

STAYING READY: A GUIDE TO FINISHING SENIOR YEAR & TRANSITIONING TO COLLEGE

COMPARING AND UNDERSTANDING FINANCIAL AID OFFER LETTERS

In the spring, you should receive your financial aid offer letter(s). The letters mostly come from colleges listed on your FAFSA form, have been admitted to, and typically arrive via email. The financial aid packages are created for you and are based on the cost of attendance at your selected schools, so the amounts will vary. Questions? Call your college's financial aid office.

Unsure of what the financial aid letter is offering?

CHECK OUT:

- This [CFNC video](#)
- The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators [comparison worksheet](#).



CREATING AN EMAIL ADDRESS AND CHECKING FREQUENTLY

Students often use their high school email address on forms related to college admissions and financial aid. Remember that you'll lose access to this email after graduation. If you do not have one already, consider setting up a professional email account, such as **firstname_lastname@emailaccount.com**. Download the email app on your phone and check it frequently, as email is how colleges typically communicate. You could also be assigned an institutional email account at a college, once admitted. Check often, as information on financial aid, orientation, room and meal plans, will likely be communicated through that email account.

SECURING YOUR SPOT

Once you've decided on your college, you'll need to submit an enrollment deposit to hold your spot. If you are short on cash, talk with the Admissions Office about a possible fee waiver for this deposit. Not all students have funds readily available for these expenses, but students need to let the college know. This waiver also applies to orientation fees.

TAKING PLACEMENT TESTS

After securing your spot, but before orientation and enrolling in classes, you may be required to take online placement tests. These placement tests are typically for math and foreign language classes to test for proficiency and will determine what level of these subjects you can enroll in.

ATTENDING COLLEGE ORIENTATION

Orientations are usually held over the summer for incoming students. You'll receive information in an email, your student portal with the college, or in the mail. Orientation provides an opportunity to connect with various on-campus organizations, meet faculty and staff, mingle with other students, and more. It's a great time to get a feel for what being on campus is all about.

STAYING ORGANIZED

Get a planner, download a calendar app, put reminders in your gaming system, or leave yourself reminder sticky notes. Your method may vary, but keep yourself organized. Here are important deadlines to keep in mind:

- ✓ Scholarships
- ✓ Financial aid applications (e.g. FAFSA)
- ✓ College admission decisions
- ✓ Orientation registration
- ✓ Tuition deposit
- ✓ Housing deposit

