The Workshop that Goes Before the Fall
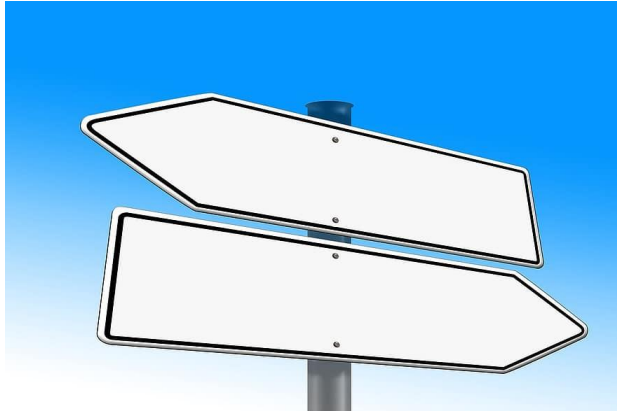
Fair Futures Workshop Wednesday 8/24 Presented by At the Table

Presenters

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Agenda

1. **Updates & Reminders**
2. **College Choice Program**
   a. Overview (what's new?)
   b. How it affects planning
   c. Challenges and solutions
   d. Questions
3. **Starting the Semester Strong**
   a. Understanding syllabi and grading
   b. Textbooks, tech, other resources
   c. Financial aid / verification
   d. Case Examples + Discussion

Updates & Reminders

1. Latest COVID vaccination guidelines

   a. CUNY students are no longer required to have the booster to attend in person classes this semester, but they are still required to be fully vaccinated with either the two-shot dose from Moderna or Pfizer or the one-shot dose from Johnson & Johnson

   b. FAQs are here: https://www.cuny.edu/coronavirus/faqs/#bst1

2. Classes start August 25 at CUNY, except for LGCC and KBCC, which start September 9

3. New Yorkers for Children's Back to School Package program is **open**.

   a. Free laptop and $100 gift card: https://www.newyorkersforchildren.org/for-youth-agency-workers/

4. At the Table is currently accepting new students: www.atthetable.org/for-students

Discussion Question:
What is one thing you **wish someone had told you about college** before you started your first semester?

The College Choice Program

College Choice Program: What's Great About It

- Brings together the FCSI/Dorm Project, CRB Stipend, and Room and Board Pass-Through
    - FCSI/Dorm Project provided CUNY dorming opportunities plus tutoring and college success coaching to students in foster care
    - Room and board pass-through allowed agencies (or ACS if student was over 21) to send $30.93/day to college for room and board costs
    - CRB stipend was a $30.93/day stipend for students in foster care, paid by agencies
- Drastically increases the amount of funding available
- Expands who's eligible for certain kinds of funding, most notably:
    - Stipend and tuition support access for non-dorming students
    - Tuition gap funding for non-CUNY students
    - More options for undocumented students
    - Extended stipend eligibility for college grads
- Allows students to pick and choose from a "menu" of services
    - Funding / housing not tied to service participation for dorming students

College Choice Program: Thinking About Eligibility

In order to access College Choice funding, students must:

1. Stay in foster care until they join the program (usually 1st semester of college)
2. Reapply each semester and submit required documentation
3. Maintain at least a 2.0 GPA
4. Be enrolled full-time in college (12 credits or credit equivalents)
5. Attend a not-for-profit or public institution
6. Enroll in any **available** support programs (CD or ASAP for CUNY 2-yr college)
7. Apply for all available financial aid
   a. TAP, Pell, FYCSI, ETV, any college-based financial aid

College Choice: Differences and Adjustments

- New set of dorming options for NYC-based students
  - The Towers
  - The Summit
  - 92Y residence
  - Outpost student club housing (locations all over NYC)
  - International House
- Clarity around working w/ landlords for off-campus housing at SUNY/others
- Payments now come from ACS rather than from agency fiscal departments
  - Landlords must register with the city to get paid
  - Payments might arrive on a different timeline
- Proof of enrollment is different from what agency fiscal departments used to require
  - For instance, includes an enrollment verification letter
  - In CUNYFirst, go to Student Center > Transcript and Verification > Request Enrollment/Verification
- **What else?**

College Choice: Tips for Success

- Start early!
- Be ready to explain the process to landlords / dorming staff.
- Make sure you and your students **students** understand what documents are being requested and why.
- Reach out to collegechoicebenefitsprogram@acs.nyc.gov with questions!
- **What else?**

Discussion:
What's been good or challenging about the College Choice program?
What questions do you have?

