

Self-help is what you can do yourself to help pay for college:

- Get a job to pay some of your expenses.
- Borrow money to pay back later with future income.

Employment

If you work, it's important to find the right balance of work and academics.

- **On-campus Work.** Colleges typically offer "work-study" as a campus job that is part of a financial aid award. Work-study can benefit you by:
 - Making transportation easier – you're probably on campus anyway.
 - Better scheduling – your supervisor understands you are a student.
 - Offering experience in your field – you might get a job related to your academic major.
- **Off-campus Work.** Employers in a college area are usually eager to hire college students for part-time work. Pay may be higher than an on-campus job, but you also should consider:
 - What will transportation cost you in time and money?
 - Will your work schedule fit your class and study schedule?
 - Whether you have the time management skills to make it work.

Education Loans

The right balance is important if you borrow money, too. Think about what you need, not want, because this is money that you will have to pay back with interest.

- **Student Loans.** Even if a parent helps you apply for these loans, the loans are made to you – and you are responsible for paying them back.
 - Federal Loans for students include:
 - Federal Perkins Loan
 - Federal Stafford Loan (subsidized and unsubsidized)
 - Federal PLUS Loan for graduate or professional students
 - Private loans are also available, but you should compare them carefully – and always apply for federal loans first.
 - The Smart Borrower Calculator at CFNC.org can help you consider how much is reasonable to borrow based on the future salary you may receive.
- **Parent Loans.** Parents sometimes get an education loan that they are responsible for paying back to help their son or daughter.
 - Federal PLUS Loan for parents, available for total cost of attendance less financial aid the student will receive. Must have good credit.

To apply for financial aid, complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at www.FAFSA.gov.

For more free information on financial aid, contact your school counselor, your college financial aid office, or College Foundation of North Carolina at CFNC.org or 866-866-CFNC.