

Riley Baker Educational Consulting

www.rileybaker.com

139 Sunset Ridge Road

Northfield, IL 60093

847.441.8687

rileybaker@rileybaker.com

June 2013

1st – SAT Reasoning and Subject Tests

8th – ACT and ACT plus Writing

Graduating Seniors

Thank teachers and others
who helped you

Thank scholarship providers

Have your final transcript sent
to your college

Summer 2013

Do Something Interesting

Job, internship, or community
service; summer program

Explore Colleges

Use websites, guidebooks,
virtual online tours and on-
campus tours and interviews

Rising Seniors

Begin to work on Common
Application

Craft your essay

Narrow college list

Prepare for fall SATs and/or
ACTs

College tours & interviews

Underclassmen

Prepare for fall PSAT or PLAN

The A to Z of Leaving for College

Some ideas to help you cope:

Arriving on campus—Bring a positive attitude and a sense of humor.

Bed and Bath—You'll need a couple of sets of extra-long sheets. Flannel is great for cold climates. There is no maid service, so bring along sets of towels too.

Communication—Cell phones, email, texting, and social media are your best bet for communicating with family and friends while you are away.

Desk Supplies—Start with the usual—notebooks, highlighters, pens, etc.—and supplement as necessary from the campus bookstore. Bring envelopes or postcards and stamps in case you feel like writing home via good old snail mail.

Electrical Options

- Rent a refrigerator/microwave for your room, after checking with your roommate. Having a fridge in the room makes it easy to have a quick breakfast or make lunch before going off to class.

- Laptop or desktop? Mac or PC? Check with your school regarding compatibility. Bring a power strip or surge protector; there are never enough outlets.

Finances and Financial Aid

- Find out which banks have ATMs on campus. The convenience will save you money and time. Consider using this bank to set up a local checking account. Learn how to balance your checkbook and keep an accurate record of what you spend.

- Don't be tempted by credit cards. If you get one, limit its use to airline tickets, textbooks and emergencies. (Real ones.)

- Debit cards are another possibility: they are used like a credit card, but the bank takes the money right out of your checking account. Remember to record each and every transaction.

- **Budget!** Figure out what you will need for clothes, incidentals and entertainment in addition to what you will need for your phone bill, books and other essentials. Work out the details with your parents.

Get up and Go—Everyone needs a change of scene, so take an overnight bag for weekends away. Join a club that takes weekend excursions—or organize your own. Visit a nearby city or find a good place to relax or hike.

Hardware—Hang things on the walls with poster putty or pushpins—not nails! Bring a little toolkit for miscellaneous repairs.

I.D.—Put your name on all your stuff (bring a Sharpie to mark everything with). This can eliminate loss and confusion. If you bring a bike or computer, make sure it has an ID number on it and keep a copy of the number in a safe place (and keep an extra copy back home). Bring along a bike lock and chain.

Just in Case

- Find out where the health center is. Learn what services they offer and what their hours are.

- Bring a first aid kit filled with things you think you might need if you get sick. Bring products that you already know work for you.

Knowledge—The key to success:

- Get to know your advisor.

- Know the course requirements for your classes.

- Recognize your limits—for socializing, scheduling and Saturday nights!

Laundry—Take care of business with a laundry bag and change (if needed). Bring a small box of your usual detergent—the familiar aroma of clean clothes may be comforting.

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Career Options for Film Studies Majors

- Cinematographer, producer or assistant director
- critic, professor, actor/actress, arts journalist
- independent or industrial filmmaker
- press agent, film editor or photographer
- drama coach or drama therapist
- studio merchandising or distribution company work
- dramaturge or story editor
- film archives, museum studies, program researcher
- tourist industry or community arts worker
- casting director or assistant
- theater manager or publicist
- television producer, camera operator, censor or colorizing technician
- screenwriter, animator, script writer or script supervisor
- sound editor, visual effects or prop maker
- costume design
- library assistant or assistant language teacher
- lighting technician or sound and special effects specialist
- program assistant or personal assistant to the director
- film production instructor or rerecording mixer
- film director or film editor
- talent agent or representative

(based on a list from Ohio State University website)



Focus on Majors: Film Studies

If you aspire to expose the world's ills through documentaries, have visions of fame, fortune and financial reward, or simply long to get paid for watching movies, Film Studies may be the major of your dreams. Among the most popular and competitive of college majors, film isn't just for those wanting to follow in the footsteps of Meryl Streep, Steven Spielberg, or critic Pauline Kael.

