

Workshop: Comparing your financial aid awards and considering appeals

Congratulations on your college acceptances! You're now receiving financial aid packages with varying award amounts, different terms and unique costs.

- How do you fairly compare different offers and understand the true cost for each school?
- If an offer doesn't meet your financial need, when and how should you consider an appeal for more aid?

This workshop for seniors and their families provides ways to standardize your financial aid packages, compare free money with loans and work-study, and calculate your true cost of attendance. You'll also learn under what circumstances to appeal your financial aid offer and how to build the best case to successfully increase your award.

Topics Covered

Breaking down your financial aid package

- Cost of Attendance - owning your college budget
- Free money vs. financing: A framework to interpret financial aid
- Calculating true cost and your net price

Understanding the future costs of borrowing

Building a 4-year estimate for your college investment

- Modeling your net price for four years
- Comparing colleges based on your current versus future costs

When to consider appeals

- Appeal vs negotiation: Understanding the difference
- Three primary cases for an appeal

Building a successful case for increasing financial aid

- Communicating with the financial aid office
- Documenting changes in your financial situation
- Using college financial aid data to support your case

Senior



Resources

- ⇒ **Awards comparison workbook:** interactive worksheets to standardize financial aid awards and fairly compare offers
- ⇒ **4-year college cost projector:** interactive worksheets providing projections for 4-year investment by college
- ⇒ **Loan payback calculator:** interactive worksheets to calculate the cost of borrowing based on loans in financial aid awards