



FAFSA 101: Paying for College

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What is The Scholarship Fund of Alexandria?



- We provide scholarships to graduating seniors
 - Our scholarships are renewable for all four years of college
- Last year, we awarded over \$900,000 in scholarships to T.C. Williams graduates!
 - We have awarded \$11 million since 1986
- Additionally, we offer college and financial aid advising to T.C. Williams students
- We are located right here in T.C. – Room A-121, across from the nurse's office

www.alexscholarshipfund.org

Visit the Scholarship Fund's College Adviser: Ms. Feldman



- Find a **college or career that fits *you*** and your interests
- Search for local and national **scholarships**
- Brainstorm and edit your **essays**
- Develop a **résumé**
- Fill out **financial aid applications** (FAFSA, CSS Profile)
- Prepare for the **SAT/ACT**



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This Evening's Presentation



- The FAFSA
- Institutional Aid
- Understanding your financial aid awards
- Understanding loan repayment
- Graduation rates
- Ways to save on your education
- Other private scholarships

What is Financial Aid?



- Financial resources intended to help pay for college expenses.
 - **Scholarships/Grants** = Free Money
 - **Work-Study** = Must work to earn funds
 - **Loans** = Must pay back

- Where can you get financial aid?
 - **Federal Government**
 - **State Government**
 - **Your College** (Institutional Aid)
 - **Private Scholarships**

Scholarships

Grants

Work Study

Loans



The FAFSA

Everything you need to know about the FAFSA



- **What is the FAFSA?**
 - FAFSA = Free Application for Federal Student Aid
- **Why should you fill it out?**
 - To qualify for grants and loans from the federal government and the Commonwealth of Virginia
 - The FAFSA is required to be considered for institutional aid from colleges
 - The FAFSA is required for most private scholarships
- **Where do you go to fill it out?**
 - fafsa.gov NOT fafsa.com

Everything you need to know about the FAFSA



- **When do you fill it out?**
 - Between January 1st and February 15th of senior year
 - *And every year of college!*
- **Why should you submit the FAFSA by February 15th?**
 - February 15th is a priority financial aid deadline for many colleges
 - If you fill out the FAFSA after that date, you may not qualify for as much money
- **How much does the FAFSA cost?**
 - It's free!
- **How long does it take to fill out the FAFSA?**
 - 30 minutes or less

Everything you need to know about the FAFSA



- **Is there any reason not to fill it out?**
 - No! Even if you think your family income is too high to qualify for aid, you might as well fill out the application and see
- **Will someone help me to fill out the FAFSA?**
 - Yes! The Scholarship Fund of Alexandria will be hosting FAFSA Completion Workshops in January
 - Stop by for free, confidential assistance on your FAFSA from financial aid professionals
 - You'll be in and out in less than half an hour!
- **When are the FAFSA Completion Workshops?**
 - Tuesday, January 13th from 6 pm – 9 pm
 - Saturday, January 31st from 9 am – Noon
 - Wednesday, February 25th from 6 pm – 9 pm

Everything you need to know about the FAFSA



- **Who is eligible for the FAFSA?**
 - U.S. Citizens
 - Permanent Residents (Green Card, I-551)
 - Student whose Arrival Departure Record (I-94) says:
 - Refugee
 - Asylum Granted
 - Parolee
 - T-Visa Holder (victim of human trafficking)
 - Cuban-Haitian Entrant

Everything you need to know about the FAFSA



- **Who is NOT eligible for the FAFSA?**

- Student Visa
- Exchange Visitor Visa
- Diplomat Visa
- Undocumented students
- Any other category not included under US citizen or eligible non-citizen

Everything you need to know about the FAFSA



- **What if you are not eligible for the FAFSA?**

You can still go to college!

- There are specific colleges that will meet all of your financial need – make sure you apply to some of them!
- There are also private scholarships that are available just for you!
- See tonight's handout on resources for undocumented students for some initial information
- Go to the Scholarship Fund office as soon as possible for a list of colleges and scholarships that would be a good fit for you!

All conversations about your status will be completely confidential.

FAFSA – www.fafsa.gov



Federal Student Aid | PROUD SPONSOR of THE AMERICAN MIND™ | FAFSA™
Free Application for Federal Student Aid

Home | About Us | FSA Site | Student Aid on the Web | Help | SEARCH | English | Español

Get help paying for college

Submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

New to the FAFSA?