Programs in Film, sometimes called Media Studies or Cinema Studies, vary widely, and may or may not include instruction in film production. Some are theoretical in nature, appealing to students considering careers in entertainment journalism and film criticism. Pitzer College's program is "not oriented toward traditional narrative film or television, or toward commercial models of new media; rather, this major stresses independent narrative forms, documentary, video and digital art and community-based media practice...".

Other programs focus almost entirely on the technical aspects of film and other visual media. Columbia College of Chicago, which specializes in media education, has a more "artsy" approach and offers concentrations in Animation, Post-Production, and Sound. NYU's Tisch School of the Arts requires students to incorporate courses in film history and criticism, film production and script writing to obtain their degrees. Alternatively, Chapman University's Dodge College requires applicants to select from among degree options including both BA and BFA programs in such specialized areas as film studies, film production, digital arts, producing, screen writing, acting, and television and broadcast journalism.

Because film programs vary tremendously, carefully doing your research becomes even more important. Before looking at colleges, think about which aspects

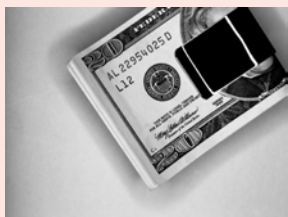
of film interest you and how you'd like to use your education. Once you understand your motivation, you'll be ready to look at what's out there.

Film curricula include courses such as The History of Film, Music for Film & Television, The Documentary, Introduction to Animation, Television Production, Cinematography, Set Design, Special Effects, Makeup, Introduction to Editing, Film Marketing, and Legal Aspects of the Entertainment Industry. Classes in specific genres might include Silent Film Classics, Film Noir, and The Films of Woody Allen.

What careers are open to film graduates? Production careers include cinematographer, director, producer, independent or industrial filmmaker, film editor, location manager, photographer, camera operator, screenwriter, animator, script writer, sound editor, visual effects or prop maker, lighting technician, or costume designer. Less technical options include arts journalist, critic, professor, film archivist, talent agent, festival manager or even entertainment lawyer (though, of course, law school would be required for this).

Jobs in the entertainment industry will continue to be fiercely competitive, as growth will be slower than average over the next seven to ten years. However, if you're truly interested in studying film, take heart. In a July 2011 New York Times article, Loyola Marymount's School of Film and Television Dean, Stephen Ujlaki, expressed his belief that although film students may not land jobs in the film industry, studying film provides them "with a knowledge of the arts and a business savvy that will get them through lives that are bound to move in unexpected directions." As with most undergraduate majors, competing in the job market depends on how well you put your coursework to use.

Financial Matters: Capping Student Loans



Student financial aid packages generally include a mix of grants (gift money), work-study and loans. Loans may be offered to either the student or the parents and may be subsidized or unsubsidized. With loans often accounting for a substantial portion of the financial aid package at many colleges, it is reasonable to ask just how much is “too much” to borrow for college?

Unfortunately, there’s no one hard and fast answer; each student’s situation is

made unique by choice of major, cost of education, additional sources of support, and expected earnings. According to the Project on Student Debt, the average recent college graduate owes nearly \$27,000 in student loans. For most graduates, that should be a manageable amount, but individual circumstances may vary. For example, students may amass still more debt if they plan to attend graduate school, or if they choose a career with very low initial pay. Future musicians or artists probably should take on less debt than engineering or computer science graduates. A general rule of thumb is to cap your student loan debt below the total salary you expect to earn in your first year after graduation. (Check out www.bls.gov for average first year salaries.) Since the average college

graduate takes five years to earn her bachelor’s degree, she should borrow no more than one-fifth of expected earnings each year of college. Your goal is to spend no more than 10% of your expected gross monthly income on student loan debt once you graduate. Even though your earnings will rise as you progress in your career, so will your obligations. Someday you’ll want to use those earnings for a house, car, furniture, retirement savings, and even for college for your future children.

