Riley Baker Educational Consulting

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November 2014

8th—SAT Reasoning and Subject Exams

Seniors—File Early Decision/ Early Action applications

Work on remaining college applications

Register for a PIN at www.fafsa.ed.gov if you'll be applying for financial aid

December 2014

6th—SAT Reasoning and Subject Exams
(register by 11/6 - late registration 11/24)

13th— ACT and ACT With Writing (register by 11/7 - late registration 11/21)

Underclassmen—Review PSAT report with advisor and map out a plan for test preparation

Schedule spring SAT/ACT testing dates

Seniors—File any additional college applications before deadline dates

College Experiences Tied to Success

When it comes to being satisfied with work and life after college, it's not *where* you go to college but what you *experience* in college that matters, finds a recent study from Gallup and Purdue University.

Gallup and Purdue surveyed over 30,000 U.S. college graduates about their engagement in their jobs and their overall satisfaction with life. The study found that the *type of college* attended – public or private, small or large, very selective or not very selective – had little effect on a graduate's long-term work satisfaction or sense of well-being.

Instead, researchers found strong correlations between the *types of experiences* students have in college and their odds of being engaged at work and thriving in other areas of life. Graduates who felt that they'd been supported in college and who had participated in what the researchers call "deep learning experiences" while in college were the most likely to have positive long-term outcomes in work and life satisfaction.

Specifically, college graduates were more likely to report feeling engaged in their current jobs if they'd had one or more of these key experiences in college:

- An internship or job during college that allowed them to apply what they were learning in the classroom
- Actively participated in extracurricular activities on campus
- Worked on academic projects that took a semester or more to complete
- Had a professor who cared about the student as a person
- Had a professor who made them excited about learning
- Had a mentor who encouraged them to pursue their goals and dreams

Graduates' odds of work engagement increased with the number of these experiences they had during college. Students who reported that they'd had three or more of these experiences in college more than doubled the odds of reporting work satisfaction after college. Slightly more graduates who majored in the arts and humanities (41%) or social sciences (41%) reported feeling engaged at work than either science (38%) or business (37%) majors. Additionally, the study found that finishing college in four years doubles the odds of engagement for working graduates.

Commitment to work is an important indicator for whether or not a graduate feels she is thriving in other areas of well-being, such as feeling socially connected, healthy and financially stable. The study found that a college graduate's odds of thriving in other aspects of well-being are 4.6 times higher if she feels she is engaged at work. Not surprisingly, if graduates felt that their college had prepared them well for life outside of college, they were 2.5 times more likely to express satisfaction with other aspects of their well-being. As with work engagement, however, the type of college attended had

(continued p. 3)

Majoring in Public Administration

Career Paths for Public Administration Majors

- Health care administrator
- Urban & regional planner
- City manager
- Public administration consultant
- Foreign service officer
- Auditor
- Criminal investigator
- Customs inspector
- Industrial relations specialist
- Labor management relations specialist
- Mediator
- Private investigator
- Systems analyst
- Public utilities specialist
- Budget analyst
- Political scientist
- Social services administrator
- Lobbyist
- Non-profit manager
- County clerk
- Financial administrator

As the aging Baby Boomer generation nears retirement age, a large number of job openings will occur in government and public sector positions. Students interested in careers in public service will find themselves well positioned for these anticipated openings in federal, state, and local government, in city management and urban planning, in work with non-profits or in positions with private firms dealing with government relations.

Public administration focuses on the management of public affairs. Public administrators function in governmental organizations in a way similar to that of business managers in the private sector. Students develop an appreciation for the socio-economic, political, and cultural environments in which businesses and governments operate. Majors must develop their ability to see all sides of complex issues and also hone their skills in negotiation. It is the public administrator who often must help those on opposite sides of an issue find common ground.

Public administration is a subfield of political science. It combines the teachings of political science with studies in economics, management, sociology, and psychology. Public administrators work to formulate public policy and to put these policies into place. Thus, public administration majors must learn about all aspects of policy making and implementation.

Success in this field requires finely developed problem-solving abilities. Knowledge of political systems and an understanding of economics, statistics, and computer science are necessary. Typical courses in the major include studies in public policy, grant writing, economic development, structure of state government, organizational theory, local politics and administration, public financial administration, human resources administration, voluntarism and information technology. Programs vary from institution to institution, with some colleges focusing on local politics or community development, while others may be geared more to those who want a career in state or federal government. Still other programs specialize in environmental policy or nonprofit administration. When considering a college for this major, try to determine how well the institution's focus fits your vision of what you'd like to do in the future.

There's a lot of cross-over between public administration and related majors. Majors in areas such as economics, urban and regional planning, political science, sociology, health care administration, public relations, environmental studies and business administration and management all provide students with similar skills and competencies. Social work and human services may also work in closely related areas. Course work in each of these fields often employs the use of case studies or simulations to provide a sense of how things operate in the real world. Most programs require internships in governmental or nonprofit agencies to provide more hands-on experiences, while other programs utilize a co-op approach, placing students in paid positions for several semesters.

A bachelor's degree in any of these areas is required for entry level positions in a variety of public service positions. Graduates may be employed by governmental agencies in positions such as assistant city manager, human resource manager, grant coordinator, neighborhood planner, or policy analyst. Nonprofits such as religious groups, chambers of commerce and other neighborhood organizations and schools also hire public administration graduates. Still others are employed by private companies to act as liaisons with governmental agencies.

Want to learn more? Visit the website of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) at www.aspanet.org. Those more interested in the human side of public administration may want to check out the website of the National Association of Social Workers (www.naswdc.org).

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Financial Matters: Financial Aid Forms

Colleges employ a variety of financial aid forms to make decisions that lead to a distribution of available funds. In order to maximize your share of aid, it is important to submit all needed forms by stated deadlines.

The *FAFSA* (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is the cornerstone on which all aid determinations are based. The FAFSA is completed online as soon as possible after Jan. 1st of the applicant's senior year of high school, and then again prior to each subsequent year of college. Although you can't complete the paperwork yet, it is a good idea to visit the FAFSA website at www.fafsa.ed.gov before Jan. 1st to obtain a PIN (needed for an electronic signature) and to learn about the documents and records you'll need in order to complete the FAFSA. It may be advantageous to complete the FAFSA even if you don't believe your family will qualify for need-based aid. You can check with all of your colleges to find out if they will consider applicants for merit aid if families have not submitted the FAFSA. Families who seek need-based aid must complete the FAFSA each year because financial circumstances may change. Many families who do not qualify for need-based aid for their first child discover that they become eligible for aid when a second or third child enters college.

Private colleges often have more money to distribute than public institutions and may also require more financial information. Check to see if any of your colleges require the *CSS Profile,* a form provided by the College Board. You can see the list of schools that require the Profile and also apply at www.collegeboard.org. This form is completed during the Fall of senior year and is submitted in addition to, not instead of, the FAFSA. Students applying through an early decision plan who would like an early read on their financial aid package need to complete the Profile by the college's early deadline. Families should understand, however, that the package offered is subject to modification once final financial aid forms are completed.

Some colleges utilize their own financial aid forms. Check carefully for all forms and filing dates required by each college on your final list. Colleges may also require students to submit their college application by an earlier date if they wish to be considered for either need-based or merit scholarships.

State funding also begins with the FAFSA form and may require additional paperwork. Check your individual state requirements if you are applying to either public or private in-state institutions.

College Experiences (continued from p.1)

little correlation with other aspects of well-being. One exception: graduates of for-profit colleges were less likely to be thriving in all areas of well-being than graduates of both non-profit private colleges and public colleges.

Another key factor in the future well-being of college graduates: student debt. The study found that the higher the amount of student debt, the worse graduates scored on well-being. Only 4% of graduates owing between $20,000 and $40,000 in student debt were thriving in all areas of well-being, compared with 14% of those who did not take out loans to pay for college.

What implications does this study have for students and parents weighing college options? "When it comes to finding the secret to success, it's not '*where you go*,' it's '*how you do it*'," note the study's researchers. "These elements – more than any others – have a profound relationship to a person's life and career."

Resource: The full Gallup-Purdue University study, *Great Jobs Great Lives*, can be downloaded at this link: http://www.gallup.com/poll/168848/life-college-matters-life-college.aspx.

www.YouVisit.com

YouVisit.com offers virtual tours of a wide variety of places. These include tours of colleges and universities, restaurants, travel destinations and venues and events. Since you're planning to attend college soon, we'll talk only about how this website can aid in your college search.

Although not a substitute for actually visiting a campus, YouVisit does allow you to get a sense of the campus and facilities through a customized tour led by your own virtual tour guide. You select colleges by name or can use the college search feature to identify schools by size, location, setting and/or type. You then select the type of tour you wish (campus tour, athletics, science tour, engineering, etc.) and off you go. Links allow you to schedule a later campus visit.

The Public Ivies

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The phrase "Public Ivies" was first coined by Richard Moll in his book *The Public Ivies: America's Flagship Undergraduate Colleges* and referred to public institutions that "provide an Ivy league collegiate experience at a public school price." A later book by Howard and Michael Greene expanded on Moll's original list. These colleges were noted for their academic rigor, superstar faculty and high rates of selectivity. Students who qualify for in-state tuition at one of these schools could save up to $25,000 *per year* over costs at an academically comparable private institution.

Public funds and private grants combine to subsidize the cost of education at the Public Ivies, but the lower cost to the student comes at a price. All of the "Public Ivies" are big—the University of Florida has three times the number of students as Cornell, the largest of the Ivy League colleges. Large student bodies translate into crowded lecture halls, more graduate teaching assistants and limited interaction with well-regarded faculty before junior year. Large also means more competition for required classes and an increased likelihood of spending more than four years as an undergraduate.

Positive aspects of the Public Ivies include world-class facilities, big time sports programs and an almost unlimited choice of classes and activities. The Public Ivies are a good choice for proactive students—those who take an active role in their education and who are adept at seeking out the learning resources that they need. These are the students who get to know their professors by showing up during their office hours and who actively pursue research and internship opportunities. They meet frequently with advisors and make good use of the career placement office at their institutions. If this sounds like you, the Public Ivies may be right up your alley.

Generally included among the Public Ivies are UCLA and Berkeley, the Universities of Michigan, Vermont, Virginia, North Carolina (Chapel Hill) and Texas (Austin), the College of William and Mary and Miami University of Ohio. Also noted are the Universities of Wisconsin, Florida, Washington, Maryland (College Park), Penn State and State University of New York (Binghamton), among others.

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