



NORTH STAR PATHWAYS



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The screenshot shows the FAFSA website interface. At the top, it says "Federal Student Aid" and "FAFSA® Free Application for Federal Student Aid". Below this is a navigation bar with links: Home, About Us, FSA ID, StudentAid.gov, and Help. There is also a search bar and language options (English, Español). The main heading is "Get help paying for college" with the subtext "Submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)". Below this is a large image of diverse students. The interface is divided into two main sections: "New to the FAFSA?" with a "Start A New FAFSA" button, and "Returning User?" with a "Login" button and a list of links: "Make a correction", "Add a school", and "View your Student Aid Report (SAR), and more...". Below these are sections for "Deadlines", "School Code Search", "FAFSA Filing Options", "Announcements", and "Thinking About College?". The "Announcements" section mentions the new 2016-2017 FAFSA and the 2016-2017 IRS Data Retrieval Tool. The "Thinking About College?" section promotes FAFSA4caster and provides links to view videos on YouTube or download accessible videos. At the bottom, there is a footer with "FOIA | Privacy | Security | Notices" and "WhiteHouse.gov | USA.gov | ED.gov".

Your Guide to Financial Aid

College continues to get pricier for students and families. According to the U.S. News & World Report, the average tuition price has gone up 4% to just under \$40,000. Public in-state school prices have increased by over \$10,000 with private schools seeing a higher increase. A key tool for students is financial aid. This guide will help you navigate what is financial aid and what tools are available to you and your parents.

What is Financial Aid?

Financial aid is pretty straightforward. It helps you as a student cover the costs of tuition, room & board, and other fees associated with attending college. It comes in several different forms

but there are four main types: grants, scholarships, loans, and work study programs.

Grants and scholarships are similar in that they do not have to be repaid. Grants are usually termed as “needs based” and usually come from state or federal government programs or from the colleges themselves. While many colleges have their own grants, one of the most common is the Pell Grant which is a federal program. By contrast scholarships are often termed as “merit based.” This can be wide ranging from sports scholarships, debate scholarships, choir scholarships and others. While they can come from the college themselves, there are a host of different organizations like nonprofits, businesses, trade groups, and associations that offer scholarships for students attending college.

A very common way students help pay for college is from student loans. There are currently over 43 million borrowers right now and the student loan market is over 1.7 trillion dollars. The average student ends up borrowing around nearly \$29,000, though this is not paid immediately in full after graduating.

There are two forms of loans: public and private. Public loans are divided between federal loans and state loans. Federal student loans are some of the most common and are also divided into three main separate programs; Direct Subsidized Loans, Direct Unsubsidized Loans, and Direct PLUS Loans. Loans unlike grants need to be repaid. Government student loans are often cheaper than private ones and federal student loans are usually capped in their rate of interest with multiple repayment options for graduates.

Lastly there are federal work study programs, where your school and the government partner to provide you a job, usually on campus, to help pay off your education as you study. The amount of hours worked, the type of work and how much you are paid all depend on the level of need and your school's cooperation with the federal program.

How to Apply for Financial Aid

First you will want to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, commonly known as the FAFSA. This is the first step to getting federal financial aid programs. Most other state and private aid programs also require a completed FAFSA form from a student. This will show you and your family's finances, any income, financial assets and financial needs in order to determine your Student Aid Index (SAI). This will help determine your eligibility for any need based aid. This should be completed as soon as possible to meet deadlines.

Secondly you will want to look into the aid provided by the colleges you are applying at. Colleges often provide both need based and merit based aid, allowing you to help offset any remaining costs left over from your aid granted from the federal government. Sometimes colleges do require additional information beyond the information provided on the FAFSA.

Thirdly, you will want to research potential scholarships. Different institutions provide scholarships based on your demographic information, your interests, sports, hobbies and academic record in high school. These scholarships are invaluable as they do not require repayment and can help offset your costs a lot.

Lastly, if there are any remaining costs after the FAFSA, institutional aid and scholarships, you may need to look into loans both public and private. Public loans like federal loans or state loans are cheaper, with easier repayment plans but there are also private loans that can help cover the gaps.

College is a great resource both in your career and in your life. But it does come at a cost. Researching what you want out of college, different schools' costs, your eligibility for aid and scholarships, as well as the potential return on investment are all critical. With this guide you can start getting ready on your journey. Talking to colleges, scholarship granting institutions and preparing for the FAFSA can all help you get ahead.





Caltech_Entrance

California Institute of Technology

The California Institute of Technology (branded as Caltech or CIT) is a private research university in Pasadena, California. The university is responsible for many modern scientific advancements and is among a small group of institutes of technology in the United States which are strongly devoted to the instruction of pure and applied sciences

Should You Attend Caltech?

The California Institute of Technology, known commonly as Caltech, is a private research university in southern California. It is one of the top technological research universities in the United States and is ranked as one of the best schools internationally. But is it the right choice for you?

Quick Facts:

Founded in 1891, it is located in Pasadena, which is close to Los Angeles, California. Its 124 acre campus is roughly 11 miles from downtown Los Angeles.

Caltech is unique in that it is a very small school, with a total student population of less than 2,400, but most of its students are graduate students with less than half of the student population being undergraduates. To maximize time, the school operates on the quarter system. The school is one of the most exclusive in the country with an acceptance rate of 3%.

Costs:

Annually its tuition and fees are \$63,000 and room and board costs an additional \$19,000. That being said, most students (51%) do receive financial aid and the average student need-based aid package is over \$64,000 which lowers the average annual cost after aid a little over \$29,000.



Frances Arnold Caltech 2021

100% of the graduate students' tuition is covered by merit-based scholarships. The school's philosophy on costs and aid comes from its Honor Code which says, "No member of the Caltech community shall take unfair advantage of any other member of the Caltech community."

Academics:

Caltech focuses on STEM research both for its graduate and undergraduate students. The most common major Computer & Information Sciences, followed by Engineering, Physical Sciences, Mathematics, and Biological Sciences.

Caltech offers 28 different majors for undergraduate students, which it calls options though students are also required to take core curriculum of mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, humanities, and physical education.

Due to the small student body size, Caltech has an extremely favorable student to faculty ratio at 3:1 and 71% of classes are classified as small, having less than 20 students.

Ross Brockwell, a NASA structural engineer credits the academics at Caltech to his success at NASA:

The whole experience at Caltech is incredible for someone interested in this line of work. I got to tour JPL [which Caltech manages for NASA] a couple of times and did a few things in the lab that were directly relevant. I saw facilities where they tested tiles for the space shuttle, and I did research on shock loading of metal plates, which is relevant to space missions.

It was also really fascinating to connect theory to practice. You learn that some theory applies to fluids and solids and microbes and all sorts of things—patterns emerge that math can trace. Sometimes you are faced with a problem that is an unfathomable mystery at first glance,

and you somehow manage to break it down and come up with a solution that works on the other side. I hope I can tap into some of that on this mission. I can't say enough how appreciative I am for my experience at Caltech. I hope I can do them proud.

