Applying for financial aid—more than FAFSA

With the college admissions season upon us, it’s a great time to start thinking about the financial aid application. You are likely familiar with the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) but some colleges also require students to complete the College Board College Scholarship Service Profile (CSS Profile). Cornell University is one of 400 private institutions that require the CSS Profile, along with the FAFSA, as part of the financial aid application.

The CSS Profile and FAFSA collect similar information, including household size, family income and asset information. The CSS Profile provides a more accurate picture of a family’s ability to pay for college as it provides additional consideration for special circumstances. While the FAFSA determines eligibility for federal aid sources such as federal grants, federal loans and work study the CSS Profile determines eligibility for institutional grant funds (non-federal aid sources). Both applications are crucial components in building a financial aid award tailored to each student’s financial need.

The CSS Profile requires a fee of $25 for the first college and $16 for each additional college. The CSS Profile provides fee waivers automatically to do-mestic (U.S. Citizens or eligible non-citizens) first-time students from families with low income and assets. These automatic fee waivers allow students to apply to up to 8 colleges. Additionally, Cornell offers a limited number of fee waivers. If you are working with a Cornell applicant who does not qualify for an automatic fee waiver and is financially not able to pay the fee, please contact Lindsay Martin at LAM292@cornell.edu.

For more information about financial aid at Cornell University, please visit: admissions.cornell.edu/costs-aid

But I sent my materials...where are they!?

Technology has come a long way in admissions. Students now have the opportunity to monitor their own application materials through various means, and for Cornell, we call it Application Status. While this may seem like an instantaneous process, students need to be reminded that materials submitted through Naviance and the Common Application or via electronic submissions still require an actual person to move the item to their personal account. Real people process electronic materials in additions to the paper items we receive.

Regular decision applicants have probably seen the recent news item on the admissions website:

First-year regular decision applicants will receive an email confirmation from Cornell University within 7–10 days after submission of the application. This email will contain your applicantID. We encourage you to activate your ApplicantID and check your application status online. School Report and Teacher Evaluation Forms are still being processed and you can expect an additional 7–10 day delay before your application status is updated with those items. At this time, we are unable to respond to phone calls or email inquiries about application materials. In mid-February, when our processing nears completion, we will notify you if we are missing materials from your application and provide you with an opportunity to complete your application. In the meantime, please do not send duplicate copies of your application materials.

We anticipate receiving tens of thousands of electronic application items and many bins of mail. Every item has to be electronically or manually “opened” and connected to the application file for the correct student. It can take up to two weeks from the time you send or submit an item for you to see it reflected in your application status.

At this busy time of year, we ask that you please not call or email to see if we have received an item. Your application status is as up-to-date as our computer system. Since we have so many materials in line to be processed (that’s when we enter information into our computer system and match items with applications), we won’t be able to share any additional information if you call or email. Sending duplicate copies is also not advisable. More materials will just take our staff more time to complete your application.

Once we have matched the documents we have received with the proper application, we will absolutely notify you if we are missing required materials. At that time (which is usually in mid-February), you will be given a chance to complete your application. Until then, submit all of your materials, check your application status, and enjoy the start of 2015!

Remind students to check their account and that our deadline to send supplemental materials is February 15th.
Cornell celebrates its birthday: 150 years!

On April 27, 2015, Cornell turns 150 years old! The celebration continues all year long. From Ithaca to London - alumni, friends, students, families, faculty, and staff will celebrate! See where we will be: http://150.cornell.edu/about

January 17 - Boston
February 14 – West Palm Beach
March 6 – San Francisco
March 8 – Los Angeles
April 24-27 – Charter Day Weekend in Ithaca, NY
May 14 - London

"Cornell’s charter defined our land-grant mission and set the stage for generations of Cornellians to help, to solve, and to transform the world." (from 150.cornell.edu/about)

Cornell’s founders wanted to establish a university where any person could find study in any field that inspired them. A university where educational opportunities were available regardless of race, sex, financial status or religion. A university that embodied the spirit of freedom.