Parents, too, should be wary of taking on loans that might affect their own ability to retire. While college students can and should seek scholarships, we know of no such option for funding a comfortable retirement.

The A to Z of Leaving for College (continued from page 1)

Music—Bring along headphones. Coordinate sound systems with your roommate ahead of time.

Necessities—Since sleeping through a class or an exam is a bad idea, a VERY LOUD alarm clock is a must. You will also need a good desk lamp for reading. One more thing: a favorite, comfortable article of clothing (or even a stuffed animal).

Organize—Use a day planner, calendar or PDA to keep your schedule straight. Write everything down!

Posters and Pictures—Personalize your space with your favorite art forms. To keep track of visitors and messages, attach a white erase board to your door. Bring photos from home.

Questions—Bike storage? Cars on campus? Transportation home? Weekend events? For answers, read all brochures and pamphlets, housing bulletins, catalogs, maps... and then ask upperclassmen or roommates. Check

your college’s website.

Recreation—Bring your skateboard, surfboard, chessboard—whatever you enjoy. Try something new while you’re at it, like rock climbing, kayaking, or tai chi.

Storage—Find a place for everything and put everything in its place by using underbed boxes, milk crates, stackables, cardboard drawers and trunks. Storage will be tight, so make good use of all available vertical and horizontal space.

Thoughts of Home—Homesickness is curable. Treat it with photos of friends and family, yearbooks, e-mails to friends or calls home. (Call home for support, but call with good news, too. You don’t always need a reason.) Even if you are feeling homesick or missing a significant other, stay at school and get involved. This is your new home, so invest your time and energy into making it work.

Unnecessary—If you haven’t used it, worn it or looked at it lately...leave it at home!

Vehicles and Wheels—Cars are often not the quickest way to get from one end of the campus to the other. Try a bike (use a good lock!), unicycle, moped, or skateboard. Check with the college about cars ahead of time; parking is always limited and car use may be restricted.

Xtra—If you can’t leave home without them, bring a TV and DVD player. Again, check first with roommates: two may be one too many, especially in a small living space. Your laptop can also double as your room’s entertainment center.

Yourself—Don’t leave behind your values, sense of self-worth or identity. Remember to be true to yourself.

Zzzzzzzzzz—You may be tempted to test your limits, but remember to get enough sleep!

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The New Common App Essay Prompts

Despite all the talk about the new Common Application essay prompts, the real focus of the essay remains the same. As always, the implied subject of the essay is YOU. Colleges use the essay to learn more about you in ways they can't perceive or discover based on the information compiled by the other sections of the application. You are more than a list of activities, biographical data, test scores, and grades. It's your job to use the essay to reveal who you are and how your experiences and values have shaped the way you think, believe and act. Therefore, no matter which prompt you choose to respond to, plan on telling a story that is unique to you, and that will help to distinguish you from all of the other applicants with similar grades and scores.

Prompt # 1 asks about a story central to your identity. In telling this story (about an experience, a person, or something that was meaningful to you), you will be sharing why this is important to you and what you've gained or how you've changed because of this experience, person or event.

Prompt # 2 asks you to talk about a time when you experienced failure. Since we all have failed at something, it is not the failure that is important, but how it affected you and how you grew or changed as a result.

Prompt # 3 asks you to reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. Here too, you'll tell a story about a specific event, but, more importantly, share why you acted as you did and what you learned from the experience.

Prompt # 4 asks applicants to describe a place in which they are perfectly content and why this place is meaningful to them. Once again, the place you've chosen is unimportant but what it means to you reveals what you value.

For Prompt # 5, writers are asked to talk about a time, experience, or event that marked their transition from childhood to adulthood. Don't think only of a formal transition such as a confirmation or debutante ball, but consider other experiences that mark such life transitions. Share the story about that time and why it mattered to you.

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