ROTC & Military Resources:

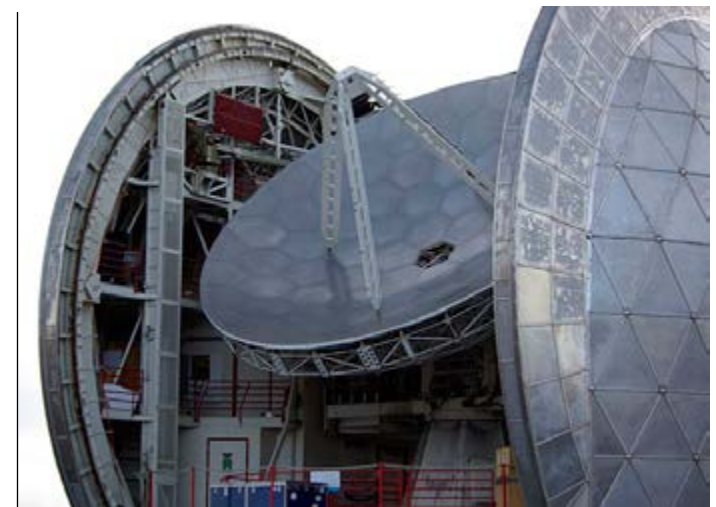
Caltech offers both Army and Air Force ROTC programs for undergraduate students. Unlike the Army ROTC, the AFROTC program is open to almost all undergraduate students at Caltech.

For veterans and currently serving students, Caltech offers a variety of educational benefits and other programs. Caltech participates in the Yellow Ribbon program which helps military students pay for their tuition. Additionally Caltech offers veterans only research programs like the Veteran Research Supplement with the Center for Integrated Access Networks.

Return on Investment:

Caltech is one of the most consistently highly ranked universities in the United States. In various publications like the U.S. News & World Report, the Wall Street Journal, among others, Caltech has been ranked in the top ten both internationally and in the United States. Additionally when it comes to Engineering, Technology and Physical Sciences, Caltech has been ranked as the best university in the world.

Caltech graduates routinely go on to be some of the top performers in their field, largely due to their very hands-on approach to education. For instance, Richard Pashley remembers that they created a class in building computer chips almost instantly:



Caltech-Submillimeter Observatory (straightened)

caltech



Dr. Piya Sorcar at Caltech

During my second year, I was taking a class in bipolar circuit design, and I wandered into [Professor] Carver's lab, and there were a bunch of students working with MOS [metal-oxide semiconductors – building computer chips], I said, 'Why aren't there any classes in this?' And one of the students said, 'Go talk to Carver.'

During the first lecture, Carver said, 'This is going to be a little different than your usual class. I'm not going to just stand up here and lecture. You're going to design an MOS circuit, and it'll be fabricated at Intel. If it works, you pass. If it doesn't, you fail.'

Due to their research and participation at Caltech, students were able to get in on the ground level of Intel, one of the first and most successful computer chip manufacturers. This type of rigorous and applicable education is partially why Caltech alumni are preferred in many fields. For instance Goldman Sachs is one of the most selective financial institutions with a 1.27% acceptance rate and Caltech alumni have some of the highest chances of being hired.

Notable Alumni:

- ◆ Steingrímur Hermannsson, former Prime Minister of Iceland
- ◆ Chester Carlson, inventor of electrophotography, the foundation of Xerox
- ◆ Adam D'Angelo, former CTO of Facebook; founder and current CEO of Quora
- ◆ Carl D. Anderson, Nobel laureate in physics
- ◆ Bruce Ames, Japan Prize laureate; National Medal of Science recipient; winner of Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement

Is It Worth It?

The California Institute of Technology is easily one of the most selective and highest quality colleges both in the United States and across the world. Students who are



Cal Kicker Jordan Kay

successful here will go on to be successful at the highest level in nearly whatever career they choose. That being said, your investment will take a lot in two main ways; financially and academically. Financially, attending Caltech requires quite a lot with over \$63,000 in just tuition alone. Even taking aid into account, this can be beyond the reach of many students and their families. Additionally due to their selectiveness, any high school student who aspires to Caltech will have to start applying themselves academically now, which will require a huge expense of time and effort. It can be a great opportunity but any opportunity comes with its costs. Some questions you and your class may want to discuss are:

- ◆ If I wanted to get into a school like Caltech, how would my day to day school work change? Do I have what it takes?
- ◆ Is the cost of a highly selective university necessary for the field that I am interested in?
- ◆ Am I interested in STEM specifically?



NewcombHallDownsideCenterJan08



Tulane University

Tulane University, officially the Tulane University of Louisiana, is a private research university in New Orleans, Louisiana. Founded as the Medical College of Louisiana in 1834 by seven young medical doctors, it was turned into a comprehensive public university as the University of Louisiana by the state legislature in 1847

Should You Attend Tulane?

Tulane is one of the oldest universities in the South with a rigorous academic program and highly exclusive alumni network. But is it right for you?

Quick Facts:

Tulane University is a private research university located in New Orleans, Louisiana. Though founded as a medical school in 1834, it then became a full university later in 1847. It is one of the oldest law schools and medical schools in the country and has one of the most exclusive acceptance rates in the United States. Currently it has a student body of over 14,000.

Costs:

Overall tuition and fees cost over \$65,000 however the average needs based aid package is over \$52,000. Additionally room and board cost an additional

\$18,000 a year. On average the annual cost after aid is roughly \$42,000 but this will depend on the student's need.

Academics: Tulane offers over 75 different majors and minors, allowing you to specialize your time as an undergraduate. In addition to a focus on the humanities, fine arts and social sciences, Tulane recently began its TIDES (Tulane Interdisciplinary Experience Seminar) which is something first year students will attend in order to acclimate them to the city of New Orleans. At Tulane some of the most popular majors are business management, social sciences, psychology, biological sciences, and health related degrees. Most classes have less than 20 students and the student to faculty ratio is quite low at 8:1. In fact its School of Health and Tropical Medicine is the only school specializing in tropical medical science in the United States.



For graduate students, it is listed as one of the top doctoral universities with a very high research activity. It is ranked by the Ford Foundation as one of the top international studies programs in the United States. The National Institutes of Health ranks Tulane at 79th in research funding for graduate students. They host hundreds of various Fulbright Scholars, Rhodes Scholars, Truman Scholars among others.

Student Life: Located in the historic city of New Orleans, Tulane has a vibrant student social life. The Princeton Review this year ranked Tulane highly in the following categories; Best Quality of Life, Best Run College, Happiest Students, in which it ranked first. The school has over 200 different social organizations you can join as well as a large Greek community for those interested in joining a fraternity, though we recommend you read our article, “Should You Join A Fraternity.” Though Tulane has much to offer, one factor students should consider is that, consistent with living in a large city, New Orleans has a higher than average crime rate, both for property crimes and violent crimes.

ROTC & Military Resources: Tulane does offer ROTC for students as it “recognizes the need for military officers with a quality education in a variety of academic specialties and highly recommends the Reserve Officer Training Corps programs as one method of meeting this need.” It offers ROTC courses for the Army, Air Force and Navy, and allows for 15 credits from ROTC courses to be applied to your degree.

Additionally for veterans and currently serving students, Tulane is a Silver Award Military Friendly recipient as it creates a very friendly environment for members of the military. Not only does it provide a Veterans Affairs liaison but also helps coordinate students for their veterans educational benefits through this offer. It also provides a 20% discount on tuition based on the veteran’s DD Form 214, which is the certification of release from active duty, as well as many other programs and opportunities.

Return on Investment: Tulane can be a great return on investment. Though costly, it has a graduating rate of 81% which is well above the average of 63%. Additionally the average amount of debt a student graduates with is just over \$29,000 which is below the average of \$37,000.

Tulane also has a great alumni network which can really help you get ahead. Andrew Messina, vice president of Advertising Sales at the Walt Disney Company explained recently that, “The woman who hired me, her boyfriend, had graduated from Tulane. He said to her, ‘Oh, you should look at this guy, because he went to Tulane and she ended up hiring me.’ “Never underestimate the power of networking. When I meet with recent graduates from Tulane, and they are really appreciative of my time, I want to help them more.”