[Start A New FAFSA](#)

Returning User?

- Make a correction
- Add a school
- View your Student Aid Report (SAR), and more...

[Login](#)

Deadlines
Information about your deadlines.

School Code Search
Find your college's school code. Also find detailed information about your college.

Announcements

- Use the [IRS Data Retrieval Tool](#) to update your FAFSA with IRS tax return information.

If you have already submitted a FAFSA and would like to use the Tool, click [Login](#) to start a correction. Once in the FAFSA, navigate to the "Finances" section, where the

What will you need to fill out the FAFSA?



- Social Security Numbers for you and your parents
 - Your alien registration or permanent resident card (if you are not a U.S. citizen)
- Dates of birth, email address, and mailing address for you & your parents
- Your parent's marital status & date of that status
- Date you and your parents became state residents
- Your 2014 Federal income records – W-2 Forms & 1040s
 - If 2014 are not available, don't worry, you can bring 2013
- 2014 untaxed income records – child support received, disability, or worker's compensation
- Family's current bank statements, business information, stock and other investment records

If you complete the FAFSA using estimates from 2013



- Many families will not have completed 2014 taxes by the February 15th FAFSA priority deadline – that’s OK!
- You may use 2013 tax returns to fill out the FAFSA.
 - However, you should use most recent W-2 or pay-stub to calculate 2014 income.
- Using 2014 income will ensure that your FAFSA is as accurate as possible.
 - An accurate FAFSA allows you to make an informed decision when evaluating financial aid from different colleges.
 - Some students see a big change in financial aid offered when they update FAFSA with most recent tax information – don’t let that happen to you!
- You must log back into FAFSA and update with 2014 taxes as soon as possible.
 - If you do not update your FAFSA in a timely manner, you may lose financial aid.

If you complete the FAFSA using estimates from 2013



- To log back into your FAFSA:
 - Go to fafsa.gov and login as a returning user
 - Click “Make a Correction” on the home screen
 - Enter the PIN number you created when you submitted your FAFSA
 - Add or update any information
 - Be sure to resubmit your FAFSA to send the new information to each school on your list!

Avoid Common Mistakes



- Be careful about whether you are completing the parent or student section – check the side bar!

The screenshot shows two overlapping form sections. The top section is titled 'Parent Demographics Information' and has a sidebar labeled 'PARENT'. It contains a green checkmark icon and the text 'Application was successfully'. Below this are several questions: 'As of today, what is the marital status (adoptive)?' with a 'Select' dropdown, 'Your parents' e-mail address' with a text input field, 'Have your parents lived in Alabama for?' with radio buttons for 'Yes' and 'No', and 'Your parents' number of family membe' with a text input field. The bottom section is titled 'Student Demographic Information' and has a sidebar labeled 'STUDENT'. It contains several fields: 'Your last name' (input: F), 'Your first name' (input: Margaret), 'Your middle initial' (input:), 'Your Social Security Number' (input: 215-63-2987), 'Your date of birth (mmdyyyy)' (input: 05/26/1996), 'Are you male or female?' with radio buttons for 'Male' and 'Female' (Female is selected), 'Your permanent mailing address (include apt. number)' (input: asdf), and 'Your city (and country if not U.S.) Your state' (input: asdf, dropdown: Alabama).

Avoid Common Mistakes



- Dependency Status Questions
 - The question below does not refer to your biological parents – it is asking if you have a court appointed guardian *other than* your parents

As determined by a court in your state of legal residence, are you or were you in legal guardianship?

Yes No

Avoid Common Mistakes



- Student is working on “1st bachelor’s degree” or “Associate degree” → NOT “Graduate/professional degree”

Are you a U.S. citizen?
Yes, I am a U.S. citizen (or U.S. national) ▾

When you begin college in the 2014-2015 school year, what will be your high school completion status?
High school diploma ▾

When you begin the 2014-2015 school year, what will be your grade level?
Never attended college/1st yr. ▾

When you begin the 2014-2015 school year, what degree or certificate will you be working on?
1st bachelor's degree ▾

Are you interested in being considered for work-study?
Yes ▾

Will you have your first bachelor's degree before July 1, 2014?
 Yes No

What happens to the FAFSA information?



