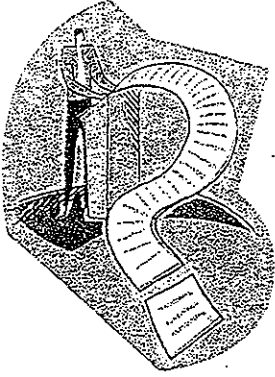


WHAT IS A(N) _____ ?



Aid Package: A combination of aid (possibly including a scholarship, grant, loan, and work) determined by a college financial aid office.

CSS Financial Aid PROFILE: The CSS PROFILE Service is offered by the College Scholarship Service and is used by certain schools to award their own private funds. Students register for the service at www.collegeboard.org after October 1.

Candidates Reply Date: A policy of the National Association for College Admission Counseling that permits students to wait until May 1 to choose, without penalty, among offers of admission/financial aid.

College Calendar: Common systems of instruction time-

Traditional semester - two approximately equal semesters

Early semester - two semesters, the first ending before Christmas

Quarter - three equal terms of about 12 weeks each

Trimester - calendar year divided into three equal semesters.

The third semester replaces summer school

4-1-4 - two equal terms of about 18 weeks each, with a 4-week interim term

Common Application: Many colleges have worked together to develop & distribute the Common Application. Using this form to apply to several schools has many advantages both to students & counselors because you only have one form to complete. Copies may then be sent to any number of participating colleges. The same is true of the "School Report" & "Teacher Evaluation" portions. Common Applications will be available online in July or August at www.commonapp.org. Statistics show that students using Common Applications are given the same consideration as those using the colleges' individual forms.

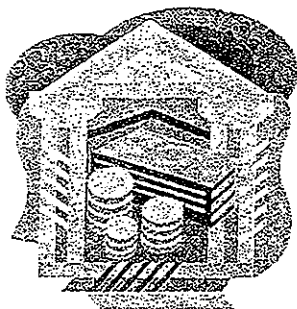
HBCU Common Application: Students wanting to apply to Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCU):

- Go to www.eduinonline.com
- You can complete an application online or print a paper copy from this website
- Fee can be paid by credit card if applying online or by check or money order if mailing in a paper application.

Credit hour: A unit of academic credit that often represents one hour of class time per week for a period of study (semester, quarter, etc.).

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA): The application required for students to be considered for student financial aid. It is important to complete a FAFSA even if you do not think you will qualify for federal aid since colleges typically will not award their own need-based aid without a FAFSA report. The FAFSA is processed free of charge, and it is used by most state agencies and colleges. Students are not charged a fee when filling this form. Worksheets for applying online are available during December of your senior year in the Guidance Office or on the FAFSA website. The FAFSA may be completed online at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS



Each college or each organization granting financial assistance to students determines procedures and guidelines. Information and applications for financial aid may be obtained from the college's website or by writing to:

Office of Financial Aid
(Name of College)
(Address of College)

NEED ASSESSMENT: Colleges have different financial aid requirements. Do what each institution and program requires. All students applying for federal financial aid must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Some colleges, universities and scholarship programs will also require the "CSS Financial Aid PROFILE" to award their institutional or private funds to students. FAFSA forms are available in the Guidance Department in December and on-line in January at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Forms filed on-line are processed faster than paper forms. They should be completed in January of your senior year.

FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS

Financial Aid can be divided into four major categories: grants, loans, jobs, and scholarships. Students may qualify for one or all of a school's available financial aid programs. Below is a brief description of each financial aid program.



GRANTS

A Grant is a "gift" to assist the student in school costs. The award of money does not have to be repaid, and students must meet eligibility requirements in order to receive a grant.

(A) The largest federal grant program is the Pell Grant. The amount a student receives is determined by a standard government formula, student's enrollment status (full time or part time), and the cost of attendance at the school the student attends. To apply, students should indicate on the FAFSA that they want to be considered for this grant.

(B) The Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG) is a second grant program also funded by the federal government. Most schools have a limited amount of funding available, and SEOG is generally awarded to students demonstrating the most need.

(C) Benefits for Veterans and their Dependents: Federal benefits remain in effect for disabled veterans under PL 894 (war time) and PL 815 (peace time). Children of a veteran who dies in service, died as a result of a service-connected incurred disability, or who has been declared 100 percent disabled may be eligible to receive benefits under PL 634. Students desiring additional information should consult their local county Veteran's Service Officer.

(D) Alabama Student Grant Program: Many colleges also offer state funded grants. If you choose to attend a private college in the state of Alabama, you should apply for the Alabama State Grant Program. Grant amounts vary each year depending on the number of qualified students. Applications are available through the Financial Aid Offices at participating colleges.