Notable Alumni: Tulane University has a number of notable alumni including:

- ◆ Robert Ivy, CEO of AIA
- ◆ Jerry Springer, talk show star and host, as well



Tulane Green Wave football fans



Fun Run Homecoming-1Freret Street, Tulane University, New Orleans, 2012

as the former mayor of Cincinnati

- ◆ Shirley Ann Grau, a Pulitzer Prize winning author
- ◆ David Filo, co-founder of Yahoo!
- ◆ Alvin Olin King, former governor of Louisiana

Is It Worth It?

There's a reason why Tulane University is one of the most selective in the nation. It is highly prestigious, with a great return on investment, rigorous academics and with a vibrant student social life. However, like all great schools, it can have downsides. Financially, even with student aid, it can be potentially out of reach for some students' finances. Additionally, for some living in the South and in New Orleans specifically, though lively, can also be a risk. Some questions to consider:

- ◆ How much in student debt is a high prestige school like Tulane worth it to me?
- ◆ Am I willing to live in a very different city and region?
- ◆ How far am I willing to travel for school and a social network?

Tulane University



Move In-Day 2011, Tulane University, Uptown New Orleans





AngellHall2010



M UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

The University of Michigan (U-M, UMich, or just Michigan) is a public research university in Ann Arbor, Michigan, United States. Founded in 1817, the university is the oldest and largest in Michigan; it was established twenty years before the territory became a state. Michigan is a founding member of the Association of American Universities.

Should You Attend University of Michigan?

The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor is a public research university. Being founded in 1817 it is one of the oldest in the United States and is a founding member of the

Association of American Universities. Located in Ann Arbor, it has a large student population and an extremely prestigious reputation. But is it right for you?

Quick Facts:

The University of Michigan has a fairly large undergraduate and graduate student population with over 51,000 students, nearly 33,000 of which are undergraduates. This is matched by its rather large campus size: 3,177 acres, or about roughly the size of a midsize American city. Though technically located in rural Michigan, it is functionally a suburb of Detroit as it is only miles away from its nearest suburbs. Students who are looking for a big school experience should definitely consider the University of Michigan.

That being said, it is one of the more selective schools in the country with only an 18% acceptance rate. The average high school GPA for its students is 3.9% and the average SAT range for those granted admission is 1350-1530.

Costs:

Your costs are going to differ dramatically if you are an in-state or out-of-state student. For those who are out-of-state, the tuition and fees is over \$57,000. But for in-state students, that drops by over \$40,000 to just \$17,000. Room and board is an additional \$13,000 and the average needs based aid package is \$26,000.

Academics:

The most common majors at the University of Michigan are Computer & Information Sciences, Economics, Business Administration, Mechanical Engineering, and Behavioral Neuroscience. Typical to a larger university, almost half of the classes are considered large (over 20 students) with a student to faculty ratio of 15:1.

The school offers over 200 undergraduate programs and 90 different master's and doctoral programs. It is consistently ranked as one of most rigorous public universities in the United States and specifically ranking highly for its engineering and business programs.



University of Michigan students and Nicholas U Mayall 4-meter Telescope (Photoby MJecmen-CC)

Student Life:

While the university has a rather large student population, the housing system accommodates roughly 10,000 of them. Most students live off campus. The school focuses on living-learning communities where the students are expected to integrate academics and residential life.

Typical to a large university, there are over 1,400 student organizations on campus and a very active Greek life scene. There are also many opportunities to get involved in the wider Michigan area, through volunteer programs with organizations like The Detroit Partnership, Ann Arbor Reaching Out, Relay for Life and SERVES.

The university's athletics association is called the Wolverines. They have an extremely competitive athletics program, in particular in men's football. The school is a member of NCAA Division 1 football

and the Big Ten Conference in nearly all of its sports. The Wolverines repeatedly finish in the top five of the NACDA Directors Cup, which is a ranking of NCAA competitiveness. Michigan athletes have won over 155 Olympic medals. Most notably, Michigan Stadium, for their men's football team, is the largest college football stadium in the country.

Students like Stephen Fung, rank the student social life as one of the best parts of being a Wolverine, noting that, "I miss the sporting events — when I was there it was during the Fab Five era — so, going to basketball games and going to the stadium for football games. Also, all of the friendships I made there, and the fun memories. I used to have a summer job at a Greek restaurant on Main Street."

ROTC & Military Resources:

The university has an ROTC program for the Army, Air Force and for the Navy as



Phyllis Ocker Field, University of Michigan Field Hockey



Michigan Getting Ready to Score a Touchdown, BYU Cougars vs. Michigan Wolverines, Michigan Stadium



Learning about the multi-disciplinary research on Alzheimer's underway at University of Michigan.

well as an extensive series of support networks and programs for veterans and currently serving students. Being in the ROTC can be a huge asset and a very unique experience that can add a lot to your time in college. Students like Will Borden explained that, "My favorite part is definitely everyone I have met because of ROTC. I met all of my friends here at Michigan as well as across the country via summer field training. Everyone has something to offer to help you grow as a person and a leader. The military provides you with an amazing extended family and that's something that I take for granted."

Return on Investment:

The University has a very high graduation rate of 81%, which is nearly 20% higher than the average of 63%. Additionally the average student graduates with a little over \$28,000 in debt, which is also well below the average nationally. As a highly recognizable and prestigious university with a huge alumni network, graduating from this school can be a major asset that sets you ahead of your peers.

Notable Alumni: Due to the university's long history and size, there are a large number of prestigious alumni such as:

- ◆ Stanley Cohen, co-winner of the 1986 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine
- ◆ Clarence Darrow, Leopold and Loeb lawyer, defense attorney for John T. Scopes
- ◆ James McDivitt, NASA astronaut on the Gemini 4 and Apollo 9 missions
- ◆ Juwan Howard, NBA basketball player for the Washington Bullets
- ◆ Gerald Ford, former president of the United States

Is It Worth It?

The University of Michigan is an extremely prestigious school in an exciting part of the Midwest and a robust network of alumni. As such, attending there would be a major opportunity for any student. But as usual, weighing the cost is important. Unless you are from Michigan, it can get rather expensive. Additionally, if it is your goal to get into a highly selective university like this, building up an impressive academic record early on will be very important. Lastly, if you are interested in a smaller school setting, the school can be jarring to new students as it is one of the larger schools in the country next to a large city. You and your classmates can discuss some of the following questions:

- ◆ Do I want to attend a large school or a small school? What are the benefits and drawbacks of each?
- ◆ What do I need to do to get ahead to get admitted to a school like the University of Michigan?
- ◆ Is the opportunity worth the potential out-of-state student cost?



Maricopa Community Colleges

The Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD), also known as Maricopa Community Colleges, is a public community college district in Maricopa County, Arizona. Headquartered in Tempe, MCCCD is among the largest community college districts in the United States, serving more than 100,000 students each year in the Phoenix metropolitan area.



Should You Attend Maricopa Community College?

The Maricopa Community Colleges are a community college district in Maricopa County, Arizona with ten colleges. It is one of the largest community college systems in the United States, serving over 100,000 students. But is it right for you?

Quick Facts:

Maricopa Community College is not one college but rather a system of interconnected colleges in the Tempe, Arizona area. A student has a choice of 10 colleges:

- ◆ Chandler-Gilbert Community College
- ◆ Estrella Mountain Community College
- ◆ GateWay Community College
- ◆ Glendale Community College
- ◆ Mesa Community College
- ◆ Paradise Valley Community College
- ◆ Phoenix College
- ◆ Rio Salado College
- ◆ Scottsdale Community College
- ◆ South Mountain Community College

Costs:

While enrollment is free with a 100% acceptance rate, Maricopa has a tiered system for credit hours (usually classes range from 1-4 credits per class). At the lowest, students who are Maricopa County residents are charged \$97 a credit for lower division courses and \$145.50 for an upper division credit.