- 1) FAFSA information is submitted to the Department of Education for processing.
- 2) The Department of Education calculates an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and sends each applicant a Student Aid Report (SAR) within 2-3 days of filing the FAFSA.
- 3) Each school selected by the student will receive the information submitted, as well as the calculated EFC.
- 4) Each school that accepts the student will send a financial aid award letter by April.
 - The letter will detail federal, state, and institutional aid awarded by the college to the student.
 - Only the Pell Grant amount will be the same at each college – state grants and federal loans will vary by school.

Words to Know



- **SAR** = Student Aid Report
 - Official calculation of family's financial need by Department of Education
- **EFC** = Expected Family Contribution
 - Amount of money your family is expected to contribute toward your education per year of college

Federal Student Aid **FAFSA**SM 

Form Approved
OMB No. [REDACTED]
App exp. 12/31/2015

2014-2015

Electronic Student Aid Report (SAR)

The SAR summarizes the information you submitted on your 2014-2015 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Application Receipt Date:	01/11/2014	XXX-XX [REDACTED]	
Processed Date:	05/29/2014	EFC: 0000+0	← EFC
		DRN: [REDACTED]	

- **Verification** = Additional documentation required for a college
 - You will see an asterisk by your EFC if you have been selected for verification by the federal government

Words to Know



- **COA** = Cost of Attendance/Sticker Price (tuition, fees, personal expenses for one year of college)
- **Gap** = Unmet Financial Need
 - Money still left to pay (in addition to EFC) after scholarships
 - COA
 - EFC
 - Financial aid from federal government
 - Financial aid from Commonwealth of Virginia
 - Financial aid from college
 - Private scholarships
 - = GAP

Federal Grants



Pell Grant

- Up to \$5,730 per year of free money
- If you qualify for free or reduced lunch, you will probably qualify for the Pell Grant
- The Pell Grant is the only type of Federal Aid that you will be guaranteed to receive at every school you've applied to
- Other types of federal and state aid are disbursed by the college based on each college's individual formula
 - Meaning that you will receive different amounts of federal and state grants and loans from each college

SEOG (Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant)

- Between \$100 to \$4,000 per year

Federal Work-Study



Federal Work Study

- Part-time jobs for students through eligible employers, such as their school, or even federal, state or local public agencies
- Must check yes, you are interested in work-study on the FAFSA application in order to be considered.
 - EVERYONE should check yes. You can always decline the job at a later date, but you can't go back and ask to be considered for it.
- Even though this is a federal program, schools set eligibility criteria

Federal Direct Loans: Subsidized & Unsubsidized



- **Subsidized Loans**
 - Available to undergraduate students with financial need
 - Loan is in the student's name, guaranteed by the Federal government through the Department of Education (DOE)
 - The government pays the interest while the student is in school
 - Fixed interest rate for 2014-15 is 4.66%

- **Unsubsidized Loans**
 - *Non-need based* loan in the student's name, guaranteed by the Federal government through the DOE
 - Federal Government **does not** pay the interest while the student is in school
 - Fixed interest rate for 2014-15 is 4.66%

Federal Direct Loans: Award Amounts



Year	Dependent Undergraduate
First Year	\$5,500 – No more than \$3,500 of this amount may be in subsidized loans.
Second Year	\$6,500 – No more than \$4,500 of this amount may be in subsidized loans.
Third Year and Beyond	\$7,500 – No more than \$5,500 of this amount may be in subsidized loans.
Maximum Total Debt	\$31,000 – No more than \$23,000 of this amount may be in subsidized loans.

Other Federal Loans



Perkins Loans

- Federal government subsidizes this loan (pays the interest while the student is in school)
- Loan is in the student's name
- Fixed interest rate of 5.0%
- Up to \$5,500 per year

Direct Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS)

- Credit-based educational loan in the parent's name guaranteed by the Federal government
- Fixed interest rate of 7.21%
- The government does not subsidize this loan
- Maximum amount a parent can borrow is the cost of attendance minus all other financial aid

Commonwealth of Virginia Financial Aid



- There are a number of different state-based grants that you will be automatically considered for when you submit your FAFSA.
- The only Virginia grant that requires a separate application is for students who will be attending a private college in Virginia.
 - **Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant Program (VTAG)**
 - Private colleges, non-need-based
 - Estimated amount is \$3,100 per year

What if you are selected for verification?



