

Oklahoma Project FAITH in Student Success

College prep leader's guide and tool kit for conducting workshops for students in grades 11-12

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OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS
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Faith Communities and American Indian Tribes Helping Students Succeed

This project is funded in part by a Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) grant (PR Award #P116B030991). Additional funding is provided by Oklahoma GEAR UP. The U.S. Department of Education awarded Oklahoma with a state GEAR UP grant totaling \$20.5 million in August 1999 and \$20.6 million in August 2005. The grants have been matched by more than \$47 million from state and partner resources. With the addition of the 2005 multi-year, federal grant, Oklahoma's GEAR UP program will ultimately receive more than \$45.6 million in federal funds by 2011. GEAR UP receives 49 percent of total funding from the federal government and 51 percent from other organizations.

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Notes to leaders

Congratulations! **You have agreed to participate in Oklahoma Project FAITH in Student Success.** This program is designed to help you teach students and parents of your group how to get ready for college and how to get help in paying for a college education.

This tool kit has been designed to walk you step-by-step through the process. All the materials you need to successfully conduct the training are included in this workbook or have been provided separately.

At least one week before your training date, make sure you have enough copies of the handout materials to provide for each participant. Additional copies can be ordered by contacting:

Edra Thrower
Project FAITH Coordinator
Phone: 405.225.9198
Fax: 405.225.9230
E-mail: ethrower@osrhe.edu

Tell her the name of the handout you need and the number of copies. Give yourself enough time to have them shipped to you. Most of the handout materials are also available on Oklahoma higher education's Web site:

www.okhighered.org

Conducting a student workshop

Working with young people can be a real challenge. You know that. It's probably part of the reason you are choosing to conduct this workshop for them. This workshop will help you channel some of that youthful energy into a focus on preparing for college. Also, you know that a college education will help your students get the future they want. This is why working with students on college prep is such an important endeavor. The following is a work list to follow to ensure you have a successful student workshop.

- Pick a time and place that is convenient for students to attend. Schedule a block of time that includes a time for students to visit socially.
- This workshop can be conducted by more than one person. If you are working with a team of presenters, hold a meeting prior to the workshop to discuss how to conduct the workshop.

How to get students to your workshop

There are many different ways to tell students about your workshop. These may include posting flyers on bulletin boards, sending letters or invitations, reminding students at every meeting your group sponsors, placing a notice in your organization's bulletin or having your organization's leader announce the workshop during worship. You may even think of other ways to spread the word, such as asking everyone to tell at least one other person.

We have provided a sample invitation, letter and announcement on the following pages. Use these samples as a guide to create the materials that will work best with members of your organization.

Sample announcement

This can be printed in your organization's bulletins and newsletters or on individual flyers. Also, you can use this as your script for verbal announcements during meetings and worship.

You CAN Go to College! It Just Takes Some Planning

To get the job and future you want, you need a college degree! That being said, you may be from a family where no one has ever attended college before and don't know the steps to take to get into college. Well, someone has to be the first... so why not you? Getting into college doesn't require perfect grades or an athletic scholarship. You just need a PLAN that includes taking the right courses, making the right grades and studying hard.

Learn about financial aid opportunities, what grades you should make, what classes you should take, how to work with school counselors and more at the *[Insert your group's name here]* **Project FAITH in Student Success workshop.**

WHEN:

[Insert date(s) and time(s) here]

WHERE:

[Insert place here, including room number, if necessary. Be sure to include directions, if needed.]

WHO:

[Insert name and title of workshop leader or leaders]

Call *[insert phone number]* to sign up or for more information. *[You may want to include a place where they can sign up if they have no access to a telephone.]*

Sample invitation

The invitation can be printed on postcards and mailed out or handed out during meetings.

You CAN Go to College! It Just Takes Some Planning

You are invited to attend a special workshop on how you can go to college.

Learn about *financial aid opportunities*, what *grades* you should make, what *classes* you should take, how to *work with school counselors* and more at the *[Insert your group's name here] Project FAITH in Student Success* workshop.

Oklahoma Project FAITH in Student Success

Presented by *[Your group's name]*

[Date(s) and time(s)]

[Place]

Call *[Phone number]* or see *[Name]* for more information and to sign up.

Sample letter

This should be printed on your organization's letterhead.

Your organization's letterhead

You CAN Go to College! It Just Takes Some Planning

Date *(insert date)*

Dear Student:

Today, anyone who wants to can go to college. All it requires is to make the right plans and to take the right steps.

[Your group's name] wants to help you learn the things you need to know to help you prepare for a college education. That is why we are offering the **Oklahoma Project FAITH in Student Success** workshop.

By attending this workshop, you will learn about the differences in colleges, ways to get to college, why you should make good grades and take the right classes, how to work with school counselors and teachers, what financial aid is available and how to apply for it, and lots more.

The workshop will be held *[Date(s) and Time(s)]* at *[Place]*. Leader(s) of the workshop will be *[Name(s)]*.

To sign up or get more information, call *[Phone number]* or see *[Name]* at *[Location]*.

Sincerely,

Your signature

How to present the program

Beginning the meeting

Welcome everyone

Welcome participants and thank them for taking an interest in their future.

Introduce yourself and any other presenters

Introduce yourself and tell them how a college education has made a difference in your life or in the life of someone you know.

Go over instructions for the day

The following rules should be observed by everyone attending the session:

- There is no such thing as a silly or stupid question.
- Always show respect to the person speaking.
- Stay on topic with questions and answers.
- Sensitive questions should wait until after the session.
- Have fun.

Tell them what they should expect to learn in the workshop

- Family sensitivity and the value of being the first to go to college
- Myth vs. reality of planning for college
- Different terms or words they will need to know
- Differences in colleges
- Ways to get to college
- How to work with teachers and counselors
- What financial aid is available and how to apply for it
- Ways to save for college
- A year-by-year planning guide from 5th to 12th grade

Start with an icebreaker

Chances are, your participants probably know each other since they belong to the same organization. However, it is always good to learn something new about someone you know, and an icebreaker will help everyone feel more comfortable in this new learning situation. You may have your own favorite icebreaker; if not, we have provided two options.

Sample icebreakers

Goal

To make the participants feel welcomed and to be at ease.

Materials needed

- Blank paper or notepads (not provided)
- Pencils (provided, make sure they are sharpened)

Getting started

Icebreaker #1: What's in a Name?

Have each participant introduce themselves and have them give a word starting with the first letter of their first name that describes them and briefly explain why. Example: Lucky Larry or Dancing Donna.

Icebreaker #2: Pocket Personality

Participants must produce one object from their pocket, purse, wallet or body (jewelry, belt, etc.) that has meaning for them and explain its significance to the group.

SECTION 1

Family sensitivity and the value of being the first in the family to go to college

Goal

To address concerns of students who have parents or family members who did not go to college.

A family who has never had anyone attend college faces many challenges. This section will identify those challenges and problems and help family members realize that being the first in the family to go to college is a good thing.

Materials needed

- Your Official Guide to Preparing for College, 11th – 12th Grade
- Income Realities handout
- What’s That Degree Worth? handout
- Salary Comparison handout

Discuss

Ask participants if they have parents or family members who may not want them to go to college. Ask participants if they know why their parents or family members feel this way. Ask them to share. Please share the following reasons if the participants do not cover them:

- Parent says, “My son has a job and without his income we can’t make ends meet.”

Why you should still go to college: It can be hard for families who depend on money from a child’s job, but the long-term rewards of a college education will mean more for the family in the long run.

- Parent says, “My daughter will not be the same person if she goes to college.”

Why you should still go to college: Growth and change are natural and are not always bad things. Parents should understand that their child will be the same person but will be better equipped to succeed in the world. Most first-generation college students report that they want to go to college to gain respect, to bring honor to their family and to help their families financially.

- Parent says, "I'm afraid my son won't fit in at college."

Why you should still go to college: Many support groups are available to college students, such as associations made up of students with similar faith, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Advisors and counselors are available to help students find these groups. Support from parents is very important to the success of a student in college. Don't let fear hold you back.

- Parent says, "Our family has always made their living by working with their hands at a good trade. I want my son/daughter to come into the family business with me."

Why you should still go to college: A college education can help a family business grow by finding different ways to make the business successful. Just because you want to go to college does not mean you will not join in the family business.

Address the benefits of going to college.

Here are some reasons for getting a college education:

- It will be easier to get a job. Most companies want workers who have college degrees, and there are more jobs available for college graduates than for those without college degrees.
- People without college degrees are more likely to be unemployed at some point in their lives.
- A person who has a college degree will make \$1 million more over his or her lifetime than someone without a college education.
- College opens the door to more pleasant working conditions. Many of the jobs open to college graduates are in offices.
- People with a college education have been shown to live happier, healthier lives. In fact, studies have shown that college

graduates are healthier, live longer, are smarter consumers and have more varied interests than those who don't go to college.