For those out of state residing in Arizona this can increase to \$420.50 per credit and \$379.50 per credit for online students.

Students who require financial aid are encouraged to fill out the FAFSA as this is the main document that Maricopa uses. Students are also encouraged to fill out their form for their scholarship awards so you can minimize your cost.

Academics:

As a community college system, most students do not earn four year degrees but rather two year associate degrees as well as general education credits for transferring to four year institutions. However recently the Maricopa Community College system

has provided seven four year degrees in the following majors; Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning, Data Analytics Programming, Elementary Education & Special Education, Information Technology, Behavioral Science, Business Administration (Accounting), and Business Administration (Management). It also has an extensive online education platform for students who do not live in the Maricopa County area.

Student Life:

Being a community college system, Maricopa will not have many of the social life amenities of other colleges in this issue. However, Maricopa and its colleges do have a strong athletics program for students to join and cheer on. Most of the colleges within the system are members of the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA). They have the following teams in both men's and women's sports; baseball, softball, soccer, golf, tennis, track & field, volleyball, basketball and cross country.

ROTC & Military Resources:

As a community college system, Maricopa does not offer an ROTC on its campuses. However for veterans and currently serving students, it does offer tuition benefits.

Return on Investment:

For students who decide that an online or community college education in Arizona is the best path, it can be a very good, low cost option. Despite being cheaper than most four year colleges, it was ranked as one of the best online education institutions in 2015.

Notable Alumni:

- ◆ Andre Ethier, former MLB baseball player
- ◆ Alice Cooper, musician inducted into the Rock & Roll

Hall of Fame in 2011.

- ◆ Antoinette Cauley, artist
- ◆ Paul Boyer, Arizona State Senator and Arizona representative
- ◆ Bill Hader, actor, comedian & screenwriter

Is It Worth It?

Whether you decide if the Maricopa Community Colleges are worth it is entirely dependent on what kind of college experience you want. Some questions you and your class may want to consider are:

- ◆ Do I want to attend a community college before potentially attending a four year institution?
- ◆ What would I gain or miss by saving money at a community college?
- ◆ Do I want to save money by attending online or do I want the full college experience?



Jim Groom at Maricopa



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Colby College

Colby College is a private liberal arts college in Waterville, Maine. Founded in 1813 as the Maine Literary and Theological Institution, it was renamed Waterville College in 1821. The donations of Christian philanthropist Gardner Colby saw the institution renamed again to Colby University before settling on its current title, reflecting its liberal arts college curriculum, in 1899. Approximately 2,000 students from more than 60 countries are enrolled annually. The college offers 54 major fields of study and 30 minors.

Should You Attend Colby College?

Colby College is a private liberal arts college located in Waterville, which is in central Maine. With a small school feel in rural New England, it has a strong focus on the liberal arts and related fields. But is it the right fit for you?

Quick Facts:

Colby College is one of the oldest universities in the Maine area, being founded in 1813. It has a small town and rural feel with a 714 acre campus near



Colby College, Commencement

the Kennebec River Valley. Unlike some other older colleges, it has just over 2,200 students.

Colby College not only emphasizes the liberal arts in its curriculum but also makes a major focus on international study. More than two thirds of the students spend time studying off campus as Colby College recognizes credits from institutions in several countries such as the International Center for French Studies, the St. Petersburg Classical

Gymnasium in Russia, and the University of Salamanca in Spain, among others.

As such, Colby College is extremely selective with a 6% acceptance rate.

Costs:

Colby College charges \$63,520 in tuition and fees with an additional \$16,330 for food and housing on an annual basis. Nearly all students are provided some need-based aid with the average aid package being \$70,197. The average

annual cost after aid usually comes out to just over \$17,000.

Academics:

As mentioned above, Colby College is extremely selective. In fact it has gotten much more selective, reducing its acceptance range from 18% a few years ago to 6% recently. The average range of the SAT scores for those granted admission is 1450 to 1540.

With its heavy emphasis on liberal arts, the most popular major at Colby College is Social Sciences, though Biological & Biomedical Sciences, Interdisciplinary Studies, Psychology and Natural Resources & Conservation are also some of the most common majors.

Due to its small size and educational philosophy, most of its classes (65%) are classified as having a small class size, with 20 students or less. As such, the average student to faculty ratio is 10:1.

Student Life:

There are multiple clubs on campus for students to participate in like the Colby Korean Club, the Colbyettes (a singing group), or the Colby Organic Farm and Garden (COFGA) club, among others.



Colby College Lovejoy Building



Colby College Fieldhouse

Also, in line with the traditional liberal arts focus, Colby College puts a major emphasis on sports, both intervarsity and intramural. The Colby College Mules compete in the NCAA Division III. The Colby College Mules have historically been most successful in men's

basketball, alpine skiing (a common sport in the Northeastern United States), women's rowing, and men's football.

There are no fraternities or sororities on campus as the college removed them in 1984 on the grounds that they were, "exclusionary by nature."

ROTC & Military Resources:

While Colby College does not offer an ROTC program (it ended its program back in 1974), it does provide resources for veterans and currently serving students. It participates in the Yellow Ribbon program, which matches grants for veterans and their children which are offered on a first come, first serve basis.

Return on Investment:

Though sometimes liberal arts are not associated with solid jobs or a good return on investment, Colby College does provide a serious return for the money spent. 84% of students graduate which is nearly 20% higher than the national average and the average student leaves with only \$23,000, much lower than the national average of \$37,000.

Students like Jennifer Barber report how Colby College instilled in her "a good work ethic" and helped her develop her own writing with faculty who shared "their own poetry and knowledge of the writing process." Barber has then gone on to be published with her poetry collection *Rigging the Wind*, which won the 2002 Kore Press First Book Award.

Notable Alumni:

- ◆ Benjamin Butler, US Army general in the American Civil War & former governor of Massachusetts
- ◆ Courtney Kennedy, former hockey player & Olympic medalist in 2002 & 2006
- ◆ Matt Apuzzo, journalist & 2012 winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Investigative Reporting
- ◆ Alfred Buck, former ambassador to Japan & member of the House of Representatives
- ◆ Sean McCormack, Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs and the U.S. State Department Spokesman

Is It Worth It?

Colby College has a unique experience and a valuable return on investment. For students who are interested in the typical East Coast, rural liberal arts school experience, Colby College will fit very well. For students who are also interested in a career in the liberal arts, Colby is distinctively suited to prepare you for a lucrative career. That being said if you need to keep your costs down, may not have the academics to get admitted or are interested in a more big city environment, Colby College may not be the right fit. Some questions for you and your class to discuss are:

- ◆ Am I ready to attend a school where we specialize so narrowly?
- ◆ Do I want to go to school in a rural setting or a large city?
- ◆ Financially how much am I willing to invest in loans to attend an expensive private school?

Ask A Teacher's Aide

What is a Teacher's Aide?:

A teacher's aide or assistant (sometimes called a paraeducator in California) works with grade school teachers to ensure that all students are given full attention and time during school. They will also often be a support to students with disabilities or who are still learning English that way the whole class can stay on the lesson plan. This will involve helping develop and administer course materials and help manage the teacher's student interactions. A teacher's aide's duties can vary depending on the type of school, the specifics of the classroom and the class size.

Becoming a Teacher's Aide:

To become a teacher's aide you will at first need to finish high school or complete your GED. Most schools will require you to apply for the job or enroll in additional education. Next many schools require an associate's degree or even bachelor's degree in education or a related topic like special education. It may also help if you complete an internship in a related field. Getting professional experience can help your chances of getting hired in addition to any education you bring to the role.



