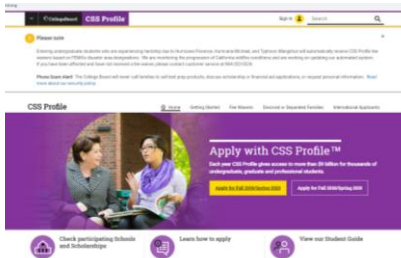




Financial Aid 101: *CSS Profile – Why me and what do I need to know to complete this financial aid application?*

The [CSS Profile](#) is a **financial aid application** that nearly 400 [colleges and universities](#) require in addition to the FAFSA. The CSS application originates with College Board (provider of SAT and AP exams) not the federal government. Unlike the FAFSA, **which is always free**, there is a fee for the CSS (\$25 – 1st school/\$16 for each additional school). Payment for the CSS requires a credit card.



Students who qualify for SAT fee waivers also qualify for 8 CSS fee waivers. Like the FAFSA, the CSS is based on 2020 tax year information (prior-prior tax year). Colleges require the CSS to dig deeper into a family's financial situation.

Depending on the school, the CSS may assess:

- Primary home value.
- Non-custodial household income and assets.
- Income fluctuations (*ex. 2018, 2019 and est 2021 taxes*) not just 2020.
- Life insurance policy cash values.
- Value of non-qualified annuities.
- Small business asset values (including rental properties).
- Value of grandparent owned 529 plans (*distributions from these accounts count against aid eligibility under FAFSA and CSS rules*).
- Financial gifts to parents to pay for college (*CSS counts them as income/FAFSA counts them as assets*).
- 529 and ESA assets held in the student's name count as the less favorable student's asset not as parent's asset (*FAFSA change*).
- Medical expenses.
- Sibling non-college tuition payments.

Unlike the FAFSA, the CSS does not provide students with an Expected Family Contribution (EFC) figure at the end of the process. Instead, each college or university on the student's list evaluates the family's financial situation based on their own institutional criteria to create a unique EFC. In a battle of the acronyms, the **CSS overrules FAFSA at these schools.**

Does this matter? Yes! On the plus side, families with high medical bills and/or non-college tuition bills may be helped by the CSS. On the negative side, students from two-household families and those with significant home equity may be "harmed" (i.e. a higher CSS EFC than what the FAFSA identifies). To address the impact of home appreciation specifically, 20 schools in the [568 President's Group](#), agreed to share a single institutional methodology that strives to be more favorable to families by limiting the impact of home equity. Have a CSS Profile in your future? Click [here](#) and [here](#)

Important information for college applications:

SPCPA School Code: 242 284

Counselor: Alison Green

School Information:
16 W 5th St
St Paul, MN 55102
(651) 290-2225

FAFSA Facts & Tips:

- Read the directions...if the question remains unclear click on the help link.
- Income questions...are based on 2020 federal income tax returns – parent(s) and student. (The IRS Retrieval Tool will populate these fields.)
- No blanks...enter "0" or not applicable.
- No commas or decimals...whole numbers only.
- No nicknames...FAFSA name, address and social security information must match IRS forms.
- Parent #1...is biological or adoptive parent student lives with 51% or more of the time.
- Parent #2...is parent #1's spouse.
- Students living with both biological or adoptive parents...decide who parent #1 is in advance and be consistent.
- Questions about students living with unmarried parents, a stepparent, or in a foster care/non-custodial adult situation...click [here](#) to learn more.
- Not living at home and other independent student questions...click [here](#) to learn more.
- Asset questions...are as of the FAFSA application date (not 2020 figures).
- Exclude...the value of primary residence and all retirement accounts (IRA, 401K, 403B, etc.) from the asset questions.
- DACA students...apply for financial aid via the Minnesota Dream Act not FAFSA. See Ms. Green for more details. Click [here](#) to learn more.
- Undocumented parents...use 000-00-0000 in the social security field. (*Caution: It is unclear whether FAFSA information can be shared with I.C.E.*)
- Male designation on birth certificate...means student must complete their Selective Service registration to be considered for federal student aid.
- Review the Student Aid Report (SAR)...once your FAFSA is submitted for important next steps!



opportunities....See websites for additional details

December 2021

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Digital Marketing \$1000 Essay on trends.		1	2	3
Stephen J. Brady Stop Hunger Scholarship \$5,000 Must demonstrate ongoing commitment to community service.					
	5	6	Advance Prevention Lawsuit Legal Scholarship \$1000 Essay/Video re Impaired Driving		10
Wellroot Family Services \$1000+ Leadership	13	14	15	16	17
			AvaCare Medical \$1000 Health Sciences Burger King Scholars Up to \$50,000 2.5 min GPA		
	19	20			24
AceableAgent Scholarship \$1000 Essay on what home is.	27	28	29	30	31
				Optimal Scholarship \$2000 Essay	
					Odenza \$500 Community Service Pink Rose \$1000 Breast Cancer

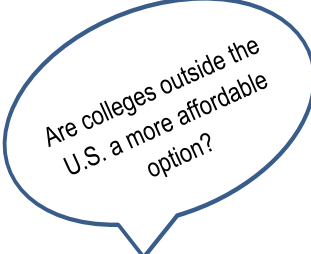
Upcoming Deadlines

- [GE-Reagan Foundation Scholarship](#) (1/6/22)
\$10,000
Demonstrated leadership & Financial Need
- [MarvelOptics Scholarship](#)
(1/5/22)
\$1500
Essay on Helen Keller
- [One Earth Filmmakers Contest](#) (1/5/2022)
Up to \$1000
3-8 min video
- [Ron Brown Scholar Program](#)
(1/8/22)
\$10,000
Community service
- [JFK Profile in Courage](#)
(1/14/22)
\$100-\$10,000
Essay

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Maybe

But, it helps to consider

a few key points before applying...

1st – are you prepared for the [differences in how college is delivered outside the U.S.](#) or are you looking for an “American” type college experience that is more discussion based, residential experience focused (dorms, sports, clubs, career centers, etc.), and has multiple opportunities to demonstrate knowledge (vs single end of term exam)? If the American style experience is important to you, consider Canada specifically the universities that have tuition reciprocity with Minnesota. Click [here](#) for the list.

2nd – colleges that make their education particularly affordable (in the U.S. and abroad) tend to be highly selective. International schools focus mostly on “the numbers” (GPA and ACT vs essays and recommendations). Do your scores make you a competitive candidate? Curious about options other U.S. students have chosen? Click [here](#).

3rd – are you prepared for [potential hidden costs](#) whether it is unexpected airfares, inability to participate in important events “at home,” visa requirements related to demonstrating financial stability (i.e.. student bank account balances that meet or exceed the expected cost of attending), communication issues outside of the college environment (for programs taught in English in non-English speaking countries), the lack of career networks in the U.S. after graduation, future U.S. employer concerns about the validity of foreign degree programs, restrictions on working while in college and after if the decision is made to remain outside the U.S. after graduation, etc.

Bottom line? Money shouldn't be the only reason you are considering this option.