Today, we are proud of the traditions that we have adapted. Each incoming class is more diverse than the last, and each year our recruitment team strives to reach out to more and more students of diverse backgrounds. Our recruitment efforts also expand every year as we visit different cities and high schools, meet new counselors, and most importantly, meet new, enthusiastic, future Cornellians!

Take a walk back in time and see some of the fun and interesting facts of how and why Cornell is the university it is today:

10-7-1868: Cornell University opens with an entering class of 412 students
9-15-1870: First female student registers
4-14-1898: Medical College founded in New York City
9-28-1915: First football game played on Schoellkopf field
12-7-1941: More than 480 Cornell alumni gave their lives while serving in the armed forces during World War II
1954: The Ivy League is officially created when the eight presidents of Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, University of Pennsylvania, Princeton, and Yale signed an athletics agreement
4-19-1969: Members of the Afro-American Society protest for 36 hours over perceived racism
10-2-1969: The center for Africana Studies and Research Center opens
9-7-1974: Student housing goes co-ed
11-10-77 - Frank H.T. Rhodes inaugurated as ninth president. Minority enrollment grows from 8 to 28 percent
1983: American Indian Program is formally established
Fall 1993: Students occupy Day Hall for four days in protest of underrepresentation of Latinos at Cornell
1995: President Hunter R. Rawlings makes need-blind admission a permanent policy
1999: Student Disability Services is established
2008: Women’s Basketball claims first Ivy title. Men’s Basketball makes Sweet 16!
2011: Cornell wins Tech Campus bid to create a technology campus in Manhattan
And if you get the chance, try our new ice cream ‘Sweet Cornell’ in honor of the sesquicentennial.

http://news.cornell.edu/stories/2014/12/sweet-cornell-ice-cream-evokes-sesquicentennial
Tips for your students—College Fairs!

Spring is the perfect time for students to attend college fairs because it’s at these fairs that your students can learn about colleges and build a rapport with admissions counselors. When they’re invited to a college fair, it will be important your students make the most of their time at the fair. We’ve created a list that you can give to your students so that they will utilize the college fair experience as much as an excuse to miss class. It is directed to your students so that you can copy and print it for their use!

Before going to the college fair:

- Create an email account that is just for your college search. We suggest finding an email account that allows you to easily sort mail, organize it, and share documents with other email accounts (should you want to have your mentor proof your essay, find an account that allows them to easily access your essay).

- Find out which colleges will be at the fair and make a spreadsheet (perhaps in your email documents) of the colleges you want to learn more about.

- Write down at least three things you are interested in (even if the subjects are uncommon). This list will help you start your search.

- Prepare sticker labels with your contact information to give to colleges. Include name, address, high school name and graduation year, interests, and email address. You can spend less time filling out cards and more time talking.

Attending the fair:

- Set yourself apart by dressing and presenting yourself well. Demonstrate that you are interested in learning more about college by smiling and making eye contact. This is a great opportunity to be bold and speak candidly about your interests in a college and in your future. Admissions counselors are there to help you and enjoy speaking with you!

- Talk with counselors and ask questions that will be impactful. Consider researching the schools you’re interested in visiting and asking counselors a few robust questions rather than those that can be answered from the web site. That is a great way to utilize your time at the college fair.

After attending the college fair:

- Organize the materials you collected and write down your thoughts while they’re still fresh.

- Create a spreadsheet with the names of the colleges you like and/or visited with at the college fair. You can use this spreadsheet as a resource to organize important deadlines for financial aid, admissions, tests, etc.

- Research! Contact admissions offices and the counselors you met at the fair, explore the websites, engage with current students, and consider visiting the colleges you were interested in. (And then add the information to your spreadsheet!)

We hope this information is helpful. We can’t wait to meet your students at fairs and events this spring! Best wishes this spring!

Positive relationships with CBOs & Schools

The Undergraduate Admissions Office and the Multicultural Recruitment team is always looking for opportunities to partner with college prep community-based organizations/agencies as well as charter or independent school groups whose focus is on diverse or low-income students.

Partnerships are not all contractually based. We believe that by sharing information, providing opportunities for students to visit campus or meet counselors and/or students, relationships can be formed to benefit both Cornell and your organization. While budgets are tight for all, we also believe in offering counselors the opportunities to meet with and hear from admissions staff. We do this through ongoing communication, all year. We welcome a list of potential applicants to the final list of students applying to Cornell, so that we can assist in whatever ways necessary to offer the student a fair chance to be admitted. We could also hold programs in your area that benefit students, parents and counseling staff.

Through this united front, we have been able to create great partnerships in places like the Rio Grande Valley, Phoenix, San Diego, Chicago, Richmond, New York City, Newark, Los Angeles, Miami, Atlanta, Houston, Dallas, St. Louis, Washington, DC and so many more! Partnerships also benefit admissions staffs and universities by assisting us in understanding students’ needs and parents’ information gaps. Often counselors in the field are more knowledgeable about student/family situations than school officials. We recognize this and hope that a dialogue can be opened about any students who have special circumstances. Below are a few ways we would love to (continue) work with you:

- Provide us with list of applicants so that we can confirm completion of admissions and financial aid applications

- We can provide real time information about applicants

- Provide us with list of sophomore and juniors who may be a good fit so that we can begin including them in events and phone calls for outreach communications

- We can attend college fairs, panel presentations and coordinate evening events that could include parents.

- Provide us with names and emails of staff who should receive counselor communications

From all of us at Cornell, we thank you for your hard work, energy and time!
CBO Spotlight: Cornell Student

Gabriela Castillo—Class of 2017—CollegeBound Initiative—East Side Community High School

My name is Gabriela Castillo, and I am a second year student at Cornell University. I am currently completing my degree in Human Biology, Health and Society in the College of Human Ecology, and I have intentions to pursue a career in dentistry following graduation. I completed my high school studies at East Side Community High School located on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Many things have changed since high school. I have become accustomed to Cornell’s rigorous environment; I have adapted to the level of diversity present at Cornell, and made new friends. Two things, however, have remained consistent in my life: the first is the encouraging love and support of my CollegeBound Initiative counselor, Sonia Szymanski, in both my studies and overall well-being as a college student; the second, is my gratitude towards CollegeBound Initiative for granting public high school students the opportunity to pursue their educational and professional goals and their active effort to provide these students with the resources and people necessary to reach these dreams.

East Side Community High School is a relatively small high school that primarily serves students of low-income backgrounds. This school strives to help their students meet their potential, and one of the ways that they have managed to do this has been through their strong partnership with CollegeBound Initiative. As the first member of my family to attend college, I had no idea where to begin my college search. Needless to say that attending an Ivy League institution was nowhere near my list of possibilities. CollegeBound Initiative introduced me to the possibility of an education at Cornell by providing the funds East Side needed to organize a family college trip to various colleges in New York State including Cornell. By involving my family in my college search, my mom was all the more supportive and thrilled when I told her of my decision to apply to Cornell University. With the help of my counselor, Sonia, and an entire Saturday afternoon at the CollegeBound Initiative Office, I was able to complete my college essay and submit my Cornell application.

Behind every student at Cornell, there is a story to be told. CollegeBound Initiative equipped me with the tools I needed to tell that story. By providing East Side students with a professional college counselor, CollegeBound Initiative has and will continue to provide students with the supportive environment that these students need to realize that college is not just for a select few— it is an opportunity that all students should have access to. Thank you CollegeBound for that realization.

Cornell is a private, Ivy League university and the land-grant university for New York State. Cornell's mission is to discover, preserve, and disseminate knowledge; produce creative work; and promote a culture of broad inquiry throughout and beyond the Cornell community. Cornell also aims, through public service, to enhance the lives and livelihoods of our students, the people of New York, and others around the world.

Our faculty, students, alumni, and staff strive toward these objectives in a context of freedom with responsibility. We foster initiative, integrity, and excellence, in an environment of collegiality, civility, and responsible stewardship. As the land-grant university for the state of New York, we apply the results of our endeavors in service to our alumni, the community, the state, the nation, and the world.