Classroom people with teacher

Lastly each state will have their own licensing requirements and may require approval from the state's department of education. This license will allow you to apply and work as a teacher's aide, which may require occasional renewal depending on your state.

Salary:

The median pay for a teacher's aide is \$30,920 as of May 2022. This can vary a lot as many teacher's aides work part time or hourly.

Trends in Career Field:

Each year there are roughly 15,000 openings for teacher's aide positions though there is not any projected growth year over year according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Interview From the Field

Gayle Ozaki is a paraeducator in the state of California for the Elk Grove Unified School District. Prior to being a home educator for 17 years, she worked as a bank teller, legal secretary, and administrative assistant for a major travel agency. After her children left for college, she wanted to get back into the workforce and that's when she started working with special needs students as a paraeducator. She is also the local treasurer for the California State Teachers & Educators Association.

Pathways: What made you interested in being a teacher's aide?

Gayle Ozaki: I was introduced to being a paraeducator



Water education in a Seattle classroom, circa 1980s

by a friend who was a teacher. She explained to me about how paras worked with students who had special needs. Since I enjoy working with children, I thought this would be a good fit for me.

Pathways: How can someone in school prepare for your field?

Gayle Ozaki: You can prepare for being a paraeducator by taking courses in Early Childhood Development, Special Education 101, Behavior Management, and other courses related to special education.

Pathways: Are there any mistakes you can think of that a new person in your field can avoid?

Gayle Ozaki: A major mistake new paras make is thinking that being a paraeducator is easy. The word “para” means “alongside.” Therefore, a paraeducator is an individual who works alongside a licensed or certificated educator to assist in providing instructional and other services to special education students. While there are some easier tasks, i.e., clerical duties, data collection, prepping for lessons, etc., working with the students can be demanding. Depending upon the disability your student has, you may have to change diapers, use a

feeding tube, or handle extreme behaviors including being hit, bit, and kicked.

Pathways: Do you see any new trends for teachers and teachers’ aides?

Gayle Ozaki: Inclusivity. Students with disabilities are being included in general education classes more and more, regardless of their disability. Rather than having students with disabilities in a special class, they are in the general education class with an assigned paraeducator to help them throughout the day.

Pathways: What is your average day like?

Gayle Ozaki: I am a mild/moderate paraeducator currently working in the Speech & Language Clinic. My day begins with preparing for the daily therapy sessions and assisting the Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) with anything she may need. We have four group therapy sessions each day with the students on either a Tuesday /Thursday or a Wednesday/Friday schedule. We pick up the students from the gate and walk them to the classroom. The students put their backpacks in a cubby and stand on a “color circle” learning colors. Next, they wash their hands while singing a hand washing song. After this, they go to “Circle Time” where they learn the theme for the session, i.e., Fall Season - Pumpkins. Next, the group is divided and they go to two separate tables. One is with the SLP where they work on articulation and the other table is with me where they work on language and usage. I have already collaborated with the SLP on



US NAV



fun projects for the students to do to keep the learning interesting and engaging. After the students have worked at both tables, it's time to get ready to leave. They choose a colored circle and stand in line while I get their backpacks ready, putting any projects and homework into their homework folders. We then walk the students back out to the gate where they are picked up by their parent/guardian.

Pathways: How long does it take to get settled as a teacher's aide?

Gayle Ozaki: For me, it took a couple years to begin to feel completely comfortable. I

have worked with four different SLPs and each one had their own style. As a para, it's my job to be flexible and be willing to work with various personalities and teaching styles. It takes time to learn to work with not only the students, but also the classroom teacher.

Pathways: What is one piece of advice you would give to yourself when you started?

Gayle Ozaki: Be patient. There is a lot to learn and it will take you a couple of years to gain confidence in your ever-changing position.

Ask An English Teacher



English classes in Moscow school

What is an English Teacher?:

An English teacher teaches English literature and the building blocks of the English language to students, usually in a junior high or high school setting. English teachers often have a passionate for language and literature and help their students develop both written and oral communication skills as well as their reading comprehension.

Being an English teacher means developing your own curriculum and lesson plan, helping students with their reading, writing and critical thinking skills, grading homework and leading discussions of literature.

Becoming an English Teacher:

First you will need to get a bachelor's degree in English or a related field like Creative Writing, or English or American literature. Secondly most schools will want you to complete some kind of internship, usually a teaching internship in English or one of those related fields. Many students will go on to teach English as a second language in a non-English speaking country to start.

Next, most will also pursue a graduate degree in English or a related field, usually a master's degree though some will go on to get a doctorate, which can make you more competitive with other

applicants. Lastly, depending on the state you will have to get a teacher's certificate which will license you to teach on a grade school or high school level.

Salary:

As of May 2022, the median annual salary for English teachers is \$83,000 and the overall median annual salary for high school teachers is \$62,000 a year. This will differ dramatically depending if you work full or part time, work at a public or private school or which state you live in.

Trends in Career Field:

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projections expect roughly 1% growth per year in the openings for high school teachers across all subjects.



Kyle Garza

Interview From The Field

Kyle Garza has taught and tutored middle and high school English, Bible, and Academic Technology for 13 years and teaches at Oaks Christian High School in Thousand Oaks, California.

Pathways: What would you do to maximize your time in getting a head start in your field?

Kyle Garza: If you're looking to get a head start in education and maximize your time in preparing for that field, the best thing you can do is talk to your

counselors in high school or college about your desired career path. Knowing what subject and age group you want to teach (and whether you want to teach public or private) as early as possible will set you on a clear path towards that goal. Basically, depending on the college, you can get loads of observation hours and pre-credential work done while doing your other BA or BS courses. If you have an awesome college counselor and your school has great connections, you'll end up getting a lot of experience

teaching the subject and age group of students that you eventually want to teach. It's also smart to ask your professors if the school has any study books available for the CBEST and CSET; I actually found out that my college's pre-credential work exempted me from taking the CSET's, which saved me time and money!

Pathways: How can someone in high school prepare for your field?

Kyle Garza: In short, teach wherever you can, whoever you can, whenever you can, especially if you can do so at a one-on-one level. A lot of educational preparation you get in college pertains to how to manage a classroom; there's really not enough instruction on how to work one-on-one with students, and that comes from experience. Tutor kids in single subjects of all ages as a paraeducator through a local school or get a job at a local tutoring center. Help some middle schooler from church learn piano. Help your nephew learn to read. The primary and most important skill you'll learn in these one-on-one interactions is the art of figuring out "where kids are at" and how to get them through their struggles either by teaching them study strategies or work habits that will help them tackle future problems or potentially just filling in their knowledge gaps in whatever content they're learning. This will also help you discern whether or not teaching is for you: if you can't handle working with one student for an extended period of time, there's no way you're going to be able to handle 20-40 in the same room.

Pathways: Are there any mistakes you can think of that a new person in your field can avoid?

Kyle Garza: The stereotypical biggest mistake of a first-year teacher is over-sharing your personal life. Obviously, it's fine if your students know that you're married or have kids or love such-and-such sports team. The mistake you want to avoid is letting things get too personal—telling them about your breakup with your longtime boyfriend or girlfriend that you thought you were going to marry—telling them about the rough weekend you had with your uncle because he was drinking at the family birthday party—telling them about drama happening in your friend group. The hard part about



all this is that you probably mean well: you're wanting to teach them important life lessons about how to deal with things outside of school. The mental health research that our school counselor has shown me demonstrates that this kind of oversharing actually burdens the students more than it helps them. Gen Z is incredibly empathetic, and they already have a lot on their plates. Feeling the obligation to check in on you is not something you want to give them.

Pathways: What do you see as the future of your field of academia?