- College provides the satisfaction of personal growth. You can explore new subjects, meet many different people and participate in activities you might not otherwise experience.

Class activity

Go over income handouts with students.

Share the information from the Department of Labor comparing education attainment and income. Ask each student where he or she would like to be on the graph. If students think an annual income of \$18,000 is enough, show them how \$18,000 really isn't very much money. Devise a budget to show students where the money will go. For example, car payment, insurance, rent, phone, lights, water, food, doctors, entertainment, etc.

Have students research the cost of these things. To help with this activity, pick up an apartment guide that shows listings and prices. Also, bring in the want ads to show the cost of cars. Find out what this new information means to your students. Remind students that the earning amounts vary from state to state, depending on the cost of living for that state. For example, \$18,000 buys even less if you live in an expensive city like New York City, Dallas, San Francisco or Los Angeles.

Income realities

Chart 1
AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS

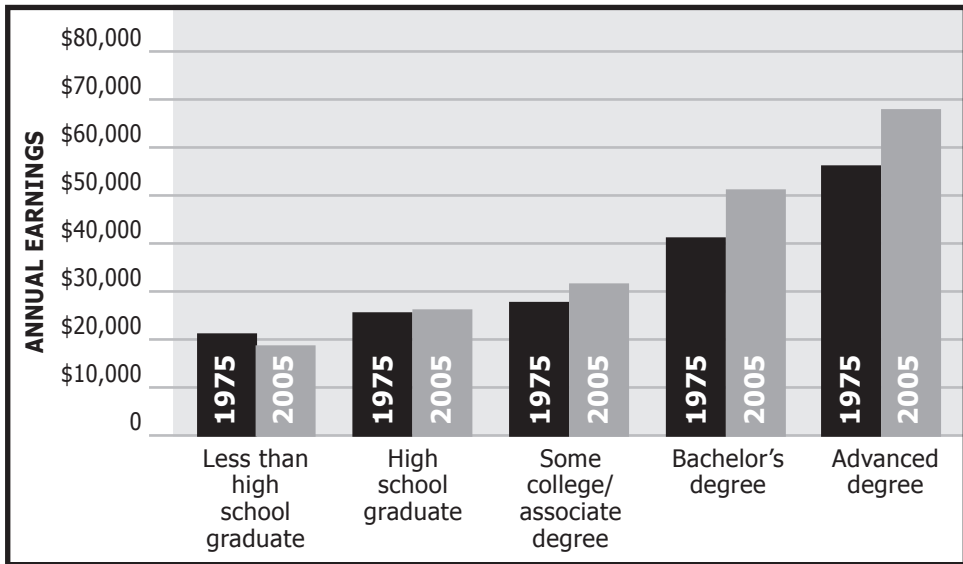
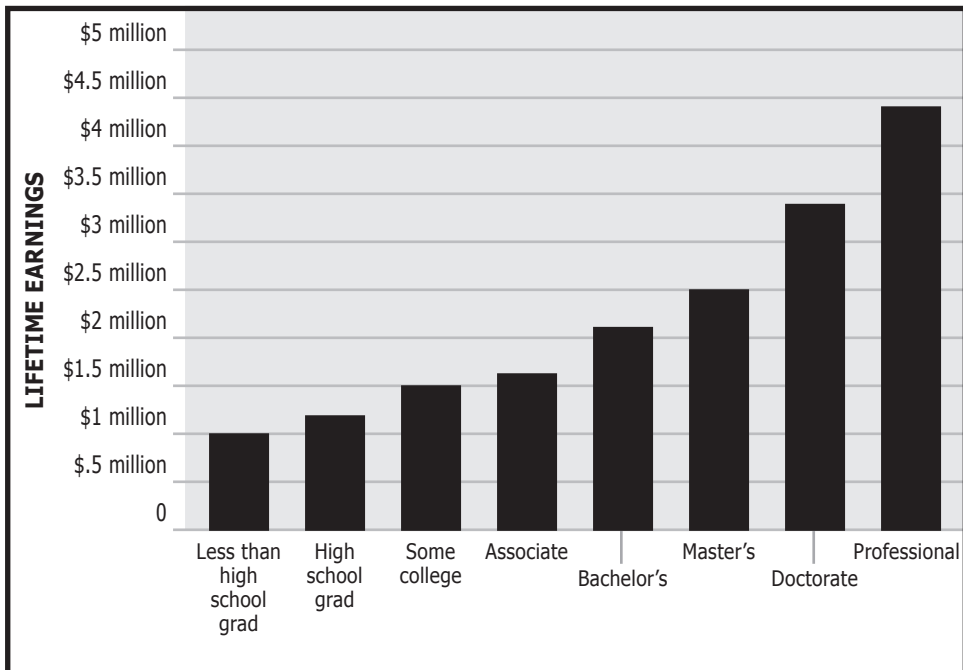


Chart 2
LIFETIME EARNINGS



What's that degree worth?



Degree area	Average starting salary	Change from the year before
Chemical engineering	\$54,256	+4.3%
Electrical engineering	\$52,009	+2.5%
Computer engineering	\$51,496	-2.0%
Computer science	\$51,292	+2.6%
Mechanical engineering	\$51,046	+4.1%
Aerospace engineering	\$50,701	+9.0%
Industrial engineering	\$49,541	+1.8%
Accounting	\$43,809	+3.9%
Information sciences	\$43,732	-0.8%
Civil engineering	\$43,462	+4,0%
Economics/finance	\$42,802	+5.1%
Business administration	\$39,448	+3.2%
Marketing	\$37,832	+6.0%
Liberal arts	\$30,337	+4.2%
Source: National Association of Colleges and Employers		

Salary comparisons

Associate or bachelor's	Hourly wage
Accountant	\$21.05
Computer programmer	\$25.91
Architect	\$24.80
Zoologist & wildlife biologist	\$21.85
Forensic science technician	\$17.88
Film & video editor	\$16.24
Pharmacist	\$32.81
Physical therapist	\$27.89
Education, training & library occupation	\$15.00
Registered nurse	\$20.49

Moderate on-the-job experience	Hourly wage
Bank teller	\$9.07
Data entry keyer	\$10.10
Landscaping & groundskeeper worker	\$8.82
Veterinary assistant	\$8.23
Security guard	\$9.89
Camera operator	\$10.99
Pharmacy technician	\$9.80
Physical therapist aide	\$9.21
Child care worker	\$6.90
Nursing aide	\$8.13

Source: Oklahoma Employment Outlook 2012

SECTION 2

Myth vs. reality of preparing and planning for college

Goal

To dispel some of the common myths about going to college.

Materials needed

None

Discuss

Share the following with the participants. After you read each Myth and Reality, ask the participants if they have any questions or comments. At the end, ask if they can add any myths to the list. Encourage other participants to answer the myths with the reality.

- **MYTH 1**

We don't have much money, and my parents can't save enough to send me to college.

- **REALITY 1**

Saving even a few dollars a week when you are in elementary school can add up over time to help cover the cost of college. There are also many financial aid programs available to help families pay for college. [Tell them you will discuss this with them in more detail in another section.]

- **MYTH 2**

The papers to fill out to go to college are too hard to understand. I could never fill them out by myself.

- **REALITY 2**

Help in filling out paperwork is available from many areas. Check with your school counselor or the admissions office at the college you are interested in attending.

[It would be a great service to your members if you, as the College Opportunity Liaison, could arrange a time to fill out financial aid paperwork as a group.]

- **MYTH 3**

I am good at sports and will get an athletic scholarship to go to college.

- **REALITY 3**

Only a small number of athletic scholarships are available each year, and even if you are one of the talented few who obtain one, you are still going to need good grades to stay eligible to play and to be successful in college classes. **Do not depend on getting an athletic scholarship as the only way for you to go to college.**

SECTION 3

Terminology

Goal

To help participants become familiar with some of the words used in academic settings.

Materials needed

- Glossary (Make sure you have enough copies for everyone in your workshop and that you have read over the list and are familiar with all the terms.)

Getting started

Pass out copies of the glossary. A master copy for you to reproduce has been provided on the following pages of this tool kit. Tell them the glossary is also available online at: www.okhighered.org/student-center/online-resources/glossary.shtml or www.OKcollegestart.org/Financial_Aid/Glossary_of_Acronyms_and_Terms.aspx.

Discuss

Like all professions, education has certain terms it uses that you may or may not be familiar with. We have put together a list of these words to help you in planning and preparing for your college education.

This list includes some of the more common words you will need to know while preparing for college. For example:

- **Concurrent enrollment:** This is a program that allows eligible high school students (juniors and seniors) to take credit-earning college courses. This means they can earn college credit by taking certain classes in high school.
- **Credit hour:** Credit given for attending one lecture hour of class each week for 15 weeks or equivalent. Most college classes are three credit hours, meaning their total meeting time for a week is three hours.

