

Helpful Resources in College

If you want help or support during your college career, there are quite a few places you can contact. Keep in mind these are general names of offices that exist on college campuses, but individual schools may call them different things. We are often taught that it's not okay or socially acceptable to ask for help, which is totally not true, and especially in college. Schools employ people to support students in multiple ways and to help you thrive. Use them!

Offices you should get to know:

Academic Advising - at some schools you might have an advisor who is also a professor, or your advisor might be a full-time staff member whose job it is to advise students. Either way, seek out your advisor for things beyond class registration. Your advisor can connect you to professors, activities and student groups, and other services that might interest you throughout your time at college. If you don't get along with your advisor, don't be afraid to ask the director of the office to switch (after you've met your advisor and can't work things out, of course). Depending on the school this may also be the office that runs workshops on applying to graduate school, law school, medical school, scholarships, and fellowships for your next steps after college.

Tutoring Center - This can include writing, tutoring by subject (math, sciences, etc), study groups, reviews sessions, and more. If you want, you could even apply for a job as a tutor! Colleges tend to say that those who use the tutoring center the most are fellow tutors.

Career Center - Do not wait until you need to apply for a job to go to the Career Center. These offices have people who are specifically there to help you find internships, jobs, research opportunities, create resumes, plan for job interviews, network, host job fairs, etc. Many Career Centers say starting to come during junior year of college (the third year) is too late. Start early!

Your professors. Any and all of them, even if you are currently not in a class with a professor you want to get to know! You might be in a small class of 5-10 students or in a lecture hall of hundreds. If you have questions and you cannot ask during class, professors generally hold something called "office hours" during which students can drop by. These times are specifically to see students. If those times don't work for you, email the professor for an appointment. Your professors are a great connection to your academic endeavors but also cool people to know.

Health and Wellness Services - Whether you're not feeling well and need to see a nurse, need to manage prescription medication, or want to speak with a counselor, the health and wellness center is an important resource for your physical and mental wellbeing. Some will even offer meditation classes or other ways to de-stress.

Residential Life - if you're living on a college campus, you will likely have a network of student Residential Advisors (RAs) and staff members who live in the residence halls with you. Sometimes even professors live in the dorms with their families and invite you to events.

Student Activities - if you're looking to join a club or intramural sport, this is the office that will have the information. Many schools will have some sort of "activities fair" in the beginning of the year to advertise

opportunities to join clubs. In your first year, don't oversubscribe as you settle into a new environment. Even if you didn't sign up in the beginning of the year, many clubs and activities will let you join later on.

Disability Services - provides access to academics for students with learning disabilities. As an incoming student or whenever you become eligible for accommodations you need to submit or update your paperwork to receive support.

This is not an exhaustive list of offices or supports. Depending on the size and resources of your school, there might be other offices or organizations that you can reach out to like a Center for First Generation students (first in your family to attend college, or first in your family to attend college in the US), affinity and diversity groups for students of color or LGBTQ+ students, your coaches and the athletic department if you play a sport, religious and spiritual life, Greek organizations (fraternities and sororities), Study Abroad/Global Programs, campus safety, Title IX, etc. You may also meet your most supportive allies in the dining hall or on the custodial team. Look for an office that supports families of currently enrolled students- some schools have a family weekend or other family events throughout the year. Be familiar with your school's website or internal portal!

Additional tips:

Check your college email. Even if this is not your preferred method of communication, colleges by and large get most of their information out using email.

If you do not have Facebook, consider creating an account once at school. Many student groups and activities use Facebook as a way to communicate and promote events, many of which offer free food. This may be an additional way for you to find information on campus in addition to email.

Costs that are not normally covered by tuition and fees include textbooks, transportation, and personal expenses (like clothes, coffee, eating out, etc.). Schools may offer tips on how to save money or ask other students who have gone through their first year. There are many options available for securing textbooks: buying new, buying used and renting. Use Bookfinder.com and CampusBooks.com to compare prices.

[Food insecurity](#) affects almost 1 in 3 college students. If you need assistance to access food or housing, reach out to a trusted individual at your school or look for a [food bank](#) near you.

Fellow students and classmates and also be your biggest supporters. For example, the [Being Not Rich at UM](#) Guide. This is specific to the University of Michigan, but some other schools have started them and they are listed. This is a google doc that has tips from other students who want to support each other while in college as a low-income and/or first generation student.

You'll soon be sitting in your first college class, so take the time to read up on some suggestions on time management, testing, and study skills: [Study tips in college \(from MIT\)](#).

College brings a ton of new vocabulary, so keep this glossary handy while you navigate registration, housing, and student services: [Get familiar with college lingo](#).

Get ready for college with this simple, low-cost app for building an effective study plan and developing strong study skills: [The Shovel Study Planner](#).