

Francine Schwartz

860.460.8829

fschwartz@pathfindercounselingllc.com

June 2015

6th – SAT Reasoning and Subject Tests

13th – 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 2015

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's New PSAT

Have a Successful Freshman Year

Starting college is a major life transition. While it's liberating not to have anyone telling you when to go to bed or when to study, the tradeoff is that you're responsible for yourself. No more having your mom call the guidance counselor to get your schedule changed. It's up to you to handle problems with professors or roommates, and, as you do, you'll gain confidence in your ability to manage your life.

Speaking of confidence, you will meet a lot of smart, accomplished students and this can be intimidating. But admissions officers don't admit students who can't do the work. In fact, they turn down thousands of well-qualified students so, if you've been admitted, you've got what it takes.

High school is over and you don't need to keep proving you can handle the most rigorous curriculum. Give yourself a break the first semester and sign up for at least one course that just sounds interesting and fun. If a class you really want is full, talk to the professor. Faculty love enthusiastic students and you may very well find that a space opens up.

Take some time to adjust to college life. Your first task is making friends and there will be many opportunities. In freshmen residence halls, the first few weeks are non-stop socializing. Students leave their doors open and everyone visits at all hours. Resident advisors will host pizza parties to help you get to know your hall-mates.

You may not be best friends with your roommate, but chances are you'll get along. In the rare case when you really can't live with your roommate, you can ask the housing office to make a change.

Everyone goes through a period of adjustment, but there are ways to minimize the stress. Even seemingly small things, such as keeping your room clean, can impact

your mood. Exercise can help you stay mentally as well as physically healthy. Working out will get those endorphins going and relieve stress.

Creating a structure that provides time to study and to sleep is another way of taking care of yourself. You'll probably have no more than 15 hours a week in class. That leaves plenty of time and, if you treat college like a 9-5 job, you can get your studying done during the day and have evenings for fun.

It is important to go to class. Sit up front and you're less likely to doze off. After each class, read your notes and clarify anything you didn't understand. Good notes are very helpful at exam time.

If you're struggling in a class, ask for help. That's what professors and teaching assistants are there for, and many schools also have tutors and writing centers. When it comes to studying, it's much easier to keep up than to catch up.

Studies show that students who participate in campus life are successful and happy in college. Whether you love film, environmental issues, vegetarian cooking, hiking or improvisational comedy, you'll find people who share your passion. Joining a club is a great way to create a feeling of community, especially important at a big university.

Everyone feels homesick at some point. Add the stress of midterms and sleep deprivation and it's easy to feel overwhelmed. The counseling center is a great resource. They see many students who are having trouble adjusting to college and talking to someone can really help.

Getting into college took motivation, commitment and self-discipline. Give yourself some time and you'll find that those qualities will also help you have a successful college experience.

Career Paths for Nursing Majors

- Nurse midwife
- Nurse practitioner
- Nurse anesthetist
- Nurse case manager
- Cardiac nurse
- Clinical nurse specialist
- Staff nurse or clinician
- Flight nurse
- Forensic nurse
- Holistic nurse
- Military nurse
- Emergency nurse
- Geriatric nurse
- Travel nurse
- Health educator
- AIDS care nurse
- Nurse administrator/Director/CEO
- Nurse Manager/Administrator
- Consultant/Entrepreneur
- Nursing informatics specialist
- Pharmaceutical/Medical device sales/Marketing representative
- Public health researcher
- Medical editor/writer
- Research nurse
- Nurse educator
- Teacher / Professor

For more information about nursing careers, visit the following websites

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing www.aacn.nche.edu.

The Bureau of Health Professions at <http://bhpr.hrsa.gov>



Majoring in Nursing

Nursing is hot! Although the U.S. economy will create 1.6 million nursing jobs over the next five years, there will still be a shortfall of about 193,000 nursing professionals by the year 2020. Finding a job will not be an issue for registered nurses anytime soon.

The duties of a registered nurse include treatment of patients, education of both patients and the public about medical conditions, and providing advice and support to the families of patients. Some RNs specialize in the type of care they provide.

There are three major paths to a career as a registered nurse: a bachelor's degree (BSN), an associate's degree (ADN) from a community college, and a diploma from an approved nursing program. Of these paths, the bachelor's degree provides graduates with the largest number of career possibilities as well as the option to earn an advanced degree leading to employment as a nurse practitioner.

Diploma programs do not grant a college degree. Instead, these are strictly vocational programs, generally hospital-based, and involve three years of study and clinical work. ADN programs are offered by junior and community colleges and take between two and three years to complete. Colleges and universities that offer the BSN can prepare their graduates for licensing in about four years. Many RNs will earn their ADN degree and begin their nursing career before returning to school to earn a Bachelor's degree in nursing. All three paths allow graduates to take the national licensing exam, known as the NCLEX-RN. Once licensed, a nurse is eligible for employment as an entry level staff nurse.

RN to BSN programs allow practicing nurses to earn their bachelor's degrees, thus making them eligible for higher level nursing positions. A bachelor's degree would be necessary for administrative and teaching positions, as well as for advanced practice positions such as nurse

anesthetist, nurse practitioner, nurse midwife, and clinical nurse specialist. The advanced nursing practice specialties also require additional study leading to a master's degree.

Nursing education programs include classroom instruction in such areas as anatomy, physiology, chemistry, nutrition, psychology, microbiology and nursing. Supervised clinical experience is provided in hospital settings and generally involves rotations in pediatrics, surgery, psychiatry and maternity. Shortage of clinical placements along with a lack of qualified nursing instructors has severely limited the number of students who can earn nursing degrees, thus fueling the ongoing scarcity of nurses. Nursing programs have found themselves becoming more and more competitive, with high grades in high school or in the first two years of college becoming a necessity. Experience in a health care setting also may be considered in the application process.

A recent report from the Georgetown Center on Education & the Workforce found that 37% of qualified applicants were not accepted by BSN programs and that 51% of qualified ADN students failed to gain acceptance because of a lack of available spaces. Accomplished high school students set on a BSN degree might want to explore direct-entry nursing programs, such as those offered at Boston College or the University of Pennsylvania. Rather than taking a general college curriculum for the first two years, students begin their pre-nursing classes immediately and generally begin clinical rotations by their second year of college. Other colleges such as Regis University offer their pre-nursing students a guaranteed spot in their nursing school as long as the pre-nursing prerequisites have been completed at a satisfactory level. To become a competitive applicant, choose the most rigorous high school program you can handle.

Financial Matters: The A to Z of College Finance



A is for the checking *account* you'll want to open. Choose a bank with offices near both your home and your college and your parents can easily add money.

B is for *budget*. Create a realistic one that allows for unexpected expenses.

C stands for *credit-rating*. Be wary of building up balances that are hard to repay. Ideally, balances should be paid off completely each month so you can avoid high interest charges. Make payments on time and you can use this account to establish a good credit rating.

D is for *debt*. 69% of college seniors graduate with significant debt. In 2013, the average debt on graduation, based on both federal and private loans, was \$28,400.

E is the first letter of *Expected Family Contribution*. This is the amount that students and their families are expected to contribute to a year's educational expenses.

F stands for *flexible-spending accounts*. Many colleges allow a portion of meal-plan money to be used for a variety of expenses such as pizza, haircuts and groceries. Merchants near the college often accept flex-cash in lieu of cash. Parents can also add more money to these flex accounts as needed.

G is for *grants*. Generally based on established need, grants reduce tuition costs and do not need to be repaid.

H reminds us of the need for *health insurance*. If the student is no longer

covered by the family's health insurance, you can find an economical alternative through the college's health plan.

I is for the *Internet*—a great source of information about scholarships and loans. Check out www.fastweb.com and www.finaid.org for scholarship databases and www.salliemae.com for loan information.

J stands for *jobs*. Even students who don't qualify for work-study can find a variety of on-campus or near-campus employment. Working 8 to 12 hours a week can add needed structure to the student's days as well as provide extra cash.

K is for *kitchen*. Housing with kitchen facilities allows students to reduce their meal costs.

L is the first letter of *loan*. For subsidized and unsubsidized loans for students and for parents, check out options at salliemae.com or nellie-mae.com.

M begins *meal plan*. Sign up for only the number of meals you're likely to use each week. Putting some of your meal money into a flexible-spending account will add variety to your meal options.

N is for *need*—the difference between cost of attendance and expected family contribution.

O is for *overseas* programs. Most colleges offer study abroad options, generally for the same cost as studying at your home campus. Travel costs are usually additional, but the experience can be priceless!

P is for *PLUS Loans*—Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students. Families can borrow money through this program to meet uncovered college expenses.

Q stands for *question*. Contact your financial aid office to request more help with college expenses.

R is for *reduce*. Look for ways to reduce costs of education. Using AP credits or taking some classes at a local community college may save some money.

S is for *scholarships*. Scholarships are gift money that reduces the cost of college. Some cover room and board in addition to tuition. Scholarships are generally merit awards given for academics, essay contests, or special skills such as athletics or performing arts.

T stands for *telephone*. Phone expenses can consume a good part of your college budget. Search out plans that are most economical for your expected usage.

U is for *unpaid* positions. While these won't fund your college expenses, they can add immeasurably to your resume.

V is for *volunteer*. Check out volunteer opportunities at your college's career or volunteer center.

W is for *work-study*. You can qualify for work-study jobs through your FAFSA application. Work-study funds can be used to pay the student's part of the expected family contribution. Best of all, this money won't be counted in assessing the following year's need.

X stands for *extras*. This includes all of the unexpected expenses that add up over time to increase your cost of attendance.

Y is for *you*. While college is expensive, remember that college graduates currently earn over a million dollars more over a life-time of work than those with only a high school diploma.

Z is for *zoom*. Completing college in four (or fewer) years significantly reduces the cost of attendance. Surprisingly, only 58% of U.S. college students graduate within six years.



Francine Schwartz
MA, LPC, NCC

East Lyme, CT

860.460.8829

fschwartz@pathfindercounselingllc.com

www.pathfindercounselingllc.com

Last Minute Summer Plans

Do you have your summer plans set? For those of you still searching for a productive way to use your summer break, consider trying to land an internship position.

Internships allow you to “try on” a possible future career and provide you with first-hand knowledge about the everyday activities of your possible profession. Other than an apprenticeship, there is probably no better way to learn how well a particular career fits you, your values, your interests and your hopes for the future. Contacts made during an internship may also form the beginning of your professional network. Mentors may offer advice on colleges and programs of study and job possibilities. They also often initiate learning opportunities.

How can you go about setting up an internship for yourself? It’s late now to begin applying so you’ll want to draw on your or your parents’ network of contacts. First, consider the individuals you or your

family members know who work in the field that interests you. Approach these people yourself, or ask family or friends to make a phone call on your behalf. Check with your teachers; members of your school community may be able to offer suggestions for intern placement. Another idea is to visit the website of the relevant professional organization; e-mail them asking about the possibility of an internship in your area. Be sure you’re clear about what you want to accomplish and what you can offer in return. Highlight your skills (especially computer-related skills) in your resume or cover letter and be sure to indicate when you would be available. Expect to be asked to provide some minimal services like filing or answering phones or entering data, but the internship should offer you many opportunities to learn about that career. Although most internships are unpaid, the experience you have can provide benefits that last a lifetime.