(E) Alabama Student Assistance Program: Grants are available to low and middle income students who meet the following requirements: student must be a U.S. citizen, must have resided in Alabama for at least 12 consecutive months preceding the beginning of the academic year for which application is made, must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an eligible institution and must demonstrate need evidenced by filing the approved need analysis application. Information may be obtained from the State Department of Education, Montgomery, Alabama 36130.

FINANCIAL AID

FAFSA on the Web: www.fafsa.ed.gov

Interactive Web version of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Click on the link to FAFSA4caster to instantly calculate the estimated family contribution and/or see potential grant eligibility.

FastWEB: www.fastweb.com

A free, searchable scholarship database that enables you to locate sources of financial aid that are suitable for you.

Financial Aid Information Page: www.finaid.org

Rich offerings on everything from scam alerts to scholarship searches.

Student Aid on the Web: www.studentaid.ed.gov

Financial aid primer from the US Department of Education, plus FAFSA links.

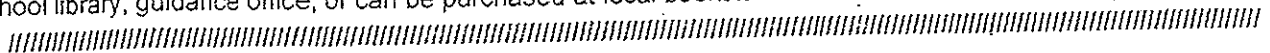
www.WeeklyScholarshipAlert.org

1-5 scholarship notices e-mailed to you each week. No charge and requires only name and e-mail address.

For International Students: www.internationalscholarships.com and www.privatestudentloans.com

Information about print sources may be obtained from www.usnews.com.

Many books are published to help students with post-secondary planning. These can be found in the public library, high school library, guidance office, or can be purchased at local bookstores.



FINANCIAL AID TIPS

1. Contact the financial aid office at all schools you are considering attending. Although the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) form is used at most schools, there is often an institutional application or other information needed that is specific to each school. Submit college-specific applications for financial aid as required.
2. Parents are encouraged to complete their income tax returns in January so figures reported on the FAFSA will be accurate. The FAFSA should be submitted as soon as possible after January 1 of the senior year. Please note, colleges award available funds as FAFSA reports are received.
3. Indicate on the FAFSA the colleges to which you would like the Student Aid Report (SAR) sent.
4. You are encouraged to learn about civic, social and religious organizations in your area which sponsor scholarship programs. Refer to VHHS website and internet scholarship searches. (Refer to page 34.)
5. Most schools have some institutional money available to students who may not qualify for Federal aid. Students should specifically ask for this information.
6. Financial Aid administrators are available to help students complete forms and explain the application process. Take advantage of this service especially in difficult or unusual situations. Taking time to complete the forms properly can save time and frustration in the long run.
7. Students should apply for admission as early as possible. Most schools will not offer you a financial aid package unless you have been accepted for enrollment.
8. All males who are at least 18 years old, who were born after December 31, 1959, and who are not currently on active duty with the armed forces must be registered with the Selective Service in order to receive any Federal financial assistance. Proof of registration will be required.
9. All Federal financial aid is awarded on the basis of demonstrated financial need. The formula used to determine a student's eligibility does not expect the parents to contribute 100% of their savings toward the student's educational expenses, but each family is expected to contribute a reasonable amount based on their ages, the size of the family, the number in college, and the family's assets and income.
10. Parents can estimate their expected family contribution (EFC) by visiting www.FAFSA.ed.gov and clicking on the link for FAFSA4caster in the lower right corner of the homepage.

Students are often expected to provide documentation to verify the information reported on the FAFSA. Accurately reporting information will help you receive your financial aid in a timely manner.

LOANS

An educational loan is exactly what the name implies – a loan. The student who receives a loan is entering into a binding agreement to repay the amount of the principal borrowed plus any interest accrued. Only in certain limited situations may a student receive a cancellation or deferment on an educational loan. Students should read all promissory notes and related information carefully before accepting a loan.

- (A) **Perkins Loan**: A Federal Perkins Loan is a low-interest (5%) loan for both undergraduate and graduate students with exceptional financial need. Perkins Loans are made through a college's Financial Aid Office—the school is the lender and the loan is made with government funds. You can apply for this loan only through the Financial Aid Office at the college of your choice. Students can borrow up to \$4,000 per year of undergraduate study. Students can borrow up to \$20,000 maximum.
- (B) **Stafford Loan Program**: Eligible students may borrow from any participating lender up to \$3,500 for a first year undergraduate or \$4,500 a year for a 2nd year undergraduate, \$5,500 a year if you have completed two years of study or more, and a state or other private nonprofit agency will stand behind the loan. 6.8 percent was the interest rate for the 2007-08 school year. Some rates begin six to twelve months after the student graduates, leaves school, or drops below half-time enrollment.
- (C) **Parent Loans to Undergraduate Student (PLUS)**: A parent with a good credit history can borrow to pay the education expenses of each child who is a dependent undergraduate student enrolled at least half time. The yearly limit on PLUS Loans is equal to your cost of attendance minus any other financial aid for which you are eligible. The interest rate is variable, but not to exceed 9%. From July, 2007 to June, 2008, the rate was 8.5 percent. Repayment and interest begin 60 days following the date of loan disbursement.
- (D) **Nursing and Health Professions**: There are special financial aid programs for students in health and health-related fields. If you plan to study in these areas, ask the financial aid administrator at your college for more information.

