

MAINE WORD ABOUT COLLEGE

The Maine Word About College

Questions about college from young Maine students, answered by old Maine students.

Today's writers

Leslee Kiley, graduated from Binghamton University.

Hannah Schleifer, current student at Bowdoin College.

Elise Morano, current student at Bowdoin College.

Offered by Maine College Circle and the Mitchell Institute to great young students throughout Maine.

Q. Why is it so important to go to college?

A. The reason that college is so important is because you need to spend as much of your life learning as you possibly can. It's probably hard to imagine what I mean by that because right now you're learning so much in school already. So when you become 17 or 18, why should you continue learning? Won't you have learned enough already? Why should more school matter?

I believe college is where you learn for life, no matter what kind of life you choose. You may want to be a professional teacher or lawyer or doctor, and college is what gets you ready for that life. Or, you may want to be a carpenter, a mechanic, a fireman or a computer scientist. Maybe you'll want to work in business, whether it's for a large company or one that you start. Whatever kind of life you choose, college is so important for getting you ready for that life, not just because it teaches you about the particular things you need to learn for your work, but because college teaches you how to spend your life learning. The world keeps changing. It's hard to imagine, but when you were born the very first iPhone came out. And think how much the world has changed since then. Think how many apps have been created, how many new games and toys and videos have been created in the past 10 years. The world isn't going to slow down. And you are going to live a very long time. So imagine how much the world will change over the next 40 or 60 or 70 years. College is a way to help you keep learning throughout your life and be prepared for all the exciting new things that will come your way as you get older.

— Leslee Kiley



Q. Do you get breaks in college?

A. Yes! I am actually on winter break right now! Colleges usually give students a Thanksgiving, winter, spring, and summer break. Breaks tend to be longer than they are in high school, so you get lots of time to relax after working so hard all semester.

Q. Do you get to pick your roommate?

A. Some colleges let you pick your roommate, but others assign you to a roommate. At Bowdoin, all incoming freshman fill out a survey, and their answers to the survey are used to help match them with one or more roommates (I have four).

Q. What time do classes start?

A. Classes may start at different times depending on your schedule. The earliest time is usually 8 a.m. but I had days this past semester where my first class wasn't until 11:30!



— Elise Morano

Q. If I have a family and I am in college, can I switch to a commuter college?

A. If circumstances in your life make it hard to live away from home, then it is totally reasonable to transfer to a commuter college. Most state universities and all community colleges have commuter options, so you will be able to find one that is close to your house. Just make sure that the school you choose offers the courses that you need to complete your degree. The most important thing about college is learning, so as long as you can do that at your college, whatever kind of college it may be, then you will be set up for success. Commuter college is a great way to continue your education if you cannot be away from home for college.

Q. How do you apply for scholarships?

A. Most colleges and universities offer a variety of grants and scholarships that you can apply for when you are applying for college. There are also a few outside resources that connect students to scholarship and grant opportunities. Some scholarships are merit-based, meaning that you earn them by doing certain things. In order to get a merit scholarship, you may have to write an essay, attend an interview, or submit a letter of recommendation from a teacher or coach. Other scholarships are purely based on your academic performance in high school. In addition to scholarships, all colleges offer federal aid or work study to help pay for tuition.



— Hannah Schleifer