Supporting **S**tudents in **S**tarting the **S**emester **S**trong

Discussion: What does every student need to have at the **beginning** of each semester to be successful?

Keys to Starting the Semester Strong

Students should:
1. Know where their classes will be taking place and how to get there
2. Understand the grading and late work policies for their classes
3. Have access to all of their course texts
4. Have access to a computer, Internet, and probably a cell phone
5. Have a plan for accessing other resources they need to be successful
   a. Tutoring/academic support
   b. Disability accommodations
   c. Help with issues outside of school (e.g. health/mental health)
6. Have account balances and other financial issues resolved
7. Have someone they can go to if they **don't know what to do**

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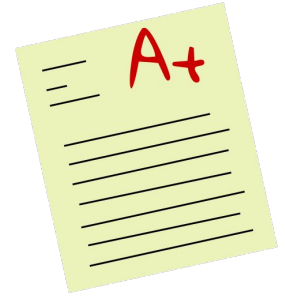
Where to find the syllabus

- Syllabi are typically posted online on the course site (at CUNY, it would be on Blackboard) or sent via email by the professor.
  - This is a good opportunity to make sure your student has access to their Blackboard/college website and college email account!
- EVERY course should have a syllabus
- If your student can't find their syllabus, they should reach out to the prof for help accessing it.

What is (or should be) in the syllabus

- Where and when the course takes place
- Contact info for the professor and office hours
- Information about textbooks and other resources needed to complete the class
- An outline of what the course covers
- The grading policy
- The policy on late work
- Due dates
- Other policies and expectations

Understanding Syllabi and Grading

Evaluation:

The grade in this course will be determined by your performance in the following:

Two-minute exercise	5%
Informative speech	20%
Midterm exam	10%
Concept speech	20%
Persuasive speech	20%
Preliminary outlines	5%
Discussion Board (1st half)	5%
Discussion Board (2nd half)	5%
Final exam	10%
Total	100%

Most college course syllabi will include a detailed outline explaining **exactly** how the course will be graded.

Discussion: Why would it be important to go over this with a student?

An Illustrative Example: Cecilia's Ten Papers

Cecilia's class requires her to submit 10 papers over the course of the semester.

- Each paper is worth 10% of her grade.
- Cecilia submits 8 of the papers and misses 2.
- She gets an average grade of 80% on each of the papers she submits.

What grade will she get in the class?

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What grade will she get in the class? **Cecilia will get a 64% in the class (0.8 * 0.8 = 0.64), which is a D.**

Late Work Policies

- **Late Assignments**
  No late assignments. Due dates are listed on the course syllabus. You will have 6 days to complete the Discussion Board Assignments, there are no make-ups for these Discussion Board assignments.

*NO LATE WORK (RESPONSES, PAPERS, OR ASSIGNMENTS) WILL BE ACCEPTED. If you cannot complete assignments because of illness or emergency, **you must let me know**. We will discuss how to proceed at that time.

Late Homework Policy

All of the assigned work should be completed in a timely manner including speech submissions, written assignments, discussion board postings, and exams. If a student does not complete an assignment or participate in the discussion board by the due dates, then the student will earn an F for that particular course requirement. Late work will be accepted for assignments and the discussion board, but there will be an automatic one grade letter deduction for lateness. **After two weeks, the work will no longer be accepted.** If a student misses an exam, the student will have earned an F for the exam. There is NO extra credit for this course. Students who do well in this course are expected to excel based on the required assignments over the span of the entire semester.

- College late work policies can **surprise** students when enforced, because they are often very different from high school.
- Students should still attempt to turn in late work - sometimes professors are more lenient than their policies say.
- The safest option is to turn work in on time and communicate with the prof immediately if you can't.

Case Study

Renee

Renee is taking an English class and tells you she's doing well through the start of the semester. She got a B+ on her first paper and is feeling encouraged by the professor's feedback. When you look at Blackboard together, you notice that she did not turn in her second paper. Renee says she's not too worried about it because she did so well on the first paper. Each paper is worth 15% of her final grade.

How would you talk to Renee about her papers and their impact on her grade? How would you frame the rest of the semester for her?

Course Texts

Required Text and Materials
➤ All reading texts are on-line. Links are under the title of the reading passages.