- 1/3 of all FAFSAs are selected for verification by the federal government.
- If the government selects you for verification, the colleges you applied to are responsible for communicating with you to verify your application.
- Even if you are not selected by the federal government, an individual college can still choose to verify your application. Some colleges verify every student.
- The college might communicate with you through:
 - Your personal email
 - Your application portal on the college’s website
 - Your new email address with the college (for example: mfeldman@gmu.edu)
 - Your actual mailbox!

What if you are selected for verification?



- You need to be sure that you are consistently checking all four sources because **if you don’t respond to verification communication in a timely manner, you can lose your financial aid!**
- If you are selected for verification, colleges will often ask you to:
 - Have your tax transcript sent to the college directly from the IRS
 - Use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool to automatically transfer your tax information from the IRS website into the FAFSA
 - Send copies of your W-2s
 - Download financial aid paperwork from the college’s website and fill out more questions about your family income
 - Use IDOC (College Board’s financial aid verification service) to complete verification questionnaires.
- The Scholarship Fund staff is happy to help with any verification questions!

Renewing your financial aid



- Although grades are not a factor in initially qualifying for federal financial aid, in order to be eligible to renew your aid, you must be making satisfactory academic progress (SAP).
 - If you fail several courses in your freshman year of college, you may not qualify to renew your federal financial aid.
- If you are making SAP, you can renew your aid by resubmitting your FAFSA before February 15th each year of college.
- It's important to note that there are a limited number of years during which you can receive federal financial aid.

Time limits on financial aid eligibility



Program Length	Limitation on Federal Financial Aid Eligibility
4-Year Bachelor's Degree	6 Years
2-Year Associates Degree	3 Years
1-Year Certificate Program	1 ½ Years
10 Week Certificate Program	15 Weeks



Institutional Aid

Choose colleges that offer lots of institutional aid



This is the most important part of finding \$ for college!

- It is a common misconception that scholarship awards typically cover the entire cost of college:
 - The Pell Grant is \$5,730
 - The average student qualifies for about \$3,000 in private scholarships
 - In-state colleges cost about \$28,000 per year – leaving the student a gap of about \$20,000
- The most important piece of financing college is choosing schools that will offer you lots of money in institutional aid to fill that gap!

Use the Net Price Calculator



My Estimated Net Price for Academic Year 2013-14 is \$ **3,076**

How did we calculate your net price? Your net price is the cost of attendance (estimated below) minus grants and scholarships (money you do not have to pay back) that you may receive.

Estimated Cost of Attendance

Tuition & Fees	\$ 12,466
Room & Board	\$ 9,730
Books & Supplies	\$ 1,240
Transportation	\$ 370
Personal Expenses	\$ 2,080
Estimated Total Cost of Attendance	\$ 25,886

Estimated Grant/Gift Aid

Estimated Federal Pell Grant	\$ 5,595
Grants	\$ 17,215
Estimated Total Grant/Gift Aid	\$ 22,810

ESTIMATED NET PRICE \$ **3,076**

Estimated Self Help

Student Work	\$ 3,000
Estimated Total Self Help	\$ 3,000

ESTIMATED REMAINING COST \$ **76**



This chart shows the estimated share of money available to you from grant aid (money that does not have to be repaid) and self-help (money that you earn or borrow). The difference between your cost of attendance and these two sources of funds is the amount you will be responsible for paying. It is the estimated "Remaining Cost," and is the third slice of the pie.

NOTE:

The estimate provided using this net price calculator does not represent a final determination, or actual award, of financial assistance. The price of attendance and financial aid availability may change. This estimate shall not be binding on the Secretary of Education, the institution of higher education or the state in which the institution of higher education is located.

Students must complete the Free Application for Federal Aid (FAFSA) in order to be eligible for, and receive, an actual financial aid award that includes federal

Let's look at some examples



Using the Net Price Calculator, we can determine that if a family of three makes \$30,000 per year, they would pay the following net prices:

College	Sticker Price	Net Price
University of Richmond	\$59,630	\$2,200
University of Virginia	\$25,886	\$3,076
Old Dominion University	\$20,834	\$9,889
University of Maryland	\$42,523	\$36,928

“Net Price” vs. “Sticker Price”



- **Private colleges** can have a significant amount of money to give away in need-based financial aid, so don't rule them out just because of their initial sticker price!
- Typically, **the more competitive the college**, or the better your grades have to be in order to get accepted, **the more money they can give away**. This goes for both private and public schools.
- Out-of-state public universities typically require families to pay a significant amount of money out of pocket. **Make sure to apply to several in-state schools!**
- **Good grades = More \$\$\$**

Your College Costs



You can calculate your individual estimated cost of attendance for each school you're considering.

