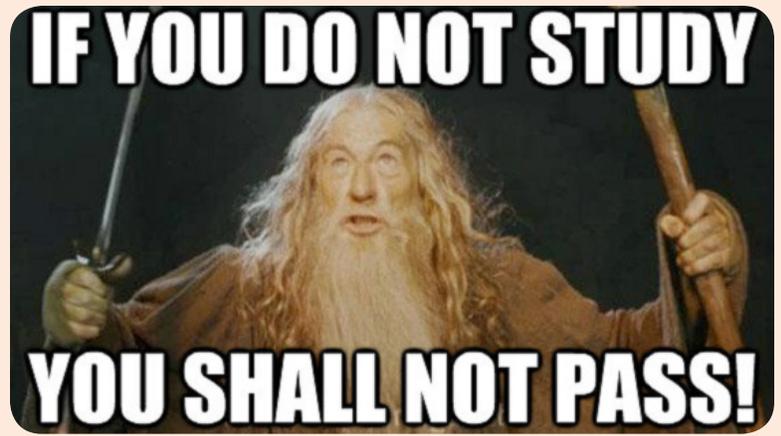
Use your planner to organize your daily, weekly and monthly goals and responsibilities.

- List your tasks from high to low priority.
- Make daily to do list, this way you attack each day with a plan.
- Be sure to highlight exam and assignment due dates to keep you on track.

Tip #2: Form study groups early

Whether you are a social person or not, being a part of a study group has its benefits. Set up days in the week where you meet up with your study buddies in the library or a coffee shop.

- Figure out what you do know and what you do not know.
- Don't make study groups too big. Have a maximum of 5 people.
- Designate a group moderator to keep everyone on their "A" game.
- Decide the topics that will be discussed each week before meeting.
- Take turns teaching others the material you understand and learn from others the material you don't understand.
- Discuss and quiz each other.
- Schedule a specific time period (1-2 hours on Fridays)
- Make studying enjoyable. Come up with challenges and fun rhymes that help with memory retention.



Tip #3: Maximize your individual study time

Study when you are at your best. Every person is different, in order to get the best academic success

find out what time of day is best for you to study. Create your class schedule around the hours that you are most active and ready to concentrate.

- Make outlines of your lecture notes as well as outlines of your notes from reading material.
- Use your outlines to cross reference when studying for major exams and quizzes.
- Set realistic goals with an action plan. You want to set goals that you know you can stick to. Once you know what is expected of you based on your syllabus set goals that you to accomplish for each class.

Tip #4: Use the resources available to you

Every student is bound to struggle in at least one subject when it comes to college academia. Make use of all the free services that are offered to you on your college campus.

- Attend your professor's office hours.
- Attend your TA's office hours.
- Get help with essays in the writing center.
- Sign up for a tutor in the math and science center.
- Speak with your advisor on a regular basis. Make sure you are taking the right classes. Make sure that you are on track to graduate on time.

Tip #5: Keep your eyes on the prize

It is very easy to get discouraged and distracted in college. When times like this strike; strike back.

- Make a list of motivational quotes to look at.
- Hang posters of Grad, Medical, and Law schools that you hope to attend in the future.
- Hang posters of different career paths
- Celebrate when you achieve all of your monthly goals.

Tip #6: Relax and remember to have some fun

College can be very stressful and very time consuming. However, with proper time management you can always find time to enjoy yourself. Schedule relaxation time.

- Go to the gym.
- Hang out with friends.
- Make time for TV.
- Go out to parties (in moderation).
- Attend social events on campus.



The Importance of Networking

Being a college student should be treated like any other professional job.

You want to make as many connections to people as possible. Take the opportunity to join clubs, caucuses, support groups, or even take the time to shadow a professor or two. Learn about the different areas that you may be interested in, make connections that can help you land a job in the future after graduation. Networking is extremely important for starting off your professional career.

Tips on Building Strong Professional Network Connections

- Learn your passions.
- Get a mentor.
- Practice making yourself visible: speak up in class, at events, conferences, student panels, write an article for the school paper, volunteer for student leadership roles.
- Keep in contact with old professors.
- Apply for internships in the field of work you are interested in.
- Use your presence on social media responsibly.



Why is your presence on social media important?

We often do not think about the things we post on social media, but the truth is that our posts can sometimes get us into trouble.

These days, social media accounts are watched and investigated any time we apply for jobs, apply to schools, and sometimes we just have “lurkers.” You should never post anything that is too personal on social media, as they say, “if it isn't something you would share in a room full of strangers, then it shouldn't be on your social media page.” You also want to remember that it is the internet, which means the things you post will more than likely be there forever. Even if you delete the content, the friends you have on social media have the ability to share, download, and save the things you post, so it is never really gone.

How to present yourself in a professional manner on social media

DO:

- **Language:** You want to make sure that your posts are free of grammatical errors. You never know who could be browsing your page, and you want them to know that you are capable of articulating your thoughts. Review your posts before posting them, and edit wherever you see mistakes.
- **Photos:** Any photos that you post on your social media should be clean and “G” rated. Update your privacy settings: Delete and un-tag yourself from any photos that can damage your image.
- **Connections:** Social media can be used as a professional platform (LinkedIn). Consider whether or not you want to befriend professional colleagues on social networks, and choose wisely. Remember, they will see any and everything related to your social media page.
- **Security Settings:** Maintain a secure page that only allows friends in your network to view your information and photos.

DON'T:

- **Language:** To keep your profile as professional as possible, avoid using foul language, comments, and innuendos that can be offensive.
- **Comments:** You want to avoid ever complaining about work or school. Complaining about your job on social media screams the words “I AM NOT A PROFESSIONAL.” You want to make sure to avoid posting any information about the clients you deal with at work or your college professors. If they were to see these posts or hear about them, it could result in being fired or expelled.
- **Photos:** As much as you would like to post the pictures of your drunken Friday night out with friends, DON'T!!!! Posting pictures like this will only hurt you. You want to avoid posting pictures where you are making obscene gestures toward the camera. You want to post things that you can stand by and defend.
- **Connections:** Steer clear of befriending people on social media that you do not know. Sometimes when you post on social media, your location will be posted with it. When you have an excessive number of friends or followers it leaves room for stalkers.
- **Cyberbullying:** posting vicious and hateful words about or toward another person on social media often leads to violence, depression, suicide, and discrimination not only toward the person being posted about but the person who made the post. The consequences of being a cyberbully can include: expulsion from school, being fired from a job, and serious criminal prosecution.

Reminder

You are SPECIAL..

Take care of YOURSELF ☺

The Importance of Self-Care

College student life gets busy. It is important to take care of yourself.

Between the long days of class, studying, and maintaining relationships, there is barely any time left in the day for yourself. Being overworked can be detrimental to your academics and more importantly to your mental health.

Tips on Practicing Self-Care

- Try to take a day off. You are a full-time student and that is a lot of work. If you can afford it, take one day a week where you do not have to focus on studying, doing school assignments, being with friends. Just be in your own space.
- Treat yourself to things you like. Buy yourself something that you have been eyeing for a while.
- Use the free student counseling services on campus. Speaking with a counselor can help you process the stressors that you may experience while in college. They can teach you proper coping mechanisms and help you come up with a mental health safety plan for when times get too overwhelming.
- Grab a cup of coffee and read a book for fun.
- Pick up the habit of journaling; this will give you a way to express yourself and your feelings. It can help you get thoughts out of your mind so that you can focus on your school work when needed.
- Take naps when needed.
- Have a movie night with friends.
- Go for a walk.
- Create a playlist that puts you in a good mood.
- Go to the gym and work up a sweat.