Kyle Garza: The idealist in me sees a re-awakening of the value of the liberal arts—people who can articulate well the foibles of human nature in literature and history and allow them to read, write, and think well about how to interact with those ideas in the marketplace of ideas while maintaining civil discourse with those who disagree. The pragmatist in me continues to see it as a career choice that will unfortunately attract the worst candidates possible—the ones who just want summers off but hate working with kids—or, hopefully, at least those who see it more as a life calling than a day job. My fear is that, as economic struggles trickle their way into more social classes, more students will hear the rumors of how disappointing “teacher pay” is and will instead pursue careers solely for the goal of “making a decent living” (as if a decent living is defined by a sum in a bank account and not one’s investment in the lives of others).

Pathways: Are there any trends in academia you don’t see panning out?

Kyle Garza: The worst trend in academia that I don’t see panning out is the association of school, particularly big-name schools, with educational value or preparation for one’s future. I tell my students, in the words of Mark Twain, “Never let school get in the way of your education.” In short, students seem to think that “the right school” will make or break their education. I am fighting against that, trying to instill in them the idea that it is “the right student” that makes or breaks the education. I want my students to see the inherent value of community college—the same education for the same degree but with the bonus of no college debt (usually) once they’ve graduated.

I’ve heard too many students tell me about their dreams of resume-buffing with USC or Yale or what have you. Frankly, I’ve had parent-teacher conferences with adults who somehow manage to remind you that they attended USC at least once every ten minutes, and they are the most insufferable people I’ve ever met. I’m far more interesting in instilling in my students a desire to care about the person they are becoming more than the college they are attending.

Pathways: What is your average day as a professor like?

Kyle Garza: Your average day as a teacher always begins weeks, if not months, before the day you actually teach. You must enter the school year with a vision of the scope and sequence of your semesters. What assessments, essays, oral examinations will you require of the students? How will you prepare them for those? What skills do you want them to master? In other words, how can you teach well in the present if you don’t know where you’re going? Then everything simply becomes a matter of knowing in advance, “What are my goals for this week?” Then it all comes down to your school’s schedule. Our schedule calls every Monday an “Anchor Day.” The students meet in all of their classes for 45 minutes, and we usually use it to review or teach something new. We then rotate A and B days on Tuesday/Wednesday and Thursday/Friday, so you’ll see every class two more times in that week for about an hour and a half each. Assuming the average teacher has five classes, that will likely mean you’ll have a light day of two classes and a longer day of three. Assuming you teach the same class three times in one day, you’re going to immediately feel like your profession is actually one of acting rather than teaching. You teach the same lessons with the same jokes and the same plan multiple times. You’ll have meetings peppered in during the mornings or lunches, either with faculty or individual students who have scheduled to go over things with you. Once the day is over, you’re going to finish whatever you can before you get home so you can hopefully leave as much work at work. You’ll never feel “done” because there’s always something you can do different in lesson planning, teaching, or assessing, but you’ll learn to be content with whatever you can get done on any given day. Once you make it to Friday, you’ll negotiate with yourself what you can get done over the weekend and what you must get done over the weekend.

Pathways: How long does it take to get established in your field?

Kyle Garza: I think I found my rhythm around year four or five, but it depends on what you're teaching. By the time you run through any one curriculum about three or four times, you'll feel like you really know it. That's because, in my case, I read Macbeth in its entirety with five classes a year, so by my 15th read-through (year three), I could confidently say that if you were to misquote any line in the play, I would notice it.

Pathways: What opportunities do you see for individuals working in your field, or for your field of study at large, to better our society?

Kyle Garza: It sounds cliché, but I think everyone has that one teacher that impacted his or her life in some incredibly meaningful way. Sometimes that translates to pursuing a degree in engineering because your engineering teacher helped you fall in love with the subject matter. Sometimes that translates to becoming a loving father or mother because you remember how fondly your teacher spoke of his or her own kids. The best teachers are the ones we want to emulate in character—not merely in profession. They were the ones who taught us how to be gracious when we most needed it, who taught us the value of integrity when we cheated, who taught us the life-sustaining and stress-reducing mindset of "In five years, you'll forget you were even stressed about this." We become the grocers, plumbers, teachers, janitors,



Tom Drury Opens 2017 English Literature Series

retail clerks, truck drivers, police officers, editors, etc. who want to pass on the character of our best teachers to the next generation. Far more important than what the students are learning is who they are becoming. Society would be far better off if everyone valued character over cash and personal integrity over financial stability.

Pathways: What is one piece of advice you would give to your younger self, while examining your future?

Kyle Garza: Susan just doesn't like you as a person; stop trying to be her friend.

But in all seriousness, it would be to become a parent sooner. Parenthood radically changes the way you see your students, the way you teach your students, the way you discipline your students. You will constantly be reminded, day in and day out, that your son or daughter will one day be in those very same desks facing the very same struggles with the very same homework. That perspective shift will change far more than you now realize, and you won't know how much until you actually get there. I can promise you that the shift will be for the better though. You will finally love your students as their own parents love them.



Thumbnail

Ask An Intelligence Analyst

What is an Intelligence Analyst:

Intelligence analysts both collect and analyze raw data and interpret it in order to help organizations best make decisions. Usually they will work in fields like security or defense either for a government agency or a private sector organization.

Being an intelligence analyst will require you to perform a lot of different duties such as working with other intelligence professionals in other departments like operations, conducting research into likely threats to

national national security, safety or business operations, communicating threats and potential solutions, and gathering data on current events.

Careers in Intelligence Analysis:

There are two types of intelligence analysis work: public sector and private sector. According to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), intelligence is “information gathered within or outside the U.S. that involves threats to our nation, its people, property, or interests; development, proliferation, or use of weapons

of mass destruction; and any other matter bearing on the U.S. national or homeland security”

Most typically people who work in intelligence will work for one of the 16 different intelligence organizations that are a part of the U.S. federal government, the most recognizable being the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Federal Bureau of Intelligence (FBI). However there are many different federal intelligence agencies that intelligence analysts can aspire to work for including organizations that are less well known like the intelligence wings of the Department of Energy, the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency or the Department of Treasury.

Additionally, there are also state agencies where intelligence analysts can work as well. For instance both California and Texas maintain roles for intelligence analysts at state agencies like the California Bureau of Investigation, the Northern California Regional Intelligence Center and the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Due to the high visibility of a lot of these agencies, there are a lot of people you can reach out to see if this line of work is something you’d be interested in. For instance Jagdeep Singh Narula, works as an analyst for the FBI and explained that:

I would definitely recommend becoming an IA here. It allows you to touch on multiple cases on your particular squad, so you’re not limited or relegated

to a single case or two cases. At the same time, there's really never a dull moment. You have cases that are ever-changing.

The best thing about working here is really feeling like you're making a difference. You know, my day-to-day is not about helping corporations get rich, it's not about helping people line their pockets. It's about helping Americans stay safe. So that, you know, it gives me a lot of fulfillment knowing that my work actually matters.

There are also a lot of private sector intelligence opportunities. A lot of businesses like Palantir Technologies, Booz Allen Hamilton or Strategic Forecasting do intelligence gathering and analysis for both governments and private firms. Many companies with a global reach will often have an in house intelligence analysis unit to help them calculate potential risk to their company. Lastly, many non profit organizations like RAND Corporation, the American Enterprise Institute or the Center for Strategic and International Studies will hire intelligence analysts.

Becoming an Intelligence Analyst:

Starting your path to being an intelligence analyst or intelligence operative can begin very early. Brian Goral, a former intelligence officer at the CIA, explained that he started in high school:

I started keeping a journal and a folder of news articles on US and Soviet forces. I would copy terms and acronyms from the backs of military-spy novels and try to understand the World Book Encyclopedia's explanation of how nuclear weapons worked. I remember at one point during a math class my sophomore year in high school...I decided we should go work for the CIA.