Go to: <http://collegecost.ed.gov/netpricecenter.aspx>



U.S. Department of Education

Net Price Calculator Center

← Back to CATC

Q. Do you want to know how much it will cost for you to attend college?

A. Enter the name of a college to find its net price calculator.

How do you apply for institutional aid?



1. Submit the **FAFSA**
2. Fill out the college's institutional financial aid application.
 - Some colleges will require the **CSS Profile** (College Board's version of the FAFSA)
 - Other colleges will have **forms you must download** from their website
3. Make sure to submit FAFSA, CSS Profile, and any financial aid paperwork by the college's priority deadline.

Be sure to check the financial aid page on each college's website so that you don't miss any forms or deadlines!

Local schools that require the CSS Profile



- University of Virginia
- College of William & Mary
- University of Richmond
- Washington & Lee University
- American University
- George Washington University
- Georgetown University
- Johns Hopkins University
- Duke University
- University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill

Cost of CSS Profile



- The CSS Profile is not a free application for most students.
 - There is a fee waiver built into the application, but even most free or reduced lunch students will not qualify for it.
- Costs \$25 to send the application to first school
 - \$16 for each additional college
- It's still worth it to fill out the CSS Profile because the schools that require it are the ones that give out the most money in financial aid!



Understanding Your Financial Aid Award

How does the college decide your award?



Schools use the expected family contribution (EFC) from the FAFSA to determine eligibility for need-based financial aid and to prepare an award package.

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \text{Cost of Attendance (COA)} \\
 \text{(minus)} \\
 \text{EFC} \\
 \text{(equals)} \\
 \text{Financial Need}
 \end{array}$$

How does the college decide your award?



- COA varies by school and colleges invest different amounts of money into their financial aid programs
 - You will receive a different amount of aid from each college
- How can you decide which college has given you the best offer?

The Best Aid



1. Grants
 - Pell
 - SEOG
 - State-based (VTAG, CSAP, VCAP, VGAP, OR CTGP)
 - Institutional (from the college itself)
2. Federal Work-Study
3. Federal Direct Subsidized Loans
4. Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans
5. Perkins Loan
6. Parent PLUS Loan

Be sure to research whether the college's institutional grants are renewable for all four-years of college!

Cost of Attendance - VCU



Cost of Attendance Calculation

Books & Supplies	\$2,659
Personal & Transportation	\$3,000
Room & Board	\$10,004
Tuition & Fees	+ \$12,635
Total Cost of Attendance	\$28,298

Need Calculation

Cost of Attendance	\$28,298
Estimated Family Contribution	- \$0
Financial Need	\$28,298

Financial Aid Award - VCU



Fed. Pell Grant:	\$ 5,645
Fed. Direct Sub. Loan:	\$ 3,500
Fed. Direct UnSub. Loan:	\$ 2,000
Fed. Work Study:	\$ 2,500
VCU One-Year Access Grant	\$ 2,000
VGAP1 Grant Virginia:	\$ 9,877
Total Aid:	\$25,522
Total Free Money:	\$17,522
Total Earned Money:	\$ 2,500
Total to Pay Back:	\$ 5,500
Still Left to Pay:	\$ 2,776
Total Out of Pocket for 1 year:	\$ 8,276

Cost of a Degree - VCU



Total Amount Borrowed Over 4 Years:

Fed. Direct Sub. Loan:	\$14,000
Fed. Direct UnSub. Loan:	\$ 8,000
Total Amount Borrowed:	\$22,000

Total Amount Paid After 10 Years:

Total Loan Repayment:	\$27,616 (\$230 per month)
Total Paid Out-of-Pocket Over 4-Years in College:	\$11,104
Total Cost of Degree	\$38,720

Cost of Attendance - Johnson & Wales University



Cost of Attendance

Books & Supplies	\$1,800
Personal & Transportation	\$2,065
Room & Board	\$10,140
Tuition & Fees	+ \$27,156
Total Cost of Attendance	\$41,161

Need Calculation

Cost of Attendance	\$41,161
<u>Estimated Family Contribution</u>	<u>- \$0</u>
Financial Need	\$41,161

