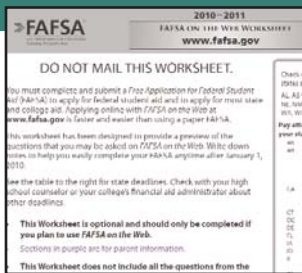




The Next Step: Financial Aid

Despite all the hard work you've already put into the college admission process, there is still work to be done. Hitting "submit" for your admission applications was in many ways just the beginning. During January the next phase of the college process starts: applying for financial aid and scholarships. Here is a breakdown of what you can expect in the coming months:



January

File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible after January 1, it is important not to miss your earliest college financial aid deadline. The FAFSA must be filed to determine your eligibility for the Federal Pell Grant Program, Federal Stafford/Direct Loans and any

Federal Campus-based program (i.e. SEOG, Perkins and Work Study). The FAFSA should be filed online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. If schools you are applying to require the CSS Profile, register online at www.collegeboard.com. Some colleges will require additional institutional paperwork as well. If you have questions during any part of this process, please call us at 1-800-525-2577 x119. Consider attending one of our in-office workshops this month to help understand the ins and outs of financial aid. If you can't make an in-house workshop, feel free to watch our "Filing a FAFSA and CSS Profile" video.

February & March

Within 10 to 14 days of filing the FAFSA online, the Department of Education will send you a Student Aid Report (SAR). If you file a paper FAFSA expect your SAR to arrive in 3 to 6 weeks). Among other things, this report determines whether you will be eligible for a Pell Grant and shows your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). Pay close attention to the instructions that are included with the SAR. Review the information and make sure there are no errors. After you have received your SAR, you will be able to go online and make corrections or add schools. Simply visit the www.fafsa.ed.gov and click on the link in Section 3 that prompts users to "Make Corrections" to existing FAFSA forms.

Center for College Planning at the NHHEAF Network Organizations

The Center for College Planning at the NHHEAF Network Organizations is dedicated to providing students and families with valuable information about the college planning process—from savings options and college admissions requirements, to applying for financial aid and scholarships. We serve all student populations: traditional, continuing education, graduate and adult learner. We offer college planning materials and coordinate speakers for schools, businesses and community organizations free of charge. We provide dynamic small group workshops in our Concord, New Hampshire office. We also provide a toll free college planning hotline and comprehensive Web site. Our goal is to promote higher education as the means to achieving personal, career and life goals.

The NHHEAF Network Organizations

The NHHEAF Network Organizations are comprised of four independent nonprofit organizations dedicated to streamlining the student loan process: New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation (NHHEAF) guarantees, originates and disburses your loan.

New Hampshire Higher Education Loan Corporation (NHHELCO) funds your loan.

Granite State Management & Resources (GSM&R) services your loan.

NHHEAF Network Educational Foundation (NNEF) administers charitable giving.



The NHHEAF Network Organizations
Center for College Planning
1.888.7.GRADUATE x119
collegeplanning@nhheaf.org

College Fact of the Month:

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, in 2006-07, of the 1.5 million bachelor's degrees awarded that year, over 50 percent were concentrated in five fields: business (21 percent); social sciences and history (11 percent); education (7 percent); health professions and related clinical sciences (7 percent); and psychology (6 percent).

April

As spring approaches you should begin to receive award letters from each of the schools that have accepted you for admission. Check your mailbox and inbox for this important information. The Award Letter outlines the aid a school has offered to you. The offers may include grants, scholarships, federal student loans or work study programs. Sit down with your parents and compare each school's offer so you can make an informed decision based on what works best for your family. The CCP offers an *Understanding the Award Letter* workshop in the CCP library and that may help answer questions about how to evaluate your award letter. To attend a workshop or view program descriptions [click here](#).

May 1st

May 1 is the National Candidate Reply Date. Decision time arrives! Accepting an offer for admission and the financial aid award package secures your spot. This is the final important deadline in the process. A tuition and or room deposit may also be required by this time.

June & July

Most schools will include a set of instructions with your award letter regarding federal student loans. During the summer, you will be required to complete an application and promissory note. At the same time, parents and students should identify how they will meet the remaining costs. Tuition payment plans, Federal Parent (PLUS) Loans and alternative loans are a few options.

Financial Concerns of First-Year College Students Have Wide Impact

More first-year college students have concerns about their ability to finance college than at any time since 1971, according to the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) Freshman Survey, UCLA's annual survey of the nation's students entering four-year colleges and universities. Such concerns are part of an overall picture of the impact of the economic downturn on the experiences of entering college students.

More than half of incoming first-time students in 2009 reported "some" concern about financing college, and more students were turning to loans to pay for college. In addition, fewer students reported experiences in the workforce as high-school seniors, with 62.8 percent having worked, compared with 69.3 percent in 2007. Students were not unique in having difficulty finding employment: more parents of incoming first-year students were also unemployed in 2009. About half (49.3 percent) of all students were planning to get jobs to pay for college.

Financial concerns also affected students' college choice, with 41.6 percent reporting that cost was a "very important" factor in choosing which college to attend, the highest level since this question was added to the survey five years ago. In addition, those reporting that an offer of financial aid was important in their college choice increased to 44.7 percent, up from 43.0 percent in 2008 and 39.4 percent in 2007. And 8.9 percent reported that not being offered financial aid at their first-choice college was important in their college selection, the highest mark since the question was first asked in 1984.

If you have questions on how to pay for college, or how to choose the right college for your situation, let the Center for College Planning team help you. Call us at 888-7-GRADUATE, x 119 to schedule a one-hour Funding Options appointment today!

Did You Know?

Campus Spotlight

Financial aid can make college more affordable for students who would otherwise have limited options for continuing education beyond high school. At Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU), ninety percent of students receive some type of financial aid through need-based grants and academic and commuter scholarships. In fact, SNHU students receive \$50 million in aid annually from private, state, institutional and federal sources. SNHU is also increasing aid to high school students with GPAs of 2.5 or higher making them eligible for up to \$18,000 in grants and scholarship awards. If you have applied to SNHU, it is important to note that March 15 is the priority filing date for financial aid forms.

FREE NHHEAF University Library Workshops

Filing the FAFSA & CSS Profile Application

Thursday, January 28 & Monday, February 15 at 5:00 p.m.*

Know The Score: Standardized Testing

Monday, February 8 at 5 p.m.*

To register for library workshops and webinars visit www.nhheaf.org/events.asp

*Library Workshops are held in the CCP Library located at 4 Barrell Court in Concord. www.nhheaf.org/directions.asp

FREE NNHEAF University Webinars:

Budgeting for Success

Thursday, January 28, 6:15 to 7:15 p.m.

Information for the Student Athlete

Thursday, February 11, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Know the Score: Standardized Testing

Thursday, February 25, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.



Southern
New Hampshire
University

Scholarship Corner:

Calling All High School Seniors! DEADLINE EXTENDED

The NHHEAF Network Organization's Center for College Planning is looking for high school seniors currently involved in the college planning and admission process to share their stories in a 5-7 minute written speech. Students should share experiences, insights and advice to current juniors about the process. The lucky winner will deliver their speech as the keynote speaker at Destination CollegeSM 2010 and win a \$1,000 scholarship. Second and third place winners will also be recognized. The deadline for submitting a speech has been extended to February 5, 2010. For more details, or to submit an entry, visit www.destinationcollege.org.



Red Sox Foundation Scholarships!

The Red Sox Foundation has announced that it will award a \$1,000 scholarship to one student at ten different public high schools in New Hampshire. Eligibility criteria include demonstrated academic excellence and a commitment to community service, as well as having financial need. The eligible high schools are:

Concord High School
Dover High School
Keene High School
Londonderry High School
Manchester Central High School
Merrimack Valley
Pinkerton Academy
Portsmouth High School
Salem High School
Spaulding High School

Click here for additional information. The deadline to apply is March 19.

NH93

NH93 Scholarship Superhighway provides an effective way for students to search for local scholarships without poring over stacks of scholarship flyers and multiple scholarship sites. Students create personalized profiles that can be matched against a database of local opportunities for New Hampshire students. Links to other scholarship sources, such as scholarships from the business community and national search engines, are also provided.



Is Facebook Hurting Your GPA?

A recent study conducted by student researchers at the Whittemore School of Business and Economics at the University of New Hampshire found that students who frequently use social media are not harming their grades. The researchers found that there was no significant correlation between the use of social media and grades. Even heavy users, over sixty minutes a day, did not show a decline in academic performance. The study also found that Facebook and YouTube were the most used social media platforms with 96% of those surveyed using Facebook on a regular basis.



twitter



Upcoming:

February - Scholarship Opportunities

Your next Dean's List will be sent in February. It's time to talk scholarships. You'll find loads of tips about where to search and also how to report outside scholarships to colleges. Until then, complete all required financial aid paperwork. And remember to call us with any questions at (800) 525-2577 x119.

The NHHEAF Network Organizations are comprised of four 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that provide students and families with the resources and funding to pursue higher education aspirations. Funds generated by the Organizations make their charitable mission possible as student loan earnings are reinvested in programs and services that benefit citizens of New Hampshire. For more information, visit www.nhheaf.org.