Have them look over the list and ask questions about any term they do not understand.

College glossary

Academic advisor: The person at a college or university who helps students decide what classes to take, what major to pursue, etc. An advisor is similar to a high school guidance counselor.

Admission requirements: Students wanting to attend an Oklahoma college or university must meet certain requirements, such as achieving a specified ACT or SAT score or combination of high school grade point average and rank in class, taking specified high school courses, etc. to be considered for admission.

Advanced Placement (AP) courses: Courses that allow students to take college-level course work in high school. Many Oklahoma colleges and universities award college credit to students who successfully complete these courses and pass the corresponding AP exams.

Associate degree: Degree given upon completion of two years of full-time study or the equivalent. Most associate degrees are awarded by two-year colleges, although some four-year universities also offer associate degrees. Some associate degrees transfer to four-year universities; others are for career preparation.

Bachelor's degree: Degree given upon completion of four years of full-time study or the equivalent.

Class rank: Ranking of a student within a high school graduating class based upon his or her high school grade point average.

College: A higher education institution that generally offers associate, or two-year, degrees but does not offer bachelor's- or graduate-level programs.

College catalog: A booklet, published by an individual college or university, that contains detailed descriptions of course and degree offerings, fees, academic policies and requirements for graduation.

Community College: Also known as a “two-year college,” a community college grants associate degrees for transfer to four-year institutions or for career preparation. Community colleges usually offer flexible class schedules with smaller class sizes. They are known as open door institutions because performance standards (standardized test scores or combination of class rank and grade point average) are not required for admission.

Commuter college: A college at which students live off campus and travel to campus for classes.

Comprehensive university: See research university.

Concurrent enrollment: A program that allows eligible high school students (juniors and seniors) to take credit-earning college courses.

Credit hour: Credit given for attending one lecture hour of class each week for 15 weeks or equivalent. Most college classes are three credit hours, meaning their total meeting time for a week is three hours. To calculate tuition, multiply the number of credit hours for each class (three) by the cost of tuition per credit hour.

Full-time student: An undergraduate student enrolled in at least 12 credit hours or a graduate student enrolled in at least nine credit hours, or the equivalent, in one semester or academic term.

Graduate student: A student working toward a master’s or doctoral degree.

High school grade point average (GPA): Average of all grades earned in the 9th through 12th grades.

Higher education center: Institution with flexible admission standards that provides higher education opportunities to citizens in the areas surrounding the centers. The center works with various colleges and universities to provide undergraduate and graduate courses, and students can earn an associate, bachelor’s or master’s degree.

Independent (private) colleges and universities: Accredited colleges and universities that offer associate,

bachelor's and/or graduate degrees in traditional subject areas. Private colleges and universities are not supported by state taxes and are not for profit. They receive the bulk of their revenues from tuition, donations and grants.

Major: An academic subject area, such as economics or geology, in which students take many courses and choose to earn a degree.

Minor: An area of interest studied at the same time as a major. It requires fewer courses than a major.

Part-time student: A student who is enrolled in a certain number of course credits or hours which are less than full-time. For an undergraduate student, this is usually less than 12 credits or hours. For a graduate student, it is usually less than nine credits or hours.

Prerequisite: A course which a student must take before he or she can enroll in another (usually more challenging) course.

Regional university: A university that offers bachelor's and master's degrees, and, in some instances, associate or professional degrees. While regional universities focus primarily on instruction, they are also responsible for extension and public service, as well as some research. They tend to have mid-sized student populations and campuses.

Research university: Also known as a "comprehensive university," a university that grants bachelor's, graduate and professional degrees and offers a wide variety of courses and degree programs. Along with instruction, research institutions also focus on research, extension and public service. Research universities usually have large student bodies and expansive campuses.

Residential college: A college at which students may live on campus in dormitories or apartments.

Semester: Calendar system used by colleges and universities. Classes and grade reports are divided into two periods in the spring and fall, each lasting about 16 weeks, and one period in the summer, usually lasting eight weeks.

Standardized test (ACT or SAT): Test used by colleges and universities to evaluate applicants' academic skills and abilities. The standardized tests most widely used by colleges and universities are the ACT and SAT. Oklahoma state colleges and universities rely primarily on the ACT.

State (public) colleges and universities: Colleges and universities that receive funding from state taxes to pay part of operating costs.

Subject area test: Standardized tests given by ACT in math, science, reading and English. Public colleges and universities look at these test scores when helping students enroll in courses.

Technical branch: Institution that has a special emphasis on education and training in technical fields. Some technical branches offer academic courses and programs, but not all institutions offer two-year programs that lead to an associate degree.

Trimester: Calendar system used primarily by the state's technical branches. Classes and grade reports are divided into three periods, each lasting about 10 weeks.

Tuition: Payment that students make to cover costs of their classes at state and private colleges and universities. Other fees may be also required.

Two-year college: An institution that grants associate degrees for transfer to four-year institutions or for career preparation. Two-year colleges usually offer flexible class schedules with smaller class sizes. They are known as open door institutions because performance standards (standardized test scores or combination of class rank and grade point average) are not required for admission.

Undergraduate student: A student working toward an associate or a bachelor's degree or a certificate.

University: A higher education institution that usually offers four-year degrees, as well as degrees beyond the baccalaureate level (i.e., graduate and professional degrees). They may also offer associate degrees.

SECTION 4

Differences in colleges

Goal

To point out the differences in two-year colleges and regional and comprehensive universities.

Materials

- Different college recruiting materials from the different types of colleges. You can download pages off the Internet or contact admissions offices at the colleges close to you.
- What to Look for When Choosing a College handout
- Paper and pen or pencil

Web site

- List of colleges in Oklahoma:
www.okhighered.org/student-center/college-univ/list.shtml
www.OKcollegestart.org/Explore_Colleges/_default.aspx
www.collegeboard.com

Discuss

Use the college recruiting materials to show examples of the differences in colleges.

There are two basic types of post-secondary education institutions:

- Two-year: Community colleges and technical branches
- Four-year: Colleges and universities

COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND TECHNICAL BRANCHES

- Less than four years in length
- Usually takes two years to complete a degree program

Community colleges

- Grant associate degrees for transfer to four-year institutions or for career preparation.
- Offer extensive night and sometimes even weekend class schedules with smaller class sizes.

- Known as open-door institutions because, in most cases, admission requirements are less strict than four-year colleges or universities.
- Cost to attend is usually less than any other type of college.

Ask participants to list community colleges they know of or have experience with.

Examples: Tulsa Community College and Northern Oklahoma College in Tonkawa

Technical branches

- Focus on education and training in technical fields.
- Some offer academic courses and programs, but not all offer two-year programs that lead to an associate degree.
- Cost to attend varies due to type of program – for example, lab fees for a degree in air conditioning and refrigeration technology are probably more expensive than lab fees for a degree in hospitality services.

Ask participants to name the two technical colleges in Oklahoma.

Examples: OSU Technical Branch -- Okmulgee and OSU -- Oklahoma City

COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

- At least four years in length
- Usually takes four years to complete a bachelor’s degree program

Regional universities

- Offer bachelor’s and master’s degrees, and sometimes associate or professional degrees.
- Focus mainly on instruction.
- Also responsible for extension and public service and some research.
- Have mid-sized student populations and campuses.

Ask participants to name some regional universities.

Examples: Northeastern State University in Tahlequah and Oklahoma Panhandle State University in Goodwell

Comprehensive universities

- Grant bachelor’s, graduate and professional degrees.
- Offer a wide variety of courses and degree programs.

- Also focus on research, extension and public service.
- Usually have many students and large campuses.

Ask participants to name the two comprehensive universities in Oklahoma.

Examples: Oklahoma State University in Stillwater and the University of Oklahoma in Norman

Independent or private colleges

- Accredited colleges and universities
- Offer associate, bachelor's and/or graduate degrees in traditional subject areas.
- Are not supported by state taxes and are not for profit.
- Receive the bulk of their revenues from tuition, donations and grants.

Ask participants to list some of the independent colleges and universities they might know.

Examples: Oklahoma City University and The University of Tulsa

Ask participants to briefly discuss what college might be best for them to attend.

Additional activities

Have each student write a list of features that are important in choosing a college. Discuss as a group.

Pass out the recruiting materials from the different colleges (that you either downloaded off the Internet or ordered earlier). Have students review the materials and see which colleges match their important features (from list written earlier) best. Discuss as a group.

Pass out the What to Look for When Choosing a College handout. Compare this list to the important features the students originally listed. See if the students missed anything and if their priorities are in order.

What to look for when choosing a college

Here are some characteristics you should consider when choosing the right college for you.

SIZE

- How many students are enrolled?
- What is the average class size?
- Geographically, just how large is the campus?
- How big is the library?

ACADEMICS

- Does the school offer the degree program I am interested in?
- What are the entrance requirements for this school, and do I meet them?
- Do they have tutoring services available if I need them?