But after high school you will want to get at least a bachelor's degree in a field that will help you in your career. College majors like political science, international relations, economics, history or cybersecurity can be very helpful. Many intelligence agencies and organizations that hire intelligence analysts will require a master's degree in a relevant field. Additionally, learning a high priority foreign language (such as Arabic,



FBI intelligence analyst on America's Most Wanted

Farsi, Turkish, Russian, Mandarin or another language), will really help you stand out. Serving in the U.S. military or interning at an organization that is related or does intelligence analysis itself also is very helpful.

Next you will have to get a security clearance. This will require an extensive background check and an in depth interview, as well as a potential lie detector test depending on the agency or business you apply to. A security clearance will authorize you to work with secret information that intelligence analysts routinely work on.

Lastly, intelligence insiders like Marcel Plichta, a former analyst for the Defense Intelligence Agency, recommends that new applicants should talk to people who work in the field:

One of the best ways to de-mystify the process of applying and the day-to-day work is to chat with someone who does it. Reaching out to people you know is the



CNG Counterdrug intelligence analyst aids civil operations



most obvious point, but for those who aren't lucky enough to have a friend in the field, going to hiring events and searching for people on networking sites like LinkedIn will help you think about where you want to apply and navigate the application process. It also tends to boost confidence, since most professionals will encourage you to pursue intelligence as a career (so long as you meet the basic qualifications, like citizenship and lack of legal trouble). There are also plenty of podcasts and interviews with intelligence professionals about how they got into the fields and their thoughts on it.

When you are finally done with your college, internship, certificate training, research and are going through the application process, it's important to remember it can be a long process. Plichta notes:

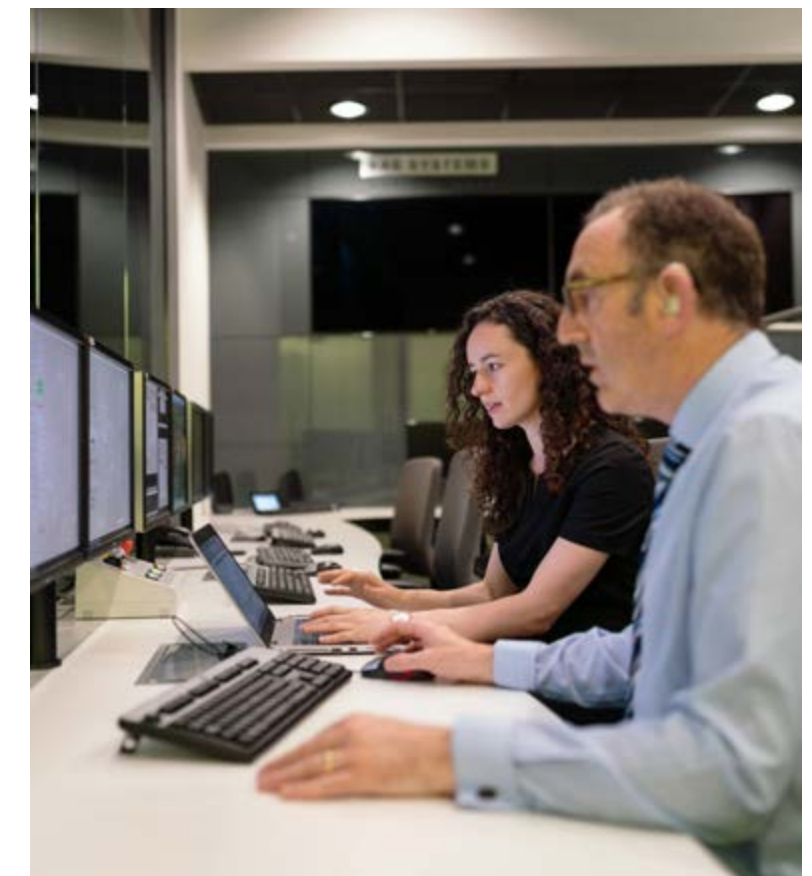
Remember that a rejection is not usually a reflection of your qualifications. There are tight hiring quotas and other factors beyond your control. To maximize your chances of getting through to an interview or another level of consideration, get into the habit of applying every time you see an opening or hiring event. Persistence is key, it's better to be rejected a few times and then get hired than to apply once and give up because you took hiring metrics as a personal slight.

Overall, intelligence is not a field you should self-select out of because you're worried about not

ticking the right career boxes. You should never count yourself out because you don't think you have the right experience or didn't have the ability to intern in college, or any of the other reasons I mentioned. If this is a career path that you're passionate about, prepare to put your best foot forward and go for it.

Salary:

According to O*Net Online, an occupational database, intelligence analysts and other similar jobs (like detectives and criminal investigators) have a median annual salary of \$83,000 or more.



Ask A Professor

What is a Professor?:

Put very simply, a professor is a teacher who teaches at any collegiate level. A professor may have a doctoral degree or not, but usually they will have at least a master's degree. Professors will usually be published and often will conduct additional research in their field. Unlike many teachers on a grade school or high school level, professors will specialize in a particular subject or academic field.

Careers in Academia:

Being a professor opens up a lot of doors to many different careers in academia. Not only are there professors of virtually every subject and field you can imagine (from accounting to zoology) but also there are multiple roles for professors within a college. Professor ranks typically include Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Instructor, and Lecturer.

- ◆ The professorship is often the top title at a college and requires several years as a faculty member.
- ◆ Next is the associate professor, who also must have at least a doctoral degree and have years of experience but less than a full professor.
- ◆ The assistant professor is often the entry level for a professorship at a college.



Professors

- ◆ An instructor is a post-graduate teacher who works as a professor but does not have the full doctoral degree yet.
- ◆ Lecturers are not tenure-track positions and their academic experience may vary depending on the subject. This is usually a specialized position.

Salary:

The median salary for a professor is a little over \$80,000

a year, though this will dramatically differ depending on what state, the size of the college you work at, your own experience and academic background, and whether your college is private or public.

Trends in Career Field:

On average over a decade there are over 118,000 openings for professors. Professor positions are projected to grow by 8% over the next decade.

Interview From The Field



W. Matthew J. Simmons

W. Matthew J. Simmons is currently the assistant director of the University of South Carolina's Institute for Southern Studies, where he teaches courses in the literature, history, and culture of the American South. He also runs the Institute's Digital US South Initiative,

working with faculty, programmers, and other IT professionals to produce cloud-based digital projects that analyze and investigate the South from a variety of angles.

Pathways: What would you do to maximize your time in getting a head start in your field and how should a high schooler prepare to be a professor?

Dr. Simmons: I really would not recommend any high school student to go college with the idea "I am going to be a professor." That presumes a depth of commitment to a particular discipline that would be frankly unhealthy for a teenager. Professors have to be obsessed with a particular discipline—and, as a high schooler, what you think you're going to be interested in for the rest of your life will change multiple times over the next few years. With this in mind, go to college with a mindset that sees every course as an opportunity to find something that

fascinates, inspires, and deeply challenges you. Maybe you intend to be a math major—great! But take your history, sociology, and chemistry classes just as seriously as your math courses. If academia is in your future, that kind of wide-ranging intellectual curiosity will serve you well, helping you bring unique perspectives to your eventual area of expertise.

Pathways: Are there any mistakes you can think of that a new person in your field can avoid?

