

Riley Baker Educational Consulting

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June 2014

7th – SAT Reasoning and Subject Tests

14th – 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 2014

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 and other applications as they become available

Craft your essay

Narrow college list

Prepare for fall SATs and/or ACTs

College tours & interviews

Underclassmen

Prepare for fall PSAT or PLAN

Savor the Journey

After a stressful year of completing college applications and waiting for admissions decisions, students and parents are relieved to make a final choice and send the enrollment deposit. But while the anxiety about getting into college is over, the emotional roller coaster continues as the family prepares for the student to leave home.

If you're a student, in these last weeks before you go off to college, there will be times when you can't wait to get away from your family and times when you can't imagine leaving home. Going to college is a big deal, and it's normal to feel conflicted. This is both the most exciting thing you've ever done and the scariest thing you've ever done.

You're about to join a new community, where you'll learn much about yourself and about the world. You'll meet hundreds of new people in a matter of weeks, and that can be exhilarating. The price for embarking on this grand journey is leaving everything and everyone you know. How could you not feel some fear? It may help to know you're not alone. Most students worry about making friends, living with a roommate, choosing a major and career, and living far from home. Many schools offer first year programs that continue after orientation that are designed to help students adjust to college life.

If you're a parent, you probably have conflicting feelings - pride in your child's accomplishments, excitement about his or her future and sadness at the thought of being left. Many parents also worry about how their child will manage at college. Beyond the daily living questions such as "will he wake up in time for 8 am classes and wash his sheets more than once a semester", there may be concerns about

drinking and drug use on campus. In a time of economic uncertainty and college costs often exceeding \$150,000, parents may worry about a child choosing a major that will lead to a good job, and students can feel pressure to make this huge investment pay off.

But college is a time when students experiment. They study subjects that weren't available in high school, try different activities, and form new relationships. It can be challenging to trust that your child will make good choices, but making mistakes is part of the learning process. A student who doesn't start her term paper until the day before it is due will have a very stressful 24 hours and may even receive a disappointing grade, but she is not likely to do that again.

For students who are struggling academically or socially, there are many resources on campus that can help. One of the best ways for parents to be supportive is by encouraging their child to take advantage of the tutoring, academic and personal counseling offered at the college. Students should vow to seek out help as soon as it is apparent that it is needed.

While it's normal for students to feel nervous about starting college, it's a wonderful opportunity for a fresh start. Nobody knows whether you were the most popular student in your high school or the class nerd. This is your chance to become the person you want to be. Sure, it can be scary, but the payoff is pretty wonderful.

And for parents, what could be more gratifying than seeing your child develop a sense of her own identity and become a self-confident, independent young adult? Savor the journey!

Careers for Foreign Language Majors

- Public relations director
- Journalist
- Television reporter
- Radio production
- Editorial assistant
- Speech writer
- Interpreter / translator
- Attorney
- FBI/NSA agent
- Legislative assistant
- International relations specialist
- Grant writer/fundraiser
- Peace Corps volunteer
- Community organizer
- Human rights worker
- Foreign service worker
- Advertiser
- Consultant
- Fashion industry worker
- International marketer
- Investment banker
- Electronic commerce worker
- Health care provider
- Teacher / professor



A strong foreign language program provides access to native speakers on the faculty, encourages social interaction through foreign language dorms or special clubs, and includes such facilities as language labs. Study abroad programs in regions where your language is spoken are an added plus.

Majors: Foreign Languages

A rise in global business ventures has led to an increased need for multilingual individuals. Proficiency in a foreign language opens up a world of opportunities. Language majors may find jobs in diplomacy or international relations, tourism, journalism, global industries such as international banking, or working in governmental or private organizations.

As China emerges as a player on the world stage, graduates with degrees in Chinese language and culture find themselves eagerly pursued. A knowledge of Arabic is essential for individuals who hope to work in the Middle East. Closer to home, fluency in Spanish language and an appreciation for Latino culture becomes increasingly important as Latinos move toward majority status in the United States.

Undergraduate foreign language programs may concentrate on specific languages and linguistics, or may be more focused on the literature and culture of the countries in which a language is spoken. At some colleges, students may choose a major in area studies. For example, in Middle Eastern area studies, the emphasis is on the history, culture, economics, and politics of that specific region. Since this type of concentration adds value to your degree, consider looking for the availability of area studies courses when selecting a college for its foreign language program.

Mandarin Chinese is the most frequently spoken language on earth. To understand the Chinese world, language majors must master the language and also gain a good understanding of China's history and traditions. Many students enter this major with no background in Chinese. The language courses are intense and meet frequently. Through immersion in the language, students learn to speak, read, write and understand spoken Chinese. Chinese literature is usually introduced in the third year of language study. Majors typically

also take such classes as Chinese religion and history, film and theater, Chinese music and art, and courses in East Asian civilization.

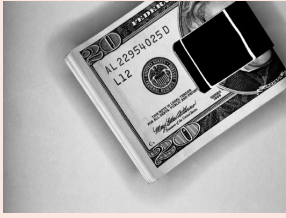
After English, Spanish is the official language of the largest number of countries. Although many students enter this major with a background in high school Spanish, the prior study of any of the Romance languages will be useful. Majors take elementary through advanced Spanish language, study Spanish culture, read both Latin American and Spanish literature, learn about Spanish history and civilizations, and may also take specialized classes such as Business Spanish or Applied Linguistics.

A major in French or Italian is similar to one in Spanish. Once again, the major focuses both on the structure of the language and on the culture and history of the regions in which these languages are spoken.

German majors study the language and literature of Germany, Austria and Switzerland. High school German or prior studies of the language are generally required before you can begin this major. After students are proficient in the language, they can go on to take such classes as German literature, film, history and drama. Russian majors may concentrate on either language or Russian literature. This major usually includes three or four years of language study combined with such courses as conversation and composition, Russian novels and short stories, theater and drama, and the works and lives of Russian literary giants.

Arabic and Japanese are among the more difficult languages to learn as adults. Once again, the language studies are intense as students must learn languages that are very different from English. Along with in-depth classes that immerse students in language studies, majors in these languages must take classes in literature, culture and history.

Pre-College Financial and Legal Matters



There are a few legal and financial issues that should be addressed before your son or daughter goes off to college. If your child has turned or will turn 18 during the next year, she is legally an adult, and you, her parent, lose the legal authority to make decisions on her behalf. That means that you have no legal right to see her grades, to manage her finances (although you remain responsible for paying her college tuition), or to make medical decisions or speak with her doctor. So, before she goes off to college, consider asking her to sign some documents that will allow you to continue to help your child.

- FERPA release: with your child's permission, you can speak with the college about her performance. Colleges often have their own FERPA release forms, so ask your college for a copy.

- HIPAA Authorization: allows you to access your child's health records and speak to her doctors about his medical issues.
- Advance Care Directive for Health Care: allows you to act on your adult child's behalf in the event that she is incapacitated and unable to make decisions for herself.
- Durable Power of Attorney: allows you to act on your adult child's behalf regarding legal or financial matters.

You can get the last three forms mentioned from your family lawyer. Each of these forms can be revoked at any time, but having them in place while your child is away at college may provide the whole family with extra peace of mind.

This is also a good time to address money management issues.

- Set up a bank account that will allow you to easily transfer money to his account. An online bank account may be the most useful, especially if the bank has special student accounts available that will give parents access to bank information. Find out which banks

have ATMs close to campus—college kids usually don't write many checks. Be sure to check on fees for using an ATM that's not part of your bank's network. Those fees can add up!

- Make plans to protect student property. College kids tend to have a lot of valuable electronics and computer equipment. Renter's insurance can protect your investment if these items were to disappear. Your homeowner's policy might also cover dorm room possessions—check with your agent.
- Health insurance: check out options provided by the college and compare these policies with your existing family medical coverage.
- Car insurance: check with your agent. If your child will not have a car at college, you may be eligible for a discount on your auto rate.
- Discuss credit card dangers: college students are besieged with credit card offers—discuss how the misuse of credit cards can affect their ability to get credit in the future. Look into debit card options or provide your offspring with a card in your name that can be monitored.

Internships and Volunteering

Still searching for a meaningful summer experience? With the job market still very weak, you might want to concentrate on obtaining an internship or a volunteer position in a field of interest to you. Although these programs are unlikely to provide you with ready cash, they do offer you that other valuable commodity—*experience*.

Volunteer positions are generally easier to find. For those interested in health sciences, volunteering at a local hospital can provide you with a first-hand look at careers in medicine. Your local veterinarian, animal shelter or pet

rescue may have good volunteer positions for future vets. Those considering a career in education might offer to help out at a local nursery, day camp or community center. Environmental activists might check out opportunities to help at a state or national park or with an environmental organization. To find a volunteer position, think about the type of career that interests you and look for ways to help in these fields.

Internships may be volunteer or paid positions, but all internships should give you an opportunity to learn.

Budding journalists can apply for internships at community newspapers, magazines, or broadcast media, while future scientists might look for opportunities to work with a mentor on a science research project. Use your network of family and friends to obtain an introduction to someone in a position to offer you an internship. Apply as you would for paid employment, submitting a cover letter and your resume, highlighting your goals, skills, and ways that you could contribute to the work being done. Make this summer the best one ever!

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Finding that Special College Experience

Lauren Pope's book, *Colleges That Change Lives*, features a collection of small liberal arts colleges that provide opportunities for students to grow and expand. These colleges focus on the learning process and provide students with an engaging and challenging educational atmosphere. Similar opportunities, however, can be found at scores of other colleges around the United States; you just need to know what qualities to look for when choosing your college. Desirable attributes include:

- Low student to faculty ratios that encourage all members of the community to actively participate in campus life and that provide opportunities for collaborative activities. At large state universities, Honors colleges offer somewhat comparable opportunities. Seek them out.
- Relatively small student populations that assure individuals the opportunity to participate in activities of interest to them.
- Having most students resident on campus encourages the extension of classroom learning into meals and leisure hours. At a larger university, living in a Residential College provides a similar experience.
- Numerous opportunities to take part in internship experiences or

laboratory research, or to assume a leadership position in a campus or community organization. Such activities allow a student to become an integral part of the college community and to gain valuable experiences both for a resume and for life.

- Classes taught by professors rather than by graduate student teaching assistants. Look for small discussion-based classes, even in introductory or survey courses.
- An active alumni association that provides career networking opportunities, summer internships, and professional and graduate school connections for undergraduate and graduate students alike.
- Opportunities to provide community service. Often, involvement in a community service activity leads to extraordinary growth experiences for the donor, and may kindle a passion that leads to a rewarding career or avocation.

Colleges change lives by providing active learning experiences, opportunities for growth through participation in meaningful activities and by encouraging independent thinking. With this type of background, graduates are assured of success.