LOCATION

- Do I want to live on campus or with my family?
- Would I prefer to go to college in the city or in a more rural setting?
- Does the community surrounding the college have sports, shopping, concerts, movies, etc., that interest me?

CAMPUS LIFE

- Does this college offer the extracurricular activities that interest me?
- Does this college have groups or clubs that I am interested in joining?
- Does this college have fraternities and sororities that interest me?

COST

- Can I afford this college?
- What campus-based financial aid opportunities are available?

SECTION 5

Different avenues to pursue to get to college

Goal

To explain alternative ways for students to obtain a college degree.

Web sites

Army www.goarmy.com

Navy www.navy.com/education

Air Force www.airforce.com

(Must register on the site to get information.)

Discuss

There are many advantages of attending college right after high school:

- College costs are usually less.
- Students are still in the “study” mode.
- Younger people usually have less responsibility and have more time to study.

However ... not everyone who earns a college degree goes straight from high school to college, but everyone who wants a college degree can get one. The advantages of attending college at a later stage in life are:

- Better knowledge of what is desired from a college degree – better job, etc.
- More focused as an adult
- Some employers will pay for college if it is related to job responsibilities

Here are some non-traditional ways of earning a college degree:

- **Attend college part-time**

Some students will begin working right after high school and attend college part-time by taking a few classes during the day or at night. It takes longer to earn a degree this way, but if it is the only way to get a college education, the time invested is worth it.

- **Military service**

Some students will enter military service right after high school to help earn money to pay for college. They will either enlist with the regular service or sign up with a National Guard unit. Both ways can provide students with funds to use for college after their term of enlistment is finished or while they serve in the Guard. Students should check with their local recruiter to find out what opportunities are available. Also, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and participating Oklahoma state system institutions have signed an Advanced Standing Agreement with the U.S. Navy to award college credit for specific technical education and training courses and job experience successfully completed while serving in the U.S. Navy.

- **Career technology centers**

High school and adult students at participating technology centers can earn college credit from state colleges and universities through Cooperative Alliance Agreements. The benefits of pursuing a degree through an alliance agreement include:

- Students can begin working on a degree while still in high school.
- College credit is awarded immediately upon successful completion of the course.
- Admissible students may enroll in any state college or university and transfer courses depending on the degree program.*

** The receiving college or university has the authority to determine the eligibility of those courses as applied toward the desired degree plan.*

Have participants discuss what might be the best path for them to go to college.

Additional activities

- If you as a leader have a college degree, share the path you took to college.
- If you as a leader do not have a college degree, share with the students if any of these paths might work for you now.
- Ask students what avenue they intend to pursue.

SECTION 6

Helping students with career exploration

Goal

To provide resources to help students look at different careers.

Materials needed

- Income realities handout (page 21)
- What's that degree worth? handout (page 23)
- Salary comparisons handout (page 25)

Web sites

- www.okcrn.org
- www.acrnetwork.org
- www.stats.bls.gov/oco
- www.OKcollegestart.org/career_center/_default.aspx

Discuss

Why explore careers?

- One of the MAIN reasons students drop out of college is that they do not know what they want to do for a career.
- It allows you to make better choices about your future. The more knowledge you have about what a job is really like and what education is needed, the more you can fit the job to your personality, interests and abilities.

When should I begin looking at different jobs?

Experts recommend you begin in middle school to gather information on different jobs you may want to do.

Isn't that too early? What if I change my mind?

Career exploration is a process. This means that it takes most people a long time to decide what they want to do. You might change your mind many times before finding the right career ... and that's okay. That's also why it's good to start exploring early.

How do I go about it?

There are two main ways to find out about careers.

One is to gather all the information you can find on careers you may be interested in. You can check out books from the library or do searches on the Internet. OKcollegestart.org helps you identify and prepare for a career that suits your skills, values, interests, and personality.

Other information you will want to find out includes:

- What type of education will I need to work in this job?
- Where do I get the education or training?
- Will this job be needed in the future?
- How can I advance in this job?
- What are some of the day-to-day jobs I will have to do?
- How much will I make doing this work?

Another way to find out about a particular career is to find ways to actually do work in a job you are interested in. You can:

- Volunteer with groups doing the type of work you are interested in.
- Work at part-time jobs in the area.
- “Shadow” or follow someone around who does the type of work you think you might want to do.
- Do an internship in the area. This means you will work in the area usually without pay, but you may be able to get school credit for it.
- Take a vocational class in high school in the area you are interested in.

Talk with the school counselor about career search opportunities available at your school.

Additional activities

- Have students review the handouts and decide on a career they would like to research. Ask students to find out what degree is required for the desired job and how much education it will take to fulfill the degree requirements.

SECTION 7

Why you should make good grades and take the right classes

Goal

To explain the grades, classes and tests needed to go to college.

Materials needed

- Your Official Guide to Preparing for College, 11th – 12th Grade
- Where am I going – College Prep worksheet (8 – 12)
- Study skills handouts

Web sites

- www.okhighered.org/student-center/jrhigh-highscl/courses.shtml
- www.okhighered.org/student-center/jrhigh-highscl/grades.shtml
- www.OKcollegestart.org/Plan_for_College/_default.aspx
- www.act.org
- www.collegeboard.com

Discuss

To attend an Oklahoma state college or university you must take certain classes in high school and take the ACT exam.

Please open Your Official Guide to Preparing for College, 11th – 12th Grade. Find the “Where to Start” table. This is a list of the classes all students must take to be able to go to a state college.

These classes will not only help you prepare for college, but also give you a valuable knowledge base for entering the job market after high school.

Look under the “Other” section. You will need two units from this section. These can be from any of the units listed previously or computer science or foreign language. Please note that 2009 graduates may have two lab science and three other courses.

There are also some additional suggestions, but not requirements, including an additional unit in math and laboratory science, plus two additional units in speech or music, art or drama.

If you look [hold up guide and point] at the “Grades To Make” section, you will notice the grade point average you must have to attend a state college or university.

Please note that to attend either Oklahoma State University or the University of Oklahoma, a student must have a 3.0 GPA. Also note the scores required on the ACT or the SAT.

For the regional universities such as Northeastern, Southwestern or Central Oklahoma, a student must have a 2.7 GPA and rank in the top 50 percent of his or her class.

Also note that to attend a community year college, students do not need to make certain scores, but they should take the required high school classes, graduate from an accredited high school and take the ACT exam.

It is not unusual for students to start at either a community college, or a regional university and later transfer to OU or OSU after obtaining an associate degree.

The final score on college entrance exams

College entrance exams

Admissions or college entrance exams are necessary to enter almost any U.S. college or university. These tests are important because, when combined with high school grades, they are used as a predictor of success during that first year of college. Two college entrance exams most used are the ACT and the SAT. Oklahoma uses the ACT for college entrance.

ACT

The ACT assessment is a standardized college entrance examination that measures knowledge and skills in English, mathematics, reading and science reasoning. Students take the ACT assessment, a 175-minute exam, in four parts: English (75 questions), mathematics (60 questions), reading comprehension

(40 questions) and science reasoning (40 questions). Each section is scored from 1 to 36 and scaled for slight variations in difficulty. Scores on the multiple-choice tests are based on the number of questions answered correctly. There is no penalty for guessing. The composite score is the average of the four scaled scores.

SAT

The SAT assessment is a standardized college entrance examination that is used most predominantly by colleges and universities along the East and West coasts.

SAT REASONING TEST™

The SAT Reasoning Test is a measure of the critical thinking skills needed for academic success in college. The SAT Reasoning Test assesses how well students analyze and solve problems. It consists of 70 minutes (two 25-minute sections and one 20-minute section) of critical reading questions; 70 minutes (two 25-minute sections and one 20-minute section) of math problems; and a 60-minute writing section, which includes multiple choice questions and a short essay. In addition, there is one 25-minute unscored section, known as the variable or equating section.

SAT SUBJECT TESTS™ (formerly SAT II: Subject Tests)

Subject Tests are required by some institutions for admission and/or placement in freshman courses. SAT Subject Tests are one-hour, multiple-choice tests that measure how much students know about a particular academic subject and how well they can apply that knowledge. Subject Tests fall into five subject areas: English, history, mathematics, sciences, and languages. They help colleges compare the academic achievement of students from different schools where course preparation and academic backgrounds may vary widely.

PSAT/NMSQT

(Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test)

The Preliminary SAT®/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test is a standardized test that provides firsthand practice for the SAT Reasoning Test. It also gives you a chance to enter National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) scholarship programs. The PSAT/

NMSQT measures critical reading skills, math problem-solving skills and writing skills. The most common reasons for taking the PSAT/NMSQT are to receive feedback on your strengths and weaknesses on skills necessary for college study; to see how your performance on an admissions test might compare with that of others applying to college; to enter the competition for scholarships from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (grade 11); and to help prepare for the SAT.

