

Foster Care to Academic Success

Important Places on Campus

The library. Your campus library should be your home-away-from-home. In the library, you'll find:

- Thousands and thousands of books, at least one of which is relevant to the paper you're writing
- A huge data base of reference articles, scholarly magazines, academic papers and even movies and CDs
- A quiet place to study as well as private rooms if you need to spread out or do a group project
- Plenty of computers with internet hook-up
- Reference librarians. Just call them The Font of All Knowledge - they can help you find just about anything you need to know. And if you don't know what a font is besides the way your letters look on a computer, they can tell you or show you where to look it up.

College libraries offer tours and orientation sessions. They have printed pamphlets describing their services, and they have a page on your school's website. And reference librarians' whole job is to help you find the resources you need to do well in school. On a side note, if you're looking for a great part-time, on-campus job, check at the library.

The Career Center. Your school's career center is not just for graduating seniors - it's a place where you can get advice and help from your first day at school.

- **Career guidance.** The career center offers self assessment tools to help you discover how your personality traits, interests and abilities match up with different careers. They don't just leave you alone to figure out what the heck the results mean, either - career center staff can help you research careers, put you in touch with alumni who have jobs in those careers and even find internships in those career fields.
- **Resume writing and interview skills.** The career center offers workshops on how to write resumes and how to prepare for a job interview. If you ask, they'll edit and proofread your resume, and run through a practice interview with you.
- **Finding a job or an internship.** The career center posts part-time and full-time job openings, hosts job fairs where employers come to your school to recruit graduates, and lists internship possibilities. Make friends with the career center staff - if they know you well, they can tell you when a perfect job opening pops up!

The Tutoring Center. Every school has academic support resources. Sometimes, it's a central tutoring center with staff who can help in several subjects. Others schools have a Math Lab, an English Center and Language Labs. Check it out on your school's website. See what they have to offer then go visit them; find out about individual tutors or group study sessions and take advantage of these resources BEFORE you need them.

4. Your Departmental Office. When you choose a major you are assigned an academic advisor - or, if you are "undecided" (and that's FINE - trust us, most students either start out "undecided" or become undecided more than once during their college career!) a freshman advisor is selected for you.

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Your advisor is another font of knowledge, this time about your school's rules and regulations and the guidelines for your major. Some majors require a final paper; others, a cumulative exam at the end of four years. Some don't require either. Your advisor knows add/drop deadlines, how to file an incomplete, how to apply for study abroad and what order you need to take your classes in. Your advisor also knows about internships and job openings in your department, and about where to get on-campus academic or counseling help. In short, your advisor knows your school. Your advisor can also write a really good letter of recommendation down the road - IF she knows you well enough.

The Financial Aid Office. As an independent student, paying for school is your own responsibility. You've got ETV and maybe a scholarship or two, but there are other resources out there and your financial aid officer can help you access what you're eligible for. Make an appointment with your financial aid officer and find out how to pay for school with as few loans as possible.

What we've listed above are just a few main campus resources. When you attend orientation you should have learned about many more - the counseling center, the student center, the gymnasium, the pastoral center. Your school most likely offers peer mentoring, intramural sports, and a multitude of clubs and societies geared to every interest.

Take advantage of all your school's resources - it will make your time as a student more successful and more rewarding, and you will be the richer for it.