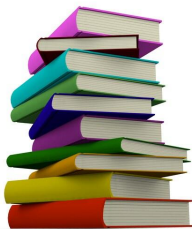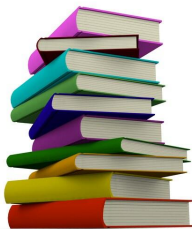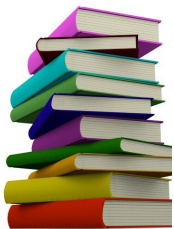**REQUIRED TEXTS:**
• *Chemistry 2e*, P. Flowers, OpenStax, 2019
This text is available as a free PDF at https://openstax.org/details/books/chemistry
It is also available free for Kindle at http://www.amazon.com
You can order a hard copy through https://brooklyn.textbookx.com/adm/ *or from* http://www.amazon.com *– but you can always print chapters from the PDF.*
• *Experiments in General Chemistry*, M. N. Kobrak, Ed., Fourth or Third edition. Kendall/Hunt, Dubuque, IA, 2017 (2012).

- Syllabi will include information about course texts **and** how to access them.
- Increasingly, courses are offering free options for accessing course texts, but some classes have online workbooks where access has to be purchased.
- Online texts often have free trials that expire after 2 weeks - be on the lookout!

Case Study

Eric has just finished the first week of the semester. He likes his classes, but there's a problem: his book check hasn't arrived due to a delay with his financial aid verification and he doesn't have any books for his classes. **What do you do?**

Technology Access!

Back to School Package - open now

Free laptop and $100 gift card:
https://www.newyorkersforchildren.org/for-youth-agency-workers/

College-based computer / mobile hotspot loan programs

These may vary by campus - some examples:

- City Tech: https://www.citytech.cuny.edu/device-loan/
- Brooklyn College:
  http://www.brooklyn.edu/web/about/initiatives/initiatives/return/students/device-loan-requests.php

Other options for technology access?

Talk to Students about the Various Resources their Campus Offers

Whether they need tutoring or accommodations for a disability, there is a person/department at your school to help you - it's just about finding them

- Academic Advisement

- Financial Aid Department

- Department of Accommodations

- Tutoring/Writing Center

- Career Center

- Health Services (could include mental health counseling)

- Support Program

Most offices are offering a mix of remote and in-person access!

Completing Financial Aid

- FAFSA (federal aid) - opens on October 1 for the following year, deadline is end of the academic year in which aid is requested

  - Students can add multiple schools on the FAFSA but only one on the TAP

- TAP (NY state aid) - complete immediately after FAFSA

  - Students can add only one school on the TAP, so they should update the school as soon as the student knows which college they are going to

- ETV - open now

  - Students can apply if they've left foster care at age 14 or older, as long as they are below the age of 21 if they are applying for the first time

- FYCSI

  - This funding source is frequently overlooked! Fill out the consent form here and send to OCFS: http://www.nysed.gov/postsecondary-services/foster-youth-college-success-initiative

Addressing Bursar Holds and Past-Due Balances

- Bursar holds result from a past-due balance on the student's account
  - Financial aid didn't come in (verification issue or incomplete application)
  - **Had to return financial aid funds due to withdrawal**
  - Not enough aid to cover tuition (and room+board if applicable)
  - Student incurred a small fine (i.e. for a library book)
- Will delay registration and may go to collections
- Steps for resolving holds:
  - Resolve any financial aid application/verification issues
  - Apply for additional/emergency funds (ETV, FYCSI, NYFC https://www.newyorkersforchildren.org/for-youth-agency-workers/#emergency_funds)
  - Ensure that the bursar is aware that the money is coming

Financial Aid Verification

- **Any student who was in foster care at any point past age 13 is automatically considered independent**, even if they were adopted, reunified, or otherwise discharged.
- Independent students generally need to submit **two or three** verification documents to the college in order for financial aid to come through. These documents are:
  - Independent Student Verification Worksheet
  - IRS non-filing letter
  - Foster care letter indicating dates of placement (sometimes)
- Schools sometimes ask for inappropriate levels of documentation
  - Why does this happen?
  - What do we do?

Case Study

Jeremiah

Jeremiah is going into his first semester at a SUNY school. His student account has a verification hold on it and when he went to financial aid to resolve it he was told he needed to submit a statement explaining why he is independent and two letters from "disinterested third parties" corroborating his statement, as well as other documentation like a court order or parent's death certificate.

Is this an appropriate request? Why might this have happened? What do we do now?