

Undocumented Students CAN Go to College!

Please do not tell undocumented students that their educational career is finished at the end of high school. There are lots of ways they can pursue their educational dreams. Here are some of their current options:

1. Attend UNC System Schools. UNC accepts undocumented students, but they must pay out-of-state tuition. The cheapest way for a student to do this is to enroll in a local UNC school and live at home. Without paying for room and board, students can attend UNC schools for about \$7,000-\$8,000 per semester. Many students are doing this around the state.
2. Attend Private Colleges and Universities. This is often the best option for high achieving undocumented students. There are many private schools that are seeking to increase their enrollment of Latino students. They are more likely than public universities to have special scholarship programs to support students who cannot take out federal student loans.
3. Attend Proprietary or Online Schools. Proprietary and online schools will often accept anyone who can pay. Some are cheaper than the options listed above.
4. Enroll in Online Programs Sponsored by Mexican Universities. Enterprising Mexican universities are marketing online study programs to Mexican nationals living in the United States. These programs are usually very cheap, but they do require that the students have a high degree of proficiency in academic Spanish. For a list of these institutions, see the bottom of this email.
5. Return to Your Country of Origin to Study. Attending universities in Mexico and other Latin American Countries is often very inexpensive. Students with a strong connection to their country of origin and strong Spanish language skills may find this an attractive option.

Community College Options

Undocumented students cannot currently enroll in degree-seeking programs at North Carolina's community colleges. However, they can enroll in non-degree seeking programs such as ESL classes, and Learn and Earn programs (see more below). There are also apparently some community colleges that continue to enroll undocumented students even under the current policy. Students may choose to apply to community colleges without revealing their documentation status just to see if they are accepted or not. Undocumented students should be cautioned NEVER use or provide an invalid SSN or alias when attempting to enroll. That could result in a misdemeanor or felony charge if discovered later.

Learn and Earn Programs

North Carolina's Learn and Earn programs are one of the best ways for undocumented students to gain college credits. Any student who is enrolled in a North Carolina public high school can participate in these programs and earn college credits while enrolled.

There are online and campus based Learn and Earn programs. You can learn more here. Students who enroll in our district's Middle College program can gain up to two years of college credit while participating in that program. This is free to the students and decreases the total amount they would spend on a college education.

AP Credits and the College Level Examination Program

Most educators know that AP classes provide an inexpensive way to accrue college credits. Students can also earn college credit through the College Level Examination Program [CLEP], which is accepted by most colleges and universities in North Carolina. The maximum number of credits accepted by each school may vary, but it will definitely save a student a lot of money in out of state tuition fees.

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

Paying for College

The most difficult part of these options for many of our students is paying for whatever path they choose. Without federal financial loans, students must find other ways to pay for their education. Many students attend school with a combination of scholarships, income from a job, family support, and private loans.

Here are some websites where undocumented students can find scholarships that do not require recipients to be a U.S. Citizen.

www.maldef.org/pdf/Scholarships_072003

www.nygearup.org/collegesense/students/scholar_undoc

www.latinocollegedollars.org

www.fastweb.com

www.thencshp.org/resources/students/index

As a heads up, in the spring of 2009, the Triangle Community Foundation will announce a new college scholarship that is designed to give one undocumented student from CHCCS a full ride to a UNC system school. Look for details soon.

Inquiring About Documentation Status

Public schools are not permitted to ask about a student's legal residency or documentation status as a requirement for enrollment. In other words, all children under the age 18 have a right to a free public education. In general, educators should not ask students about their documentation status, because the question itself can create discomfort and barriers to school engagement. If you are counseling students about their college options, the best option is usually to let them disclose their documentation status to you during the process. If you have a trusting relationship, they will inform you willingly.

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The following list was compiled by an organization in Arizona called Educamexus. Their website is <http://www.educamexus.org> The following universities offer online degree programs geared towards people living in the United States.

- Universidad del Valle de Atemajac (UNIVA)
<http://unadis.univa.mx/>
- Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla
<http://online.upaep.mx/>
- Universidad de Guadalajara Virtual
<http://www.udgvirtual.udg.mx/>
- Tec Milenio
<http://www.tecmilenio.edu.mx/>
- Consorcio Clavijero
<http://www4.clavijero.org.mx/>

EDUCAMEXUS is a space that compiles an up to date list, classifies and properly distributes information regarding opportunities on basic and higher education, its legal regulations in the United States and in Mexico, and informs of existing funding aid that will allow interested people to continue their education and receive orientation about their educational opportunities at no cost.