Additional activities

A plan for college, 11th - 12th grade students

- Hand out the Where Am I Going – College Prep worksheet (8 – 12).
- Have the 11th graders look at what they have already taken and use the worksheet to decide what to take next year.
- Have 12th graders look up admission requirements for each type of college. Ask the students to compare the admission requirements with their personal transcripts. Discuss what each student will need to do in order to attend the school of his or her choice.

Study skills and good learning habits

- It's not just taking or passing courses that prepares students for college. The key to student success is learning the subject matter in those courses. We have provided several handouts on study skills (see the following pages). Please copy and utilize any or all you feel appropriate.

WORKSHEET

Where am I going?

College prep worksheet (8–12)



Following the College Prep Course Curriculum can help you be successful in college. Use this worksheet to map your academic plan for the future.

11th-grade students: Use this worksheet to decide what you will take in school next year. **11th – 12th grade students:** Use this worksheet to see how your curriculum matches up to entrance requirements at the colleges you are considering attending.

If you are enrolled in Oklahoma’s Promise, you must take the following high school coursework to meet program requirements.*

College prep courses curriculum		What I have taken		What I will take next year	
Units	Course	Units	Course	Units	Course
4	English: Grammar, literature, composition				
3	Lab science: Biology, chemistry, physics, or any certified lab science; general science courses with or without a lab do not qualify**				
3	Math: Algebra I, Algebra II, geometry, trigonometry, math analysis, calculus, Advanced Placement statistics				
3	History and citizenship skills: Including one unit of American history and two units from the subjects of history, government, geography, economics, civics and/or non-Western culture				
2	Foreign or non-English language (two years of the same language) OR computer technology: Courses in programming, hardware and business computer applications such as word processing, databases, spreadsheets and graphics. Keyboarding or typing classes do NOT qualify. (One foreign language and one computer course will not meet this requirement.)				
1	Additional units from any of the above				
1	Fine arts (music, art, drama) or speech				

* Students graduating from a high school not accredited by the Oklahoma State Board of Education or a recognized accrediting agency must also achieve a composite ACT score of 22 or higher.

** Students graduating high school in 2007, 2008 and 2009 may have two (2) lab science units and two (2) additional units.

Spending study time wisely

- **Plan to study.** Make studying one of the most important things you do each day.
- **Use time available in class to study or begin an assignment.** By doing so, you can ask your teacher for help if you do not understand something.
- **Make a weekly schedule.** Schedule time for studying and homework, as well as for other activities such as school activities, chores and fun.
- **Find study times that work best for you.** Pick a time when you are alert. Remember, the more alert you are the better you will concentrate.
- **Plan short study sessions.** By doing so you will be motivated and alert.
- **Take study breaks.** Take a break when you find yourself losing concentration on your work. After a few minutes of relaxing by doing something like getting a drink or stretching, you can get back to your work feeling refreshed.
- **Have study times throughout the week.** Don't try to get everything done in one night. Try to study a little at a time each day. Learning is improved when you split a big job into smaller jobs. It will make studying for tests easier, and it will also give you time to ask your teacher questions if you don't understand something.

Choose from the following list of positive study behaviors when setting goals for yourself.

Positive study behaviors for 11th – 12th grade students

.....

In class

- Listen carefully to the teacher and ask questions when you don't understand.
- Avoid talking to friends during class instruction.
- Practice taking better notes.
- Write down assignments and due dates carefully.

At home

- Set a "study time" separate from homework time.
- Study more frequently, for shorter time periods. (Four half-hour study sessions are much better than one two-hour session.)
- Study the most difficult subject first.
- Use "active" study techniques (recite, write, make study review cards, etc.).
- Review class notes each night by reciting or writing marginal notes or questions (to increase retention).
- Get organized each night for the next day (file papers, check schedule, calendar and weekly goals).

Time management

- Make a study schedule over the weekend for the following week.
- Begin to study at the time designated.
- Study earlier in the day (before dinner) whenever possible.
- Use some weekend time for studying if unable to do so during the week.
- Use a calendar for recording due dates and setting "weekly goals."
- Break large assignments into smaller parts and set deadlines for finishing each part. Use the calendar.

Study environment

- Study in a quiet place
- Have a study routine. Study the same subject in the same place at the same time each day.
- Organize desk, drawers and papers. (Use folders if you have them.)
- Remove visual distractions from your study location.
- Provide good lighting. Straining will make you tired faster.
- Have everything needed for homework or study nearby (paper, ruler, tape, stapler, dictionary, etc.).
- Put up a bulletin board to post a calendar, schedule and other important information.

Time-tracking log

.....

Do you spend your time well? Time is expensive. If you use it all on unimportant things, you are cheating yourself. It is a valuable ingredient of life. Learn to use your time wisely and make it count. For one day, keep a record of how you spend your time.

Write down each activity you did that day and how it helped you or someone else (see example).

Time-Tracking Chart		
ACTIVITY	TIME	BENEFIT TO ME OR OTHERS
Read <i>Othello</i>	3:45 to 4:45 p.m.	Research for book report

Wasting time is like stealing from yourself. How did you actually spend your time? What did you learn about yourself? Are you spending enough time on the things that are important to you?

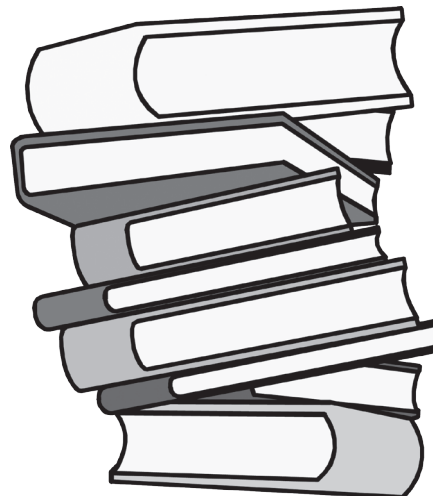
Find a place and get organized

A good place to study

- Find a quiet place.
- Make sure the lighting is good.
- Use a table or desk.
- Find a chair that forces you to sit up straight.
- Use the same good location each time you study.
- Don't be afraid to ask a family member for help if you need it.

Get organized

- Designate a place to write down all assignments and the due dates.
- Write down test dates.
- Check off completed assignments.
- Write down special instructions.
- Ask questions if you do not understand.
- Don't wait until the last minute to begin an assignment or study for a test.



Reminder checklists

At home

- Pack all homework, books and notebooks in book bag or backpack.
- Bring lunch or lunch money.
- Place any signed papers in travel folder.
- Eat a good breakfast.
- Before school I need to:

At school

- Before packing to leave, check homework assignment sheet.
- Bring home any materials, books, notebooks or other materials you will need to complete your homework assignments.
- Ask teacher about any upcoming tests or projects (when it is due, what it covers).
- Put in my book bag any notices handed out to go home.

I need to remember to:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Weekly self-evaluation

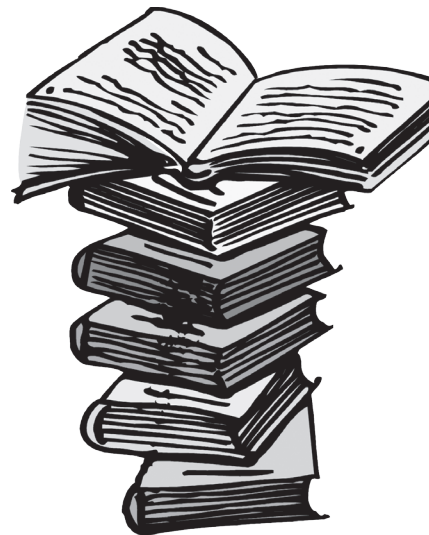
.....

Name _____

Check if accomplished

This week, I:

- Studied in a quiet place.
- Used a study schedule (to plan several study sessions for an upcoming test).
- Made or used a weekly schedule (to plan/keep track of long-term assignments).
- Eliminated distractions while studying (turned off the radio or television).
- Recorded homework assignments on a pad or on one page in my notebook.
- Completed all homework assignments.
- Organized my schoolwork (using folders, cleaning out my book bag/desk/locker).
- Studied earlier in the day.
- Added additional "study time" after homework was finished.
- Used "active" study techniques (reciting, making flashcards, taking notes, listing and making up test questions).



Complete the following statements.

Something new that worked well for me this week was:

I tried hard to:

I have begun to see positive results in:

I feel good about:

I have put more effort into:

This week, my goal is to:

Report card evaluation

.....