More information about federal programs is available in "Funding Education Beyond High School," a financial aid booklet from the U. S. Department of Education, which gives a good outline of the federal financial aid programs and your rights and responsibilities under these programs. Several copies of this publication are available for checkout in the Guidance Office or it can be accessed online by entering the title in your search engine.



WORK STUDY

Work opportunities provided by the institution to help students meet educational expenses are mutually beneficial to both the school and the student. Students gain valuable work experience while the institution has a ready supply of student assistants. It may be wise to point out to students that a campus job—even one awarded through the Financial Aid Office—is a job. The student is expected to work the assigned hours and is paid only for those hours actually worked. Studies have been done which indicate that students (even freshmen) who work no more than 20 hours per week do as well or better than students who do not work. Students with good computer skills have very little difficulty in finding a job on campus.

- (A) **College Work Study Program** is funded through federal and institutional sources. Students are paid at least the minimum wage for the number of hours they actually work. The amount a student is allowed to work depends on the amount of financial need demonstrated.
- (B) Most campuses also have an **Institutional Work Program** funded entirely by institutional funds. Eligibility requirements are determined solely by the institution.
- (C) **Cooperative Education** is a work program gaining in popularity with students. Generally, a student attends school for a period of time and alternately works full time at a job secured through the campus Cooperative Education Office. Contact the school for more information on this program.

MILITARY CAREER OPTIONS

The Armed Services are major employers in the nation. They are also major sources of educational training and preparation for entry level jobs. There are numerous job training opportunities in the military for both men and women. If you would like to travel or earn good wages immediately, the military service may be for you. Representatives from all the services are available to give you information about career training and/or educational opportunities. If you are concerned about the information that you are receiving or contacts that are being made by your recruiter, see your guidance counselor.

Recruiting officers of all branches of the Armed Services visit the high schools regularly. If you are interested, speak with your counselor to set up an appointment. You can also seek additional information by visiting the recruiting offices in your area or by visiting their online websites.

Seniors should consider learning about their specific abilities by taking the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). This test is administered by appointment during the school year by military personnel in each high school. There is no cost to either the student or school district, nor does taking the test obligate the student to enlist.

All branches of the service offer educational assistance programs.

THE ARMED SERVICES VOCATIONAL APTITUDE BATTERY (ASVAB)

The ASVAB is a test used by the services to help with career counseling and job placement. Here are some of the most commonly asked questions about the ASVAB:

1. What is the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery? The ASVAB is a group of twelve tests that measure your aptitude in five separate career field areas and provides an indication of your academic ability. The tests are General Information, Numerical Operations, Attention to Detail, Word Knowledge, Arithmetic Reasoning, Space Perception, Mathematics Knowledge, Electronic Information, Mechanical Comprehension, General Science, Shop Information, and Automotive Information. Your scores on these tests are combined into scores on the following composites: Verbal; Math; Perceptual Speed; Mechanical; Trade Technical; and Academic Ability.
2. Why should I take the ASVAB? The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery is the result of more than 35 years of military service research. It was specifically designed to identify individual aptitudes. If you are a senior trying to decide what to do after high school, your test scores can help identify fields worth exploring. No matter what your age or inclination, the ASVAB can be valuable to you because it can tell you more about yourself.

The ASVAB is not a "pass" or "fail" test. Your scores will only show how well you did in comparison to a representative sample of other students in the United States who took the same tests. You have a lot to gain and nothing to lose when you take the ASVAB.

3. Do I incur any military obligation by taking the ASVAB? No! Taking the ASVAB does not obligate you to the military in any way. You are free to use your test results in whatever manner you wish. Additionally, ASVAB results will not be used to enter your name in any draft registration system.

You have an option to sign a statement authorizing release of your test scores to representatives of all the military services; and, like the majority of high school students, if you are an upperclassman, you will probably be contacted by a service representative sometime before you graduate. You should expect this whether or not you ever take the ASVAB.

CAREER SITES

About.com Career Planning: www.careerplanning.about.com

America's Career Info Net: www.acinet.org/acinet

Naviance/Family Connection: <http://connection.naviance.com>

Career Explorer.net: www.careerexplorer.net

Keirsev Temperament Sorter: www.keirsev.com

Know Your Type (Myers Briggs): www.knowyourtype.com

Lifeworks: www.science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks, explore health and medical science careers

Mapping Your Future: www.mapping-your-future.org