Financial Aid Award - Johnson & Wales University



Fed. Pell Grant:	\$ 5,730
Fed. Direct Sub. Loan:	\$ 3,464
Fed. Direct UnSub. Loan:	\$ 5,937
Federal Perkins Loan:	\$ 1,000
Federal SEOG Grant:	\$ 275
<u>Institutional Aid:</u>	<u>\$10,100</u>
Total Aid:	\$26,506

Total Free Money:	\$16,105
Total to Pay Back:	\$10,401
<u>Still Left to Pay:</u>	<u>\$14,655</u>
Total Out of Pocket for 1 year:	\$25,056

Cost of a Degree - Johnson & Wales University



Total Amount Borrowed Over 4 Years:

Fed. Direct Sub. Loan:	\$13,856
Fed. Direct UnSub. Loan:	\$23,748
<u>Federal Perkins Loan:</u>	<u>\$ 4,000</u>
Total Amount Borrowed:	\$41,604

Total Amount Paid After 10 Years:

Total Loan Repayment:	\$52,294 (\$436 per month)
<u>Total Paid Out-of-Pocket Over 4-Years in College:</u>	<u>\$58,620</u>
Total Cost of a Degree:	\$110,914

What if you can't afford the total out of pocket?



- It's OK to **borrow a manageable amount** of money in Federal Loans because college is an investment in your future!
- However, if you don't have enough cash to attend the college of your choice after receiving:
 - Federal and State Grants,
 - Federal Student Loans,
 - Institutional Aid, and
 - Private Scholarships,
 then you need to *choose another school!*
- **Private student loans are NEVER a good idea!**

Private Loans



- Loans available to students through banks or credit unions
 - Loan in the student's name
 - Credit check required
 - Student may need a credit-worthy cosigner

Private Loans vs. Federal Loans



Private Loans

- Higher interest rates
- Very few repayment options
 - Typically require repayment within 10 years
- Higher default rates

Federal Loans

- Lower interest rates
- Variety of repayment options
 - Income-based plans
- Lower default rates
- Public service loan forgiveness programs
 - If you are planning to work for a school, university, government agency, or non-profit organization

Think about starting with Community College



NOVA can be a very affordable option for your first 2 years of college!

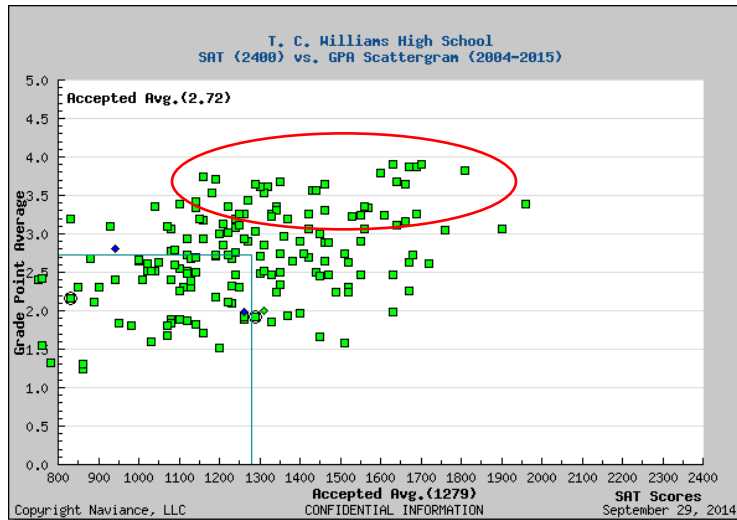
- If you qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch, you most likely also qualify for the **\$5,730** Pell Grant through the FAFSA.
 - The **Pell Grant covers most of NOVA's tuition**, so you can knock out your first two years of college for FREE!
 - Then you only need to pay for two years of college at a four-year university to receive your Bachelor's degree.
 - Your **grades won't impact your Pell Grant eligibility** – Federal Aid is dependent on family income only!

Don't rule out NOVA (NVCC)



Many professors that teach at community colleges also teach at four-year schools. And many intelligent, high-achieving students go to NOVA because it makes financial sense!

Applicants to Northern Virginia Community College



Get a Fresh Start



NOVA can be a chance for you to start over!

- **Your dream school is not out of reach**, no matter what your academic performance has been in high school.
- You can **transfer from NOVA** to the Virginia four-year college of your choice under the **Guaranteed Admissions Agreement**.
 - For example, if you maintain a 3.4 GPA at NOVA, you can be **guaranteed acceptance to UVA** for your final two years of college – even if you have a 0.0 GPA right now!
- Each 4-year college has different course and GPA requirements to transfer.
 - For example, VCU requires a 2.5 GPA at NOVA for guaranteed admission!



