

CHAPTER 8 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

“To accomplish great things, we must not only act but also dream; not only plan but also believe.” ~ Anatole France

The pursuit and completion of an academic course of study such as a high school diploma, General Educational Development diploma or post-secondary degree are important tools in the process of successfully reentering society and today’s workforce. The information within this section was compiled for its ability to help individuals achieve their academic goals.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Community colleges, four-year colleges, and universities provide individuals with the opportunity to pursue an academic course of study. Most academic programs don’t prepare students for a specific job or profession. Instead, they are designed to provide a wide variety of skills to assist with succeeding in whichever career is chosen after graduation.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES

A community college is a public education institution that offers a wide variety of services which may include Literacy/Adult Basic Education programs, vocational programs, and two-year degree programs. Community colleges do not offer four-year or advanced degrees although some universities use community college campuses as sites to offer their advanced courses.

To locate a community college in your area visit the American Association of Community Colleges’ website at <http://www.aacc.nche.edu> and select the heading entitled “Find Your Community College.”

FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

Four-year colleges and universities include both public and private institutions where individuals can earn a Bachelor of Science or a Bachelor of Arts degree upon completion. To earn a Bachelor’s degree, individuals can begin their coursework at a community college and transfer to a four-year college or university, or apply directly once they earn a General Educational Development of high school diploma.

To locate a four-year college or university in your area, go to <http://www.collegeboard.com> and select the heading entitled “College Boards Free College Search Tool.”

ADVANCED DEGREES

Some professions require an advanced degree (Master’s degree or Ph.D.). Universities provide graduate programs for individuals interested in furthering their education beyond a Bachelor’s degree or in pursuing a career in a field that requires an advanced degree. The Princeton Review provides information on graduate programs across the United States through their website at, <http://www.princetonreview.com>.

Additional Resources:

U.S. Department of Education, *Back to School: A Guide to Continuing Your Education After Prison*
<http://www.edpubs.gov/document/ed005088p.pdf?ck=287>

U.S. Department of Education, *Taking Charge of Your Future: Get the Education and Training You Need*
<http://www.edpubs.gov/document/ed005354p.pdf?ck=450>

HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY PROGRAM

GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

<http://www.gedtestingservice.com>

The General Educational Development (GED) testing program was developed to give U.S. and Canadian citizens who have not graduated from high school the opportunity to demonstrate the level of achievement normally acquired through the completion of a traditional U.S./Canadian high school course of study. The five GED comprehensive examinations cover writing, social studies, science, interpreting literature and arts, and math.



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Emphasis is on intellectual ability such as evaluating, analyzing, drawing conclusions and the ability to understand and apply information and concepts. The tests are administered in all 50 states, U.S. territories, and the 10 Canadian provinces.

For additional information about General Educational Development, call 800.626.9433 to find the nearest official GED Testing Center or locate your jurisdiction's GED testing administrator, please visit <http://www.gedtesting.com/testers/ged-testing-administrator>.

National Contact:

American Council on Education
General Educational Development Testing Service
One DuPont Circle, NW, Suite 250
Washington, DC 20036
P: 800.626.9433

State Contact:

Please refer to [Appendix 8-A: State GED Administrative Offices](#).

REHABILITATIVE EDUCATION & TRAINING

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

<http://www.jan.wva.edu/sbses/vocrehab.htm>

Vocational Rehabilitation, a state-supported division of services, assists individuals with disabilities who are pursuing meaningful careers. Vocational Rehabilitation assists those individuals to secure gainful employment commensurate with their abilities and capabilities through local job searches and awareness of self-employment and telecommuting opportunities. In addition, to Vocational Rehabilitation, some states have separate agencies serving individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

National Contact:

U.S. Department of Education
Rehabilitation Services Administration
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202
P: 202.245.7468

State Contact:

Please refer to [Appendix 8-B: State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies](#).

KNOWLEDGE-BASED COLLEGE CREDIT OPTIONS

COLLEGE-LEVEL EXAMINATION PROGRAM

<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/clep/about.htm>

The College-Level Examination Program serves high school students, enrolled college students, international students, and adults returning to college. It is designed to allow students to get college credit for knowledge learned outside the classroom. The heart of CLEP is a series of computer-based examinations rewarding students for what they know, whether they've learned it in school, on the job, through reading, by observation, or in the course of their life experiences.

There are five general examinations and 30 subject-specific examinations. The general examinations are in English composition, humanities, college mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences. The tests are at the level of courses taken in the first 2 years of college. Subject examinations include composition and literature, foreign languages, history and social science, mathematics and science, and business. The general and subject examinations are multiple choice questions limited to 90 minutes. The subject examinations, requiring a higher degree of specialized knowledge and training, demonstrate the specific knowledge and skills a student may have gained through job experience, outside course work, or independent reading.

The College-Level Examination Program is the most widely accepted credit-by-examination program in the United States. Nearly two-thirds of accredited institutions of higher education give credit for satisfactory scores

on the examinations. Colleges have found that students who complete such exams are motivated, intellectually curious, and independent learners – qualities colleges look for and value in their students.

National Contact:

College Level Examination Board
45 Columbus Avenue
New York, NY 10023
P: 212.713.8000

DEFENSE ACTIVITY FOR NON-TRADITIONAL EDUCATION SUPPORT (DANTES) SUBJECT STANDARDIZED TESTS

<http://www.GetCollegeCredit.com>

There are 38 DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSSTs). Fact Sheets/Study Guides containing descriptions of the content of each exam, sample questions, and lists of approved texts are available at no charge from the below address.

National Contact:

Prometric: Attn DSST Program
1260 Energy Lane
St. Paul, MN 55108
P: 877.471.9860

FEDERAL & STATE STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

FEDERAL STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

<http://www.studentaid.ed.gov>

Federal student aid comes from the federal government – specifically, the U.S. Department of Education. Federal student aid is financial assistance for eligible students to pay for education expenses at an eligible postsecondary school (e.g. college, vocational school, and graduate school).

Federal student aid covers such expenses as tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, and transportation. Aid can also be used to help pay for a computer and for dependent care.

There are three main categories of federal student aid:

Grants – Unlike loans, grants are not repaid unless, for example, an individual is awarded funds incorrectly or they withdraw from school prior to the planned end of term or if they do not meet the terms of a stated agreement. Almost all federal grants are awarded to students with financial need.

Work Study – The federal Work-Study Program provides jobs for students demonstrating financial need and emphasizes employment in civic education and work related to a specific course of study, whenever possible.

Loans – Student loans, unlike grants and work-study, are borrowed money that must be repaid, with interest, just like an auto loan or home mortgage. Individuals cannot have these loans canceled because they didn't like the education they received, didn't get a job in their specified field of study, or they're having financial difficulty.

What are the eligibility requirements for federal student aid?

To receive aid from the federal student aid program, you must meet certain criteria. The most basic eligibility requirements are that individuals must:

- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen;
- Have earned a GED or high school diploma or passed an approved ability-to-benefit test;
- Have registered with Selective Service;
- Have no defaulted student loans;
- Be enrolled in a degree or certificate program that participates in the federal student aid program;
- Be making satisfactory academic progress.

Am I eligible for federal student aid while incarcerated? (1)

Individuals who are currently incarcerated have limited eligibility for federal student aid. An individual is considered to be incarcerated if he or she is serving a criminal sentence in a penitentiary, prison, jail, reformatory, work farm, or similar correctional institution, whether it is operated by the government or by a contractor. An individual is not considered to be incarcerated if he or she is in a halfway house or on home detention or is sentenced to serve only on weekends.

Those individuals incarcerated in institutions other than federal or state institutions are eligible for Federal Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, and Federal Work-Study but not for federal student loans.

It is important to note that, upon an individual's release, most eligibility limitations will be removed. In addition, an individual may be eligible to apply for aid in anticipation of being released so that their aid is processed in time for them to start school.

I was convicted of drug possession and/or sale – am I eligible for federal student aid?

A federal or state drug conviction can disqualify an individual for federal student aid funds. Convictions only count if they were for an offense that occurred during a period of enrollment for which the individual was receiving Title IV funds. Also, a conviction that was reversed, or removed from the individual's record does not count, nor does one received while a juvenile, unless the individual was tried as an adult.

The chart below illustrates the period of ineligibility for federal student aid funds, depending on whether the conviction was for sale or possession and whether the student had previous offenses. (A conviction for sale of drugs includes convictions for conspiring to sell drugs.)

	Possession Of Illegal Drugs	Sale Of Illegal Drugs
1 st Offense	1 Year From Date Of Conviction	2 Years From Date Of Conviction
2 nd Offense	2 Years From Date Of Conviction	Indefinite Period
3 ⁺ Offenses	Indefinite Period	

If an individual was convicted of both possession and selling illegal drugs, and the periods of ineligibility are different, the individual will be ineligible for the longer period. (2)

Individuals regain eligibility the day after the period of ineligibility ends or when they successfully complete a qualified drug rehabilitation program or, effective beginning with the 2010-2011 award year, passes two unannounced drug tests given by such a program. Further drug convictions will make an individual ineligible again.

Individuals denied eligibility for an indefinite period can regain it after successfully completing a rehabilitation program, passing two unannounced drug tests from such a program, or if a conviction is reversed, set aside, or removed from the individual's record so that fewer than two convictions for sale or three convictions for possession remain on the record. In such cases, the nature and dates of the remaining convictions will determine when the individual regains eligibility.

For additional information regarding eligibility for federal student aid or to request printed information such as brochures, fact sheets or booklets about federal student aid and related topics, contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center for assistance.

1. Incarcerated Students: HEA Sec. 401(b)(8) and 484(b)(5) 34 CFR 600.2 and 668.32(c)(2)

2. Drug Convictions: HEA Sec. 848(r) 34 CFR 668.40

National Contact:

Federal Student Aid Information Center
 P.O. Box 84
 Washington, DC 20044
 P: 800.433.3243

Additional Resources:

U.S. Department of Education, *Funding Your Education: The Guide to Federal Student Aid*
<http://publications.usa.gov/USAPubs.php?PubID=2274>

U.S. Department of Education, *Federal Student Aid Grant Programs Fact Sheet*
<http://publications.usa.gov/USAPubs.php?PubID=224>

U.S. Department of Education, *Federal Student Aid Loan Programs Fact Sheet*
<http://publications.usa.gov/USAPubs.php?PubID=225>

U.S. Department of Education, *Federal Student Aid for Adult Students*
<http://publications.usa.gov/USAPubs.php?PubID=930>

U.S. Department of Education, *Federal Student Aid for Incarcerated Individuals*
<http://www.studentaid.ed.gov/students/attachments/siteresources/IncarcFAQ.pdf>

STATE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Many state and local governments have student financial assistance options (scholarships, loans, and grants) that may be applied to reduce the overall financial burden to students within a specific community or geographic area. In addition, some institutions of higher education have direct financial assistance options designed to assist students and families. A list of state higher education agencies is located in [Appendix 8-C: State Higher Education Agencies](#).

SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM

<http://www.sss.gov>

Selective Service is the process by which the U.S. government administers involuntary military enrollment. Registration with the Selective Service is required for all males between the ages of 10 and 25.

Registration with the Selective Service is required to receive certain federal or state benefits, including federal student aid.

To register with Selective Service or verify prior registration, contact Selective Service directly to request a "Registration Form" or "Status Information Letter".

National Contact:

Selective Service System, Registration Information Office
 P.O. Box 94638
 Palatino, IL 60094
 P: 847.688.6888

SCHOLARSHIP, INTERNSHIP & FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

There are many financial aid programs offered by charitable foundations and major corporations. Most of them provide scholarships, internships and fellowships to individuals based on their ethnic and social backgrounds among other criteria. Most organizations focus on applicants who show academic promise and the greatest level of need. The following list is a brief sampling of the many organizations available. For more detailed information visit your local public library or <http://www.collegeboard.org>.

AMERICAN INDIAN COLLEGE FUND

<http://www.collegefund.org>

The American Indian College Fund awards approximately 5,000 scholarships annually to students at tribal colleges and universities. The American Indian College Fund requires that each applicant demonstrate financial need and high academic achievement. In addition, applicants must be Alaskan Native or American Indian.

National Contact:

American Indian College Fund
8333 Greenwood Boulevard
Denver, CO 80221
P: 303.426.8900

ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP FUND

<http://www.apiasf.org>

The Asian and Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund has awarded more than \$60 million to deserving students since 2003.

National Contact:

Asian and Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund
2025 M Street, NW, Suite 610
Washington, DC 20036
P: 202.986.6892

GATES MILLENNIUM SCHOLARS PROGRAM

<http://www.gmsp.org>

Gates Millennium Scholars provides scholarships to African-American, American Indian/Alaskan-Native, Asia Pacific Islander-American, and Hispanic-American U.S. citizens and permanent residents enrolled full-time in a degree-granting college. Applicants must demonstrate financial need, high academic achievement, leadership and service orientation.

National Contact:

Gates Millennium Scholars
P.O. Box 10500
Fairfax, VA 22031
P: 877.690.4677

HISPANIC SCHOLARSHIP FUND

<http://www.hsf.net>

The Hispanic Scholarship Fund provides scholarships to Mexican American, Hispanic American, and Puerto Rican U.S. citizens and permanent residents enrolled full-time in a degree-granting college. In addition, applicants must demonstrate financial need and high academic achievement.

National Contact:

Hispanic Scholarship Fund
1411 West 190th Street, Suite 325
Gardena, CA 90248
P: 877.473.4636

UNITED NEGRO COLLEGE FUND

<http://www.uncf.org>

The United Negro College Fund awards 10,000 African American students from low and moderate income families each year with scholarships and internship programs so they can afford college tuition, books, and room and board. Applicants must demonstrate high academic achievement.

National Contact:

United Negro College Fund
1805 7th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
P: 800.331.2244

SPECIAL EDUCATION RESOURCES

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION | OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION & REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/osep/index>

The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services of the U.S. Department of Education provides support to parents and individuals, school districts and states in three main areas: 1) special education, 2) vocational rehabilitation, and 3) research. For assistance with locating and obtaining a referral to special education or vocational rehabilitation service providers within a specific geographic area, contact the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services for assistance or visit your local American Job Center.

National Contact:

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Special Education & Rehabilitative Services
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202
P: 202.245.7468

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PRIVATE SPECIAL EDUCATION CENTERS

<http://www.napsec.org>

The National Association of Private Special Education Centers is a nonprofit association whose mission is to represent private special education programs and affiliated state associations and to ensure access for individuals to appropriate private special education programs and services.

National Contact:

National Association of Private Special Education Centers
1522 K Street, NW, Suite 1032
Washington, DC 20005
P: 202.434.8225

REGIONAL, STATE & SPECIALIZED ACCREDITATION AGENCIES

The accreditation status of a college, university or other educational program provides an indication of its general quality and reputation. The following accrediting bodies are recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. Individuals who are interested in participating in an educational course of study should first ascertain the accreditation status of the institution applying to by contacting one of the following agencies.

MIDDLE STATES COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION | REGIONAL

<http://www.msche.org>

The Middle States Commission of Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools is the regional accrediting body for Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

National Contact:

Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
Middle States Commission on Higher Education
3624 Market Street, 2nd Floor Annex
Philadelphia, PA 19104
P: 267.284.5000

NEW YORK STATE BOARD OF REGENTS | STATE

<http://www.regents.nysed.gov>

The New York State Board of Regents of the New York State Education Department is the general accrediting body for the State of New York. This agency oversees registration of degree-granting programs or curricula offered by institutions of higher education and of credit-bearing certificate and diploma programs offered by degree-granting institutions of higher education.

National Contact:

New York State Board of Regents
New York State Education Department
89 Washington Avenue, Room 110EB
Albany, NY 12234
P: 518.474.5889

COMMISSION ON INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION | REGIONAL

<http://www.neasc.org>

The Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges is the regional accrediting body for Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

National Contact:

New England Association of Schools and Colleges
Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
209 Burlington Road
Bedford, MA 01730
P: 781.271.0022

COMMISSION ON TECHNICAL AND CAREER INSTITUTIONS | REGIONAL

<http://www.ctci.neasc.org>

The Commission on Technical and Career Institutions of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges is the regional accrediting body for Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. This agency covers colleges and institutions that offer programs leading to an associate degree but do not offer programs leading to a degree in liberal arts or general studies.

National Contact:

New England Association of Schools and Colleges
Commission on Technical and Career Institutions
209 Burlington Road, Suite 201
Bedford, MA 01730
P: 781.541.5416

THE HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION | REGIONAL

<http://www.ncahigherlearningcommission.org>

The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools is the regional accrediting body for Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

National Contact:

North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
The Higher Learning Commission
30 North LaSalle Street, Suite 2400
Chicago, IL 60602
P: 312.263.0456

NORTHWEST COMMISSION ON COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES | REGIONAL

<http://www.nwccu.org>

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities is the regional accrediting body for Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington.

National Contact:

Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
8060 165th Avenue, NE, Suite 100
Redmond, WA 98052
P: 425.558.4224

SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS | REGIONAL

<http://www.sacscoc.org>

The Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools is the regional accrediting body for Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

National Contact:

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Commission on Colleges
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, GA 30033
P: 404.679.4500

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES | REGIONAL

<http://www.accjc.org>

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges is the regional accrediting body for California, Hawaii, the U.S. Territories of Guam and American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

National Contact:

Western Association of Schools and Colleges
Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
10 Commercial Boulevard, Suite 204
Novato, CA 94949
P: 415.506.0234

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR SENIOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES | REGIONAL

<http://www.wascweb.org>

The Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges is the regional accrediting body for California, Hawaii, the U.S. Territories of Guam and American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

National Contact:

Western Association of Schools and Colleges
Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities
985 Atlantic Avenue, Suite 100
Alameda, CA 94501
P: 510.748.9001

DISTANCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING COUNCIL | SPECIALIZED

<http://www.detc.org>

The Distance Education and Training Council is a voluntary, non-governmental, educational organization that accredits distance education institutions.

National Contact:

Distance Education and Training Council
1601 18th Street, NW, Suite 2
Washington, DC 20009
P: 202.234.5100

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OER)

Open educational resources (OER) are educational materials available for study at no cost on the web. Some are available for anyone to access any time; others, such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), require sign-up and are only available during certain times. Please note that some MOOC providers offer certificates of completion or other products or services for a fee; however, the MOOCs themselves are by definition free of charge and include access to the main body of learning materials.

CHOOSING OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Most sites for university-based OER can be searched through www.ocwconsortium.org and/or www.oercommons.org.

Sites that specialize in web courses designed by college professors under contract with the website sponsor, rather than in web versions of existing college courses, include:

- <http://www.saylor.org>
- <http://www.education-portal.com>
- <http://www.opencourselibrary.com>