Academia is a field that a lot of students develop a romantic fantasy of even before they get to college; it's an "aesthetic" more than a "field" in a lot of students' minds. This is a problem, as the reality of academia is often exceedingly unromantic: the work we do is regularly frustrating, uncertain, sometimes very boring, and even a bit lonely. Success in academia is largely dependent upon how well you do the immensely unromantic parts of the job. If your ideas of it are formed by the #darkacademia hashtag on TikTok, push those aside—with vanishingly few exceptions, your professional life will not look like Hogwarts.

Pathways: What do you see as the future of your field of academia?

Dr. Simmons: Academia is at a crossroads right now and it's a risky time to try to make academia a career. Inevitable demographic changes will be felt in a few years—the number of children born in the 2010s was significantly less than the number born in the 2000s.

This will affect the raw numbers of students available to enroll in higher education, meaning that the large and more elite small schools will be in tight competition for a smaller number of students. As such, many second-tier small schools are likely to close. State and federal politics are also going to create a lot of challenges to what gets taught in colleges and universities and what kind of degrees are offered. Expect to see a lot of departments downsizing or closing, while other programs transform the kind of work they do. This is going to negatively affect an already difficult labor market in academia. If you chose the wrong field of study in graduate school, you could find yourself in an exceptionally tough, or even impossible, job market in several years.

Pathways: Are there any trends in academia you don't see panning out?

Dr. Simmons: Traditional academia is increasingly concerned with student returns on investment and, as such, is more and more focused on offering vocational skills and professional certifications as complements to degrees. While I understand these concerns, academia is going to find out that the corporate world—and particularly big tech—can teach these skills much faster and more cheaply than academia can. I worry that many colleges are going to pay a big price in a few years and will find something it briefly saw as a "necessary" become instead a force that will have hollowed out many institutions.

Pathways: What is your average day as a professor like?

Dr. Simmons: Somewhat surprisingly to people who think academia is totally different from the corporate world, my typical day is full of lots of emails and meetings! Much of being a professor is what we call “professional service”: helping out with the running of your department, serving on committees, and so forth. Beyond that, I teach four courses a semester, translating to a couple of 75-minute classes each day. I also have ninety minutes of office hours—where I meet with students—twice a week. Other than scheduled meetings, teaching, and office hours, my time is very flexible—I can come and go as I please. That flexibility doesn’t mean I don’t have a lot of work to do, though! Lesson planning and grading are a huge part of what I do every day, and they sometimes keep me up well past midnight. Academics typically need to find time to do research as well, something which often keeps us busy on weekends and during the summers. The flexibility of an academic’s time is one thing that attracts a lot of people to the field—but flexibility doesn’t mean less work! If you become a professor, know that you’ll be taking work with you on lots of vacations and regularly

spending Saturday afternoons in the office.

Pathways: How long does it take to get established in your field?

Dr. Simmons: You won’t get a chance to enter into academia in any real way until your late 20s at the earliest. Four years of college, 2-3 years of a master’s program, and another 5-7 years (or more) of a doctoral program means that you won’t be out on the job market until 28 or 29 at the earliest. Graduate students typically receive a very modest stipend and tuition waivers in lieu of a salary, meaning that you won’t have a chance of making a solid income until around 30; that loss of prime earning years is something you must consider before you even think about academia.

You also need to learn about the three different kinds of academic “tracks”: tenure-track is the idealized version of academia most people think about, where you make a very nice salary and essentially have a lifetime appointment. Academia is increasingly reliant

on professional, (sometimes known as instructional or clinical) track faculty. These professors are typically tasked with teaching more rather than doing research, and have multi-year contracts rather than tenure. Finally, a lot of teaching gets done by adjunct professors. These are essentially “part time” faculty who teach classes as they are available. There is never any guarantee that classes will be available any given semester, the pay per class is typically relatively low, and adjuncts normally do not receive benefits like retirement and health plans. Many people get out of graduate school thinking they will be competing for tenure-track or professional-track jobs but find themselves locked into low-paying adjunct work well into their 30s or beyond. Of course, this wildly varies depending on your academic discipline, as every discipline has its own labor market with challenges and advantages unique to it. If you are thinking about being an academic, you will want to have serious conversations with trusted professors about the labor market in their discipline!

Pathways: What opportunities do you see for individuals



Hitoshi Murayama



Robert Malenka - Professor at Stanford University



Belmans in labo



Professors

working in your field, or for your field of study at large, to better our society?

Dr. Simmons: Being an academic is not easy. But one of the reasons people want to do this kind of work is precisely because academia is one of the most powerful places for creating social change and positively benefiting others. Academics are at the forefront of research and development for new technologies, drugs, and medical treatments. We train leaders in business and government, we use our expertise to advise our leaders on how to handle the complex challenges of the 21st century. Academics provide perspectives on the world, one another, and the eternal questions about what it means to be human that remain with our students long after graduation. Such work is deeply rewarding and satisfying.

Pathways: What is one piece of advice you would give to your younger self, while examining your future?

Dr. Simmons: Don't fall in love with the idea of being a professor before understanding the frustration, heartbreak, and economic uncertainty that will accompany the first many years of pursuing this dream—but, if you're clear-eyed about those challenges, don't give up. The rewards are real and powerful!



OCHCO Human Capital Conference

Ask a Human Resources Specialist

What is a Human Resources Specialist?:

An human resources (HR) specialist or manager is someone who helps a company manage their HR functions such as hiring and supporting new employees, training employees to follow company policy and protocols, and ensuring the company follows all relevant laws and regulations.

In many companies, HR specialists will also handle compensation like managing payroll and other benefits. Lastly HR focuses on employee performance and managing the company culture to ensure that all employees are valued.

Careers in Human Resources:

Since every company requires an HR department and someone to run it, HR specialists can work for nearly any kind of company for tech to manufacturing. Depending on the size of the company, HR specializes may specialize in a particular role like:

- ◆ Benefits administrator, who focuses on helping employees navigate their health and other employee benefits.
- ◆ Employee relations manager, who focuses on helping employee dispute relations.
- ◆ Recruiter and trainer, who focuses on finding qualified employees and conducting their training.

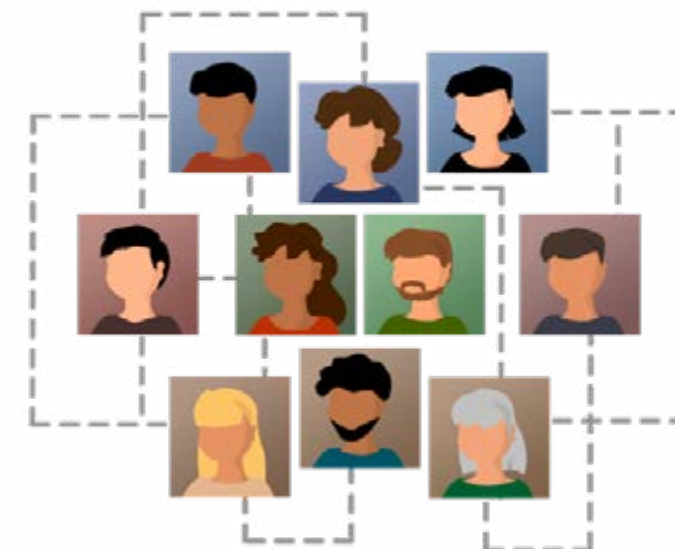
Getting started as an HR specialist often requires getting a college degree. Many schools offer a B.A. in human resources management but you can get hired with an entry level position with a related field like psychology, business administration or communications.

Salary:

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the median annual salary for an HR manager is \$130,000 or \$62.50 an hour for HR specialists who work hourly.

Trends in Career Field:

The BLS projects that openings for HR managers will increase in the market by 5% over the next decade with over 15,000 openings each year.



HUMAN_RESOURCES



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