Understanding Loan Repayment

Not all loans are equal



- For example, Mary needs to take out a \$5000 loan to pay her tuition bill for Virginia State University. She is evaluating the options below, using a 10 year repayment plan:
 - Federal Direct Loan (Unsubsidized): \$52 per month = **\$6,276**
 - Perkins Loan: \$53 per month = **\$6,364**
 - Parent PLUS Loan (paid for by Mary's parents): \$59 per month = **\$7,029**
 - Loan from Wells Fargo Bank: \$72 per month = **\$8,608**
- **Federal Direct Student Loans** are generally the best route to take – private loans (from banks) are typically the most costly

Let's take a look at the average student



- Students graduating from college in 2013 faced an average amount of \$35,200 in student loan debt
- Let's assume that for John, \$20,000 of this debt is in direct student loans, \$8,000 is in Perkins Loans, \$7,200 is in private bank loans
- If John pays back his loans using a standard 10 year repayment plan, he will pay:
 - \$395 every month for 10 years
 - Totaling \$47,451
- John will pay \$12,251 more than the amount of money he actually borrowed



Graduation Rates

Importance of College Completion



- Nationally, only **58%** of those starting at a 4-year institution between 2003 and 2007 received a Bachelor's degree within 6 years

(NCES, 2012-174rev, "Graduation Rates, Selected Cohorts, 2003-2008").

- 71%** of students who dropped out of college said that work contributed to the decision – also citing lack of financial aid, and the stress of trying to study while supporting their families

("With Their Whole Lives Ahead of Them", 2009).

Make a wise investment of your time and money



- Make sure you are applying to schools with **graduation rates of over 50%**.
- Graduation rates are often an indication of the number of **support services** on campus and the **amount of financial aid** that a school provides.
- If you don't have the grades to be accepted by a school with a high graduation rate, you may want to **think about starting with NOVA** and then transferring to a four-year school with a higher graduation rate.



Ways to Save on Your Education

Don't transfer from 4-year to 4-year



***The only colleges that are built for transfer are community colleges
such as NOVA.***

- If you don't get accepted by the college of your choice right out of T.C., don't start out at another four-year college with the intention to transfer!
- If you know you are planning to transfer, please save yourself time and money by beginning at NOVA!

Don't transfer from 4-year to 4-year



- Transferring from one four-year school to another ends up costing you thousands and thousands of dollars!
- Most four-year colleges do not accept credits from other four-year colleges, so it will end up taking 5 or 6 years for you to complete your degree.

Cost Saving Tips



- **Make sure to take a full course load – meaning 15 credit hours per semester.**
 - This will help you reach the 120 credits required for graduation in four years!
- **If you can handle it, take an extra class each semester.**
 - It won't increase your tuition, and it can help you graduate a semester early.
- **Buy your books online rather than in the bookstore!**
 - Check out Amazon.com or Half.com
 - Even consider renting textbooks instead of buying!
 - Buy an older edition of your books – there is usually very little difference!

Cost Saving Tips



- **Attend a school that is relatively close to home**
 - It can get really expensive to buy plane tickets to and from school for breaks
 - You have to pay extra money to stay in dorms over school breaks
 - Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break, Spring Break, Summer Vacation...
- **Think about living at home** – and saving an average of **\$10,000** per year on college expenses!
 - You can still spend all day on campus and get involved with extra-curricular activities.



Other Private Scholarships

Sign up for Ms. Feldman's scholarship email list



Go to <http://goo.gl/forms/a9B5Ox2ITE> & sign up!

- You will receive a monthly email with upcoming scholarship deadlines!
- Stop by the Scholarship Fund office to chat with Ms. Feldman about what scholarships might be right for you
 - Ms. Feldman can match you with scholarships and provide assistance with scholarship applications

We are here to help you!



- **FAFSA Completion Workshops:**
 - Tuesday, January 13th, 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm in E201 (Rotunda)
 - Saturday, January 31st, 9:00 am to Noon in E201 (Rotunda)
 - Wednesday, February 25th, 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm in E201 (Rotunda)
- **Contact Ms. Feldman with any questions!**
 - margaret.feldman@acps.k12.va.us
 - (703) 824-6730
 - Room A-121