The Journey to College and Beyond: A Parent’s Guide to the College Transition [brochure and streaming video]

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Here are just a few questions that you may have when your student starts their freshman year:

- **How can I get involved?**
  Many colleges and universities host Parent and Family Weekends that allow you to visit with your student while gaining a better understanding of what they are doing each day. Be sure to ask about parent-involvement opportunities during your student’s registration and orientation weekends.

- **When do I check in with my student?**
  We encourage you to develop a communication plan with your student. We also encourage you to use different forms of communication: phone calls, video calls, text messaging, social media, mail, care packages, etc.

- **When will they come home?**
  When they come home, expect your relationship and their expectations to change. Your student may also be saddened to know that life in their hometown has gone on without them, so be able to serve as that listening ear when they are feeling frustrated or upset.

- **How do I help when things go wrong?**
  Inevitably, something will go wrong for your student while they are in college: financial aid errors, failed test/class, policy violation involvement, etc. When these things happen, be a support system for your student while allowing the student the autonomy to handle their own issues.

**Books**
- *Divorced Parents and Filing the FAFSA* (by LLC Crush College Debt)
- *I’ll Miss You Too: The Off-to-College Guide for Parents and Students* (by Margo Ewing Woodacre, MSW and Steffany Bane Carey)
- *Letting Go (Fifth Edition): A Parents’ Guide to Understanding the College Years* (by Karen Levin Coburn and Madge Lawrence Treeger)
- *Naked Roommate: For Parents Only: A parents Guide to the New College Experience* (by Harlan Cohen)
- *There is Life After College: What Parents and Students Should Know About Navigating School to Prepare for the Jobs of Tomorrow* (by Jeffrey Selingo)
- *You’re On Your Own (But I’m Here If You Need Me): Mentoring Your Child During the College Years* (by Marjorie Savage)

**Blogs By Parents Like You**
  http://grownandflown.com/
- *Parent’s Guide to the College Puzzle:*  
  http://parentsguidetothecollegetuzzle.com/

**Websites**
- *Big Future by College Board* (College Planning)  
  http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org
- *FAFSA Application*  
  http://fafsa.gov
- *Federal Student Aid*  
  http://studentaid.gov

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CNS 577: Counseling Concepts & Applications for the Student Affairs Profession  
Western Kentucky University
College Application Process

Application Tips
Below are some tips for completing college or career school applications.

1. Keep it real
2. If you are asking teachers, coaches, counselors for letter of recommendations, ask several weeks before the letters are due
3. Beat the deadline
4. Apply online. It’s easier and faster
5. Emphasize your uniqueness
6. Keep it clean online, especially with your different social media pages

FAFSA Information
To receive federal student aid, you’ll need to...

1. Qualify to obtain a college or career school education by having your High School Diploma or GED.
2. Be enrolled or accepted as a regular student in an eligible degree or certificate program
3. If male, be registered for Selective Service
4. Have a valid Social Security number
5. Sign certifying statements on your FASFA stating that you are not in default of a federal student loan and that you will use your aid only educational purposes.
6. Maintain satisfactory academic progress

In addition, you must. Be a U.S. citizen or National or have a Green Card, or Have an Arrival-Departure record or have a battered immigrant status or Have a T-Visa

Registration & Orientation

Registration is where your student’s journey truly begins. This often means that you need to let them go into their advising appointment alone. It is a time for them to learn and begin accepting responsibility. It is important to hear your student’s voice and them to be responsible for their own schedule.

A few reminders since now your student has made their decision on where to go to college:

- Send in your student’s tuition/housing deposit
- Work with your student to accept their financial aid offer
- Choose housing
- Select a meal plan
- Make sure your student has communicated with their high school about where to send a final high school transcript

Orientation

- If you have to option to attend a Parent & Family Orientation along-side your student when they go to their New Student Orientation, it is highly recommended that you go.
  *Parents will have the opportunity to learn about the offices, services, and academic programs your student’s new school has to offer.
- Find out if your student’s school has a Parents Association as they might provide a monthly newsletter or outlet for important information such as details about Parent and Family Weekend or important things to speak to your student about.

Move-In Day

While there are a plethora of resources available for what to bring and what to leave at home. We encourage you to review the residence hall and university policies with your student to ensure that everything they bring is permitted. Please keep the following in mind when planning for Move In Day:

- Be Open-Minded to the roommate and residential experience.
- Be Patient, as there may be hundreds students, parents, and family members attempting to move in the same day.
- Encourage Autonomy by allowing your student to unpack and decorate how they wish.
- Homesickness is to be expected, as this may be their first time to be away from home for a long period of time.
- Part of being safe is using common sense. This can include locking your door when you aren’t in the room, keeping your belongings in a safe place, and walking with friends at night and in secluded areas on campus.
- It’s okay for parents to worry. Be sure to take time for yourself and do what you need to do to ease those fears while allowing your son/daughter the opportunities to learn and grow.