Name _____ Date _____

This past semester, my grade for this class was: _____

I earned it because:

- I turned in all my class assignments on time.
- I came to class prepared to learn.
- I participated actively and cooperatively during class discussions.
- I studied effectively for tests.
- I did not complete all assignments.
- I handed work in late.
- I frequently was unprepared.
- I did not contribute in a positive way to class discussions.
- I did not study effectively for tests.
- Other: _____

I would like to improve my grade(s) to: _____

In order to improve my grades, I will:

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

STUDY SKILLS HANDOUT

Study log

Week of

“Active” study techniques include:

- Making lists of related information
- Making a study review card
- Making and using a set of flashcards
- Writing questions I think will be on the test
- Drawing a map, sketch, chart or other diagrams
- Reciting important information by explaining or describing in my own words

Day	Subject/topic	Active techniques

STUDY SKILLS HANDOUT

Daily checklist



Week of

My daily checklist	M	T	W	TH	F
I carefully copied down my homework assignments.					
I brought home everything I needed to do my assignments.					
I started my homework at _____ time.					
I put 100% effort into completing my homework carefully and neatly.					
I placed my finished homework in my school bag.					

Week of

My daily checklist	M	T	W	TH	F
I carefully copied down my homework assignments.					
I brought home everything I needed to do my assignments.					
I started my homework at _____ time.					
I put 100% effort into completing my homework carefully and neatly.					
I placed my finished homework in my school bag.					

Get the most from reading assignments



Give a brief explanation of the reading:

Main idea/key concepts in the reading:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Important terms to be familiar with:

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Questions to consider:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Are you ready for the test?

.....

Topic of test _____

Five main ideas about the topic (important concepts, key ideas, causes, results, important events or people):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Important terms or vocabulary words related to the topic:

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

On a piece of paper, write at least 10 questions you think will be asked on the test.

Ask your teacher about the test and check off which of the following you should include in your review.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Class notes | <input type="checkbox"/> Past quizzes and tests | <input type="checkbox"/> Text readings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher review | <input type="checkbox"/> Handouts/worksheets | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

What is the format of the test?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> True - False | <input type="checkbox"/> Labeling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Essay | <input type="checkbox"/> Short answer (multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, matching) |

How many study sessions do you plan to have? _____

Which days do you plan to study? _____

What study strategies do you plan to use in preparation for the test?

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 3. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 4. _____ |

Test-taking tips

- Look over the entire test before you begin.
- Make note of anything you don't want to forget.
- Follow all directions.
- Answer all questions.
- Budget your time.
- Read questions carefully.
- Answer the easiest questions first.
- Ask questions if you are confused.
- Double check your work once you are done.

Active study strategies you can use

- Reciting important information
- Making study review cards
- Using study review cards
- Drawing maps, sketches or other diagrams that can be useful
- Making a list of related information
- Using a timeline



Improving your study skills

Below are some methods you can use to help improve your study skills. Try them out and find some that work best for you.

- **Write down important content on index cards.** For example: definitions and words, ideas, descriptions, math equations or computation, and things that have a particular sequence.
- **Outline material** that is covered in class or will be used in the next class.
- **Use the study guide** if one is provided. Use a highlighter to mark important items covered in class.
- **Rewrite the chapter summary** at the end of each chapter covered.
- **When studying for a test, alternate studying your notes from the front to back and then back to front.** Your brain tends to remember the first thing you read and forget the last.
- **Don't wait until the last minute.** Waiting until the last minute usually causes you to make errors. Budget your time so you don't have to panic.
- **Get organized.** Buy a calendar or planner to mark important assignment due dates and school activities. If you write it down and check it daily you won't forget!
- **Divide and conquer.** If you have a big workload, don't try to do it all at once, divide it into smaller assignments.

SECTION 8

How to work with your school counselor

Goal

To help students feel comfortable with the guidance counselor and to know what questions to ask.

Materials needed

- Your Guide to Preparing for College, 11th – 12th Grade
- Working with your counselor worksheet

Discuss

High school guidance counselors know what it takes to help you get ready for college. They can help you pick a college, remind you of testing requirements and deadlines and write letters of recommendation. It's important for you to get to know your counselor. Counselors are there to help you.

Together, you and the guidance counselor can find colleges that are a good match.

Questions to ask guidance counselors

- What basic academic courses should I take if I want to go to college?
- How many years of each academic subject does the high school require for graduation?
- What elective courses do you recommend for college-bound students?
- Can students who are considering college get special help or tutoring?
- What activities can I do after school and over the summer to help me get ready for college?
- How much homework is expected of students preparing for college?
- What do different colleges require in terms of high school grades and ACT or SAT scores?

- Are there any special scholarships or awards that I should know about now, so I can work toward them?

The guidance counselor may also be an expert on available financial aid, which we will talk about next.

Can anyone else here think of other questions you may want to ask a guidance counselor?

Be sure to take notes on the worksheet provided so you can remember what was said and talk it over with your parents at a later time.

Student activity

Add your own questions for the counselor on the worksheet provided. Remember to take it with you to the meeting.

WORKSHEET

Working with your counselor

Counselor's name: _____

Time, date, place of meeting: _____

Questions to ask guidance counselors

- What basic academic courses should I take if I want to go to college?
- How many years of each academic subject does the high school require for graduation?
- What elective courses do you recommend for college-bound students?
- Can students who are considering college get special help or tutoring?
- What activities can I do after school and over the summer to help me get ready for college?
- How much homework is expected of students preparing for college?
- What do different colleges require in terms of high school grades and ACT or SAT scores?
- Are there any special scholarships or awards I should know about now, so I can work toward them?

SECTION 9

Differences in financial aid

Goal

To make students aware of the different types of financial aid.

Materials needed

- Your Guide to Preparing for College, 11th – 12th Grade
- Funding Your Education brochure
- OSRHE Grant and Scholarship Program booklet

Web site

- www.okhighered.org/student-center/financial-aid
- www.OKcollegestart.org/Financial_Aid/Types_of_Aid/Types_of_Aid.aspx

Discuss

There are several types of financial aid, including scholarships, loans, grants and work study. The high school counselor also has information on the different types of financial aid available. Most colleges and universities have entire offices devoted to financial aid services. Contact the college or university you are interested in attending for more information on financial aid.

SCHOLARSHIPS

A gift of money (that does not have to be repaid) given to recognize student achievement, skills and talent. A scholarship may be based partly on financial need. Scholarships can come from private companies, charitable foundations, religious organizations or civic groups.

LOANS

The federal government has several different types of loan programs for college students and their parents. These loans must be paid back. They include:

- **Federal Direct Loans** made by the federal government directly to students and parents through colleges.
- **Federal Perkins Loan Program** funded by the federal government and awarded by the college or university. These loans have low-interest rates and are repayable over a long period of time.
- **Federal PLUS Program** provides low-interest federal loans to credit-approved parents of eligible undergraduate students. Repayment begins 60 days after loan funds are paid. These loans are available from banks, lending institutions and participating direct lending schools.
- **Federal Subsidized Stafford Loan Program** provides low-interest federal loans to eligible students through banks, lending institutions and participating direct loan schools. It is based on need, and the interest is paid by the federal government for qualifying students while they are enrolled at least half-time. Repayment begins after the student leaves school.
- **Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loan Program** provides low-interest federal loans which are not based on need, and the student must pay the interest while in school. Repayment begins after the student leaves school.

GRANTS

Financial aid that does not need to be paid back, usually awarded based on need, but can be awarded for good grades, special skills, talent, heritage or other criteria. An example is the **Federal Pell Grant**, which is based on need and may be used for tuition, room and board, books, or other educational costs, and requires no repayment.

WORK STUDY

A federal government-supported program coordinated through campus financial aid offices that provides jobs for students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay education expenses. The program encourages community service work and work related to each student's course of study.

SECTION 10

How to search and apply for financial aid

Goal

To help students understand how to search and apply for financial aid.

Materials needed

- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application
- Are You Looking for Money for College? brochure
- OSRHE Grant and Scholarship Programs booklet
- Search for Financial Aid handout
- SAMPLE scholarship applications

Web sites

- www.fafsa.ed.gov
- www.pin.ed.gov
- www.okhighered.org/student-center/financial-aid
- www.OKcollegestart.org/Financial_Aid/_default.aspx

Discuss

STATE GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

The state of Oklahoma has several scholarships programs to help you pay for college. More information can be found out about state scholarship programs in the **State Regents' Grant and Scholarships Program booklet** [hold up booklet].

FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID

The federal government has made it easy to apply for federal financial aid. By filling out one application – the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid or FAFSA** – you can apply for grants, loans or work study. This application must be filled out during your senior year and requires information from the parents' income tax forms.

You can apply by filling out the paper application, of which you have a copy [hold up application], or you can apply online in seven simple steps.

If you need help in filling out the application, ask your school counselor, contact the institution you are interested in attending.

Remember, you cannot get federal financial aid without filling out the FAFSA.

More information on financial aid is available in Your Official Guide to Preparing for College, 11th – 12th Grade. [Hold up and open to the **Financial Aid** section.]

Student activities

Searching for financial aid

Have students review the Search for Financial Aid handout and conduct scholarship searches using the methods below.

- **Log on to OKcollegestart.org** and conduct an online scholarship search that reflects your specific interests and abilities.
- **Check for scholarships sponsored by local organizations** such as your faith-based organization; your parent’s place of employment; and civic and community clubs such as the American Legion, YMCA, 4-H Club, Elks, Lions, Masons, Kiwanis, Jaycees, Chamber of Commerce, and the Girl or Boy Scouts.
- **Talk with the high school counselor about local and/or college and university sources of financial aid.**
- **Contact the admissions or financial aid offices at the schools you are interested in attending.** A listing of financial aid offices in Oklahoma colleges and universities can be found at www.okhighered.org under the Student Center or www.OKcollegestart.org.

Filling out scholarship applications

Many students graduating from high school do not know how to properly complete scholarship applications. This exercise will introduce students to SAMPLE scholarship applications and give them practice to complete ACTUAL scholarship applications with confidence.

Pass out copies of the SAMPLE scholarship applications and go over filling the application out with students (step-by-step).

The search for financial aid

- Call the financial aid office and check the Web site of the college or university you are interested in attending. Check possible scholarships or grants and find out what you should do to apply. **Put the deadline date on your calendar!**
- Visit www.OKcollegestart.org, www.okhighered.org or call the Student Information hotline at 1.800.858.1840 for scholarship information. There is no charge for this service. Some private companies charge a fee for this same service and information. Remember, it is available at no charge from the State Regents.
- Apply for local scholarships.
- Network. Tell everyone (including the high school counselor) that you are looking for scholarships. Check for scholarship opportunities with your parent's place of employment, any organization that you or your parents belong to, or your religious organization. Also, look for scholarship opportunities in your local newspaper.
- Use books and computer programs with scholarship information. If at all possible, utilize the Internet. Your high school guidance office and/or the library will have books that list numerous scholarship opportunities.
- **When searching for scholarships, beware of "scholarship scams."** **Only use services that are FREE. Do not give anyone your personal information.** If you are willing to do the work, you can find the same information yourself.
- Remember, applying for scholarships can be frustrating. You may not get a response when you write to an address taken from a scholarship book or computer search. If you do get a response, you may find that the deadline has passed or that there is no longer funding for the scholarship. Apply for more than one.
- **Buy a calendar or planner. Mark it with due dates and deadlines of applications for grants and scholarships.**
- Stay organized! Make copies of everything!
- Exhaust all avenues for scholarships and grants before applying for loans. Also, remember that many students who are not able to get scholarships often are able to get need-based financial aid.
- **Plan early so you don't panic!**

Don't make these mistakes!

- **Hurrying through the application process** – Take your time. Be sure your application forms are complete and accurate before submitting them.
- **Not being able to trace your mailings** – Be sure to send all financial aid applications and related correspondence by certified mail.
- **Underestimating or overestimating financial aid eligibility**
 - If possible, apply to a school that you would like to attend but would need financial aid. After talking with the financial aid office, you may be surprised to find you are able to attend a more expensive school. If a satisfactory financial aid package cannot be arranged, be sure that you have also applied to a school where you meet the admission requirements and where you can afford to go without or with little financial aid assistance.
- **Taking the first financial aid package offered** – Compare financial aid packages at similar schools and determine the best financial aid package for you. Don't take the first deal that you are offered if it does not meet your needs. Ask schools if they can "beat the other schools' deals." Be assertive and patient.
- **Selecting colleges on the basis of their "sticker" price**
 - Because of the way financial aid is packaged (expected family contribution stays constant, no matter how much a school costs), it may not cost you any more to attend an expensive college than a lower-priced school.
- **Taking out a personal loan or charging a credit card** – More attractive financial arrangements may be available from the federal government, commercial organizations or the schools themselves. Both the Perkins and the subsidized Stafford Loans charge no interest or principal repayment until after the student graduates, leaves school or attends on less than a half-time basis (home equity loans and credit cards may charge interest immediately).
- **Being too quick to accept a college's offer for aid** – Be careful never to miss a deadline, but don't respond before the deadline. Keep your options open. You may be able to use other offers to get a better deal at the school you want to attend.
- **Starting too late to look for aid** – It's never too early to start, but it can be too late. Ideally, by the time students are in the 10th- or 11th-grade, parents and students should have already begun the process.

High School _____ Year of Graduation _____

Grade Point Average _____
(Must be at least a 3.0. Please attach an official transcript.)

Career Goal _____

List Academic Awards and Honors
(Attach additional pages if necessary.)

List Organizations and Leadership Positions
(Attach additional pages if necessary.)

List Community Service Activities
(Attach additional pages if necessary.)

Family Income _____ (Adjusted gross income may not exceed \$50,000.)
* Parents, custodial parents or legal guardian must submit a copy of the official federal income tax return form filed for 2006 or 2007. This information will be kept confidential and will be destroyed upon verification by the program administrator.

Student Signature _____

Date _____

Application deadline is March 15, 2008. Mail completed application and appropriate documentation to:

The Frances Koop Parsons/SBC Pioneers Memorial Scholarship
Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
PO Box 108850
Oklahoma City, OK 73101
Phone 1.800.858.1840 or 225.9239 in the Oklahoma City area

SAMPLE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Ruby N. Courtney Writer's Scholarship

APPLICATION FOR 2007-08

The Ruby N. Courtney Writer's Scholarship offers financial assistance to students interested in writing and/or literature at the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University. Recipients of this scholarship award must be Oklahoma residents, be enrolled full-time, be in good academic standing, and have completed 30 credit hours. Scholarship recipients will receive a \$500 cash award.

Last Name	First Name	MI
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Mailing Address	City	State	Zip Code
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Phone	Major
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Number of Credit Hours Earned _____

Cumulative Grade Point Average _____

BRIEFLY DESCRIBE YOUR CAREER GOALS

(Attach additional pages if necessary.)

WRITING SAMPLE

Applicants must include a 2-3 page writing sample.

TRANSCRIPTS

Attach transcripts from any higher education institution you have attended.

Submit your completed application to the Ruby N. Courtney Writer's Scholarship Coordinator at Oklahoma State University or the University of Oklahoma. Application deadline is March 15, 2008.

SECTION 11

College costs and saving for college

Goal

To illustrate the current costs of a college education and help students understand the need and benefit of saving money for their college education.

Materials needed

- Oklahoma College Savings Plan brochure
- Estimated costs for students at Oklahoma public colleges and universities handout

Web sites

- www.ok4saving.org
- www.okhighered.org/student-center/college-cost/estimated.shtml
- www.OKcollegestart.org/Financial_Aid/College_Cost/How_Much_Does_College_Cost_.aspx

Note to leader(s)

We realize saving for college is a sacrifice for any family, but especially for low income. Please use your discretion as to whether this section is appropriate to discuss with children from your organization.

Discuss

WHEN TO START SAVING

The time to start saving is now, if you can. Talk to your parents/guardians about setting aside money for college.

If you and your family can save \$10 a week at 4 percent interest for 17 years, you'll save \$12,663.44. That's a good start! Another good way to save for college is by opening an account with the Oklahoma College Savings Plan. You can start

saving with as little as \$100. **[Hold up College Savings Plan brochure and ask if they would like to take one home to their parents.]**

Student activity

Hand out the college costs handout. Caution your students to not become overwhelmed or discouraged. Remind them of all the financial aid help that is available.

HANDOUT

2007-08 estimated costs for students at Oklahoma public colleges and universities

The estimated cost of attending Oklahoma colleges and universities is calculated below for full-time **resident** undergraduate students enrolled in 30 semester credit hours during the 2007-08 academic year. Costs for room and board and books and supplies are based on FY2008 estimated costs.

2007-08 ESTIMATED COSTS FOR RESIDENT STUDENTS AT OKLAHOMA PUBLIC COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Expenses	Research Universities	Regional Universities	Community Colleges	Technical Branches
Tuition	\$3,423.00	\$2,825.56	\$1,790.50	\$2,332.50
Mandatory fees	\$2,126.10	\$943.91	\$688.27	\$760.00
Academic service fees	\$670.47	\$120.91	\$65.72	\$166.65
Room and board*	\$6,126.50	\$4,189.20	\$4,051.05	\$5,020.00
Books and supplies	\$1,025.00	\$947.91	\$979.90	\$1,336.21
TOTAL	\$13,371.07	\$9,027.49	\$7,575.44	\$9,615.36

The estimated cost of attending Oklahoma colleges and universities is calculated below for full-time **non-resident** undergraduate students enrolled in 30 semester credit hours during the 2007-08 academic year. Costs for room and board and books and supplies are based on FY2008 estimated costs.

Expenses	Research Universities	Regional Universities	Community Colleges	Technical Branches
Tuition	\$12,692.25	\$8,180.92	\$5,276.03	\$7,012.50
Mandatory fees	\$2,126.10	\$943.91	\$688.27	\$760.00
Academic service fees	\$670.47	\$120.91	\$65.72	\$166.65
Room and board	\$6,126.50	\$4,189.20	\$4,051.05	\$5,020.00
Books and supplies	\$1,025.00	\$947.91	\$979.90	\$1,336.21
TOTAL	\$22,640.32	\$14,382.85	\$11,060.97	\$14,295.36

* Note: Room and board estimates are based on a student living in a traditional dormitory with a roommate and participating in a 20-meal-per-week plan. Many institutions offer a wide variety of room and board plans, and costs may differ from average reported above.

SECTION 12

Planning for college – A year-by-year guide

Goal

To present a calendar of steps to be taken from 5th grade to senior year to prepare for college.

Materials needed

- Your Official Guide to Preparing for College, 11th – 12th Grade
- Planning for College – A Year-By-Year Guide handout
- Senior Planning Checklist handout

Web site

- www.okhighered.org/student-center/jrhigh-highscl
- www.okcollegestart.org/Plan_for_College/High_School_Planner/High_School_Planner.aspx

Discuss

Certain steps must be taken from 5th grade on to help students prepare themselves to enter college. **[Distribute the Planning for College – A Year-By-Year Guide handout to your students.]**

[Go over the steps for 11th - 12th grade students.]

Remind students they can create an online planner at OKcollegestart.org.

Student activity

Pass out the Senior Planning Checklist handout. Have seniors post it where they can see it all year. Encourage your seniors to check off accomplishments as they are achieved. Go ahead and give 11th graders a copy so they can be ready for their senior year.

Planning for college – A year-by-year guide

5TH GRADE

- Develop good study habits and study hard.
- Start saving for college.
- Watch the GEAR UP programs, *The Plan (for college) parts I and II*.
- Read and work the GEAR UP Student Activity Booklets.

6TH GRADE

- Continue studying hard.
- Continue saving for college.
- Talk with someone who has gone to college.
- Watch the GEAR UP programs, *The Plan (for college) parts I and II*.
- Read and work the GEAR UP Student Activity Booklets.

7TH GRADE

- Keep studying hard.
- Continue saving money.
- Start thinking about different jobs that interest you.
- Watch the GEAR UP programs, *The Plan (for college) parts I and II*.
- Read and work the GEAR UP Student Activity Booklets.

8TH GRADE

- Keep studying.
- Keep saving money.
- Watch the *GEARing UP for College* DVD.
- Enroll in Oklahoma’s Promise if your parents earn \$50,000 or less per year. You can fill out an application online at www.okpromise.org.
- Take the Educational Planning and Assessment System’s (EPAS) EXPLORE test to evaluate your skills in English, math, reading and science reasoning and to help you begin the process of career and educational exploration.
- Decide which high school or Advanced Placement (AP) courses will better prepare you for college. AP courses allow you to take college-level courses while in high school. Once you complete the course, you must pass an AP exam to receive college credit.

9TH GRADE

- Study on.
- Save on.
- Sign up for Oklahoma’s Promise if you did not apply during the 8th grade. You can fill out an application online at www.okpromise.org. Find out about college entrance requirements.
- Start a plan for college by taking the courses that prepare you for college-level course work. Meet with your counselor if needed.
- Get involved in extracurricular activities that help develop teamwork, leadership and commitment.

10TH GRADE

- Study, study, study.
- Save, save, save.
- Last opportunity to enroll in Oklahoma’s Promise. The deadline is June 30. You can fill out an application online at www.okpromise.org.
- Take core courses required for college entry.
- Take the EPAS PLAN test to evaluate your skills in English, math, reading and science reasoning and to help you review your progress toward educational and career goals.
- Investigate your options of taking AP courses as well as participating in concurrent enrollment, which allows juniors and seniors to enroll in college courses if they meet certain requirements.
- Sign up for a practice exam to prepare for the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), which will determine your eligibility for a National Merit Scholarship.
- Make a list of reasons why you like different colleges and universities – compare degree programs, location, cost, etc.

11TH GRADE

- More studying.
- More saving.
- Take core courses required for college entry.
- Explore opportunities to earn college credit while in high school.
- Take the PSAT/NMSQT and the ACT or SAT exams.

- Research financial aid options and deadlines for applying.
- Attend a college day/night event in your area.
- Narrow your choice of colleges and universities you would like to attend and visit the campuses.

12TH GRADE

- Have we mentioned studying?
- Have we mentioned saving?
- Take core courses required for college entry.
- Explore opportunities to earn college credit while in high school.
- Take the ACT or SAT several times to improve your score. Colleges use these scores to make admissions, guidance and placement decisions.
- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible after Jan. 1. You can complete this form online at www.fafsa.com.
- Attend a college day/night event in your area.
- Research financial aid options and deadlines for applying.
- Decide which college you would like to attend and submit admission and financial aid applications.

Senior Planning Checklist

SEPTEMBER

- Narrow your college choices to three.
- Contact admissions offices to schedule campus visits.
- Begin your private scholarship search if you haven't already.
- Be mindful of application deadlines.
- Attend College Fairs. Check with your College Opportunity Liaison and school counselor for fair dates.
- Schedule ACT/SAT exam

OCTOBER

- Apply for admission to selected college if have not already.
- Begin compiling information for private scholarship applications.

NOVEMBER

- Request financial aid information (grant and scholarship) from the schools you have applied to. Make sure the information explains available aid, application procedures and deadline dates.
- Obtain a Free Application for Federal Financial Aid (FAFSA).

DECEMBER

- Submit applications for private and institutional (college) financial aid. Keep a copy of all completed scholarship applications and information just in case you need to reference it at a later date.

JANUARY

- Collect W-2 forms and begin completion of Federal tax returns used to complete financial aid applications. Mail as soon after January 1 as possible. Remember the FAFSA can be completed online as well.

Take the ACT/SAT again if you haven't already. Remember, by taking it again you may increase your score.

FEBRUARY AND MARCH

Check on college financial aid application deadlines as well as scholarship applications if possible.

Promptly respond to any requests for information from college admissions and financial aid offices.

AFTER APRIL 1, MAKE SURE YOU....

Respond to offers of admission in a timely manner.

Keep up-to-date on paperwork for admission, financial aid, housing, etc.

Make sure final transcripts are sent to the college you plan to attend. (May)

Call admissions office to verify that all information is complete.

Finalize your budget for the academic year and determine how you will fund your educational expenses (scholarship, financial aid or working).

SECTION 13

Goal setting

Goal

To help students learn how to set and achieve goals.

Materials

- How to Set Goals worksheet
- Paper and pen or pencil

Web site

- www.careerplanning.about.com/od/settinggoals/a/setting_goals.htm

Discuss

Goal-setting activities are a great way for you to learn. The learning process is continuous for everyone. Goal setting helps you focus on what is good and important to learn for leading a happy and productive life.

Learning how to live a goal-directed life will involve lessons in planning ahead, seeking to achieve, outlining thoughts in detail, self-discipline, character and motivation.

GOAL SETTING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

- A goal is “reasonable” when you can see the whole process needed to achieve it.
- You will experience progress when you set measurements of your goal. It is also a way to monitor your forward movement toward your goal and will keep you motivated.
- Goals can provide strong motivation and direction. When goals are carefully thought out, understandable, with reasonable objectives, you will maintain a sense of realism and the hope of attaining the goal.
- People with dreams are likely to attain them.
- A dream can only become a goal if you write it down and develop a plan of action.

- When a goal is exciting to you, you are energized. You are excited at the prospect of achieving it because it is meaningful to you.
- When you set impossible goals, you will become frustrated and discouraged. Keep your goals challenging, motivating and attainable!
- If your goals are your own, you will have the desire and commitment to achieve them.
- Achieving the goal is not as important as who you become in the process.
- Every step you take in attaining your goal is as important as the last.
- The difference between a wish and a goal is that a wish will probably never happen.

Student activities

Pass out the How to Set Goals worksheet. Have students complete the goal-setting activities.

How to set goals

Goals should be:

SPECIFIC

MEASURABLE

ATTAINABLE

REWARDING

TIMELY

- When goals are specific you can clearly see what you want to achieve. Be sure to write the goal down.
- You must have a way to measure your progress as you work toward your goal.
- If your goal is attainable, you see a realistic way and reasonable chance to achieve it.
- The reward of achieving a goal is exciting! Have clear reasons for wanting to achieve your goal. Write your goal down, and if possible, keep it with a picture that you have drawn or cut out of a magazine. When you become discouraged, look at your goal and picture. This should remind you of what you want to achieve.
- Your goal should have a time limit.

My goals

(Once this is complete, hang it up where you can see it everyday.)

1. **Define the goal.**

My goal is:

2. **Decide the steps needed to accomplish it.**

The actions I will take to achieve my goal are:

3. **What are the possible obstacles and how will you handle them?**

The obstacles to achieving my goal are:

4. **Give yourself a time limit.**

I will have accomplished my goal by:
