

Ending the “I can’t” Myths about college

Who says you can’t go to college?

Being a college or university student is hard, but it's also fun and exciting. It's a time in life where you can concentrate fully on learning what you enjoy and on what will help you find a well-paid and meaningful career.

Quite a few myths are out there, however, about getting into and paying for college. So before you let the myths discourage you, check out the real story about college.

MYTH #1: You Can’t Afford College.

Sometimes you have to spend money to make money. College graduates earn an average of 1 million dollars more over their careers than high school graduates. In most cases, you can’t afford NOT to go to college. Remember, however, that if you don’t graduate, that financial advantage will be lost and you will still have to pay back any loans that you took out. So make it a priority to study something you love and to stay in school.

MYTH #2: There’s Less Financial Aid Than Before

Wrong. Most students receive some form of aid. Less of this aid now comes in the form of grants (free money); however, there are still low interest loans, institutional grants, and work study programs.

MYTH #3: I’m Not a “Straight-A” Student, So I Won’t Get Into School or Get Financial Aid

Most college graduates are perfectly ordinary people in terms of memory, attention span, and other abilities; however, they are usually willing to stretch their minds and exercise their mental abilities. Also, while it's true that most scholarships reward merit, the vast majority of federal aid is based on financial need.

MYTH #4: I Have a Family to Support, I Cannot Go to College

Community colleges often have evening classes and programs specifically designed for part-time students. When attending college part-time, it is best to take only two or three courses at a time. If you’re arranging your classes around work or family responsibilities, you also need to arrange regular times and places to study. It may take you longer to earn a degree, but you can do it!

MYTH #5: You Have to Pass an Entrance Examination to Get into Community Colleges

High scores on standardized examinations such as the SAT or ACT are required for admission to some state universities and selective private colleges, but not for most community colleges. Many other colleges and universities do not require entrance examinations. Most community colleges welcome all applicants. If you do your first two years of college work toward a bachelor's degree at a community college, your work can transfer to a four-year college or university without entrance examinations.