

# College Success Checklist

IT'S A PLAN

You may find college different from high school in many ways. Learn how to succeed in college.

## ACHIEVE

### Do your best in school.

Your grades matter for your future. They may also impact your financial aid. Continue good habits that help you be successful.

- ☐ Go to and participate in all of your classes.
- ☐ Stay on top of reading and assignments.
- ☐ Determine the place you study best.
- ☐ In college, your grades only come to you because of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Talk with your family about their expectations about sharing your academic progress.

### Take the right classes.

Talk to your advisor and make sure you're taking the classes you need to complete your degree on time.

- ☐ If you are planning to transfer colleges, make sure the credit will transfer.
- ☐ Take a class unrelated to your major or program that interests you.
- ☐ Consider spending a term studying in another country or at another college.

### Get organized and get help.

In college you are in charge of your own time. Take advantage of people and programs that will help you succeed.

- ☐ Find a system that works for you to keep track of class material and assignments.
- ☐ Ask for help from your professors, advisor or classmates. Find a study partner or group, go to office hours and use tutors.

## ENGAGE

### Get involved.

College can be more than just classes. Extracurricular activities help you explore your interests and make friends.

- ☐ Join student groups, volunteer for an organization you care about, or get a part-time job. Try something new or start your own club.
- ☐ Make a plan for summer. Consider summer classes, internships or research, special programs or a job.

### Spend time with good people.

Who you hang out with matters. Get a support system of people who want to see you succeed.

- ☐ Choose friends that share positive goals and interests.
- ☐ Find a mentor – a professor, advisor, former teacher, or older student that you can talk to.
- ☐ Stay connected with family and friends from home while focusing on new experiences on campus.

### Make good choices.

Practice healthy, safe, and kind behaviors.

- ☐ Take care of your physical and mental health. Exercise, eat healthy and get enough sleep.
- ☐ Be responsible with risky behaviors like drinking, doing drugs, and having sex.
- ☐ Be kind; treat others with respect.





## EXPLORE

### Narrow your career interests.

Visit your college's career center to get help.

- ☐ Explore careers that match your degree and your interests.
- ☐ Consider volunteer opportunities, internships, research or a job shadow to learn more.
- ☐ Attend a career fair.

### Do you want to transfer colleges?

Plan ahead and talk to advisors at both colleges. Plan ahead to make sure credit transfers.

- ☐ Review what is most important to you in a college.
- ☐ Research admission requirements to make sure you're on track.
- ☐ Get to know the colleges.
- ☐ Apply by the deadline. Be prepared with all the information you need before you apply.

### Considering graduate school?

Explore your options for next steps.

- ☐ Talk to your advisor and professors about programs and careers that interest you.
- ☐ Research admission requirements. You may need to take an entrance exam before applying.
- ☐ Get to know the colleges and professors you might work with.
- ☐ Apply by the deadline. Be prepared with all the information you need before you apply.

## PAY

### Keep track of your money.

Talk with your family about managing college costs. You're the only one who can see your tuition bill and financial aid information because of FERPA.

- ☐ Make a budget and stick to it. Beware of credit card offers! Use them responsibly.
- ☐ Understand your student loans. Accept only the amount of loans you really need—remember, you will need to pay them back.
- ☐ If possible, make interest rate payments on unsubsidized loans while you still in school.

### Apply for financial aid each year.

Get help from the financial aid office at your college.

- ☐ Re-apply for FAFSA or ORSAA every year.
- ☐ Apply for scholarships. You may be eligible for more scholarships now that you're in college.

### Get help if there are changes to your financial situation.

Life happens. Contact your college's financial aid office if you or a family member lost a job or had unexpected medical expenses, childcare costs or other financial issues.

- ☐ Some colleges have emergency grants for current students.
- ☐ Ask for a review of your financial aid offer.

