



Insights

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In This Issue...	
StrengthsQuest	1
Should you go to graduate school?	2
SSS Grant Aid	3
Searching for Internships	4
Study Skills For College	5
Zumba!	6

StrengthsQuest Profile: Paige Kroenke

As a participant in Student Support Services, I was asked to take an inventory called StrengthsQuest to help identify some personal strengths that will further enhance my academic, social, and professional careers. My strongest strength was the includer strength; an includer is someone who always strives to “stretch” the circle wider. As I read the description of an includer, one description phrase caught my attention. The phrase was, “In direct contrast to those who are drawn only to exclusive groups, you actively avoid those groups that exclude others.” This phrase is a perfect example of who I strive to be; I try to never exclