

Financial Aid Step-by-Step – 2016-17

- I. **Get your FSA ID – you need it to log-in to the FAFSA and to sign and submit it.**
 - a. <https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm>
 - b. Student must have an FSA ID
 - c. Parent must have an FSA ID
 - d. Do this *as soon as possible* to avoid delays/issues
 - e. **Ask Marek or Miguel for help or if you have questions!**

- II. **File the 2017-2018 FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)**
 - a. <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>
 - b. *Available from October 1, 2016*
 - c. Submit FAFSA *as early as possible* to maximize your financial aid opportunities!
 - d. Use Income Tax information from 2015
 - e. Keep your and your parents financial records organized so you can easily find information
 - f. Print your Student Aid Report (SAR) and confirmation that you submitted it
 - g. **Schedule an appointment with Marek or Miguel for help with submitting the FAFSA!**

- III. **Submit the CSS Profile for any colleges you are applying to that require it**
 - a. <https://student.collegeboard.org/css-financial-aid-profile>
 - b. Use your CollegeBoard login/password
 - c. *Available from October 1, 2016*

- d. Submit it *as early as possible* to maximize your financial aid opportunities!
- e. Keep your and your parents financial records organized so you can easily find information
- f. Print confirmation that you submitted it
- g. Schedule an appointment with Marek or Miguel for help with submitting the CSS Profile!**

IV. Provide colleges you are applying to with any financial information they ask for or require

- a. Check college websites
- b. Check your email and mail regularly
- c. Call/email colleges to follow-up
- d. Make sure you send requested information *as soon as possible* to maximize financial aid opportunities!
- e. Make sure you send requested information in the way that the college asks for it (fax, mail, email, uploading through their website, etc.) to avoid delays/problems and maximize financial aid opportunities!
- f. Ask Marek or Miguel for help or if you have questions!**

V. Apply for scholarships

- a. A good time to focus on this is after you submitted college applications, but the *earlier the better*
- b. Check with your school's guidance office/career center, Naviance, parents employer/union, civic groups/organizations, churches or religious organizations
- c. Start local (school, town, county, state), before you go national
- d. Search the internet (various sites)

- i. Check-out Daniella Dennis' list of scholarship websites (ask Marek or Miguel)
- e. Use the same or similar essay for multiple scholarships to save time!
- f. Ask Marek or Miguel for help or if you have questions!**

VI. Make corrections to the FAFSA once you and/or your parents file 2016 Income Tax Returns

- a. <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>
- b. It is in your and your parents' interest to *file taxes as early as possible* to maximize your financial aid opportunities! As soon as you receive your W-2s (usually second half of January to February), file your taxes right away!
- c. Use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool
- d. Schedule an appointment with Marek or Miguel for help with making corrections to the FAFSA!**

VII. You will most likely be selected for Financial Aid Verification

- a. This is when the schools you apply to are required to get additional information from you before they can award you financial aid.
- b. This usually happens in the winter/spring
- c. See step IV
- d. It is crucial to be organized and have all financial records prepared
- e. Ask Marek or Miguel for help or if you have questions!**

VIII. Review financial aid offers from colleges

- a. These usually arrive in March/April
- b. Remember: $COA - (Grants + Scholarships) = Net\ Price$
- c. Organize your offers in a spreadsheet so you can easily compare and see what is the best financial option for you and your family
- d. Check with the college if grants and scholarships are renewable, and any other questions
- e. Schedule an appointment with Marek or Miguel for help with interpreting your award offers!**

IX. Accept/decline your award

- a. This usually happens once you decide which school you will attend
- b. The college will then ask you for MORE information and documents, so:
 - i. Check your email/mail
 - ii. Call/email the school to follow-up
 - iii. Be organized
 - iv. *Reply quickly and provide information in the way they ask for it to avoid delays/problems and to maximize your financial aid opportunities!*

X. Notify the college's Financial Aid office if you receive any outside scholarship, tuition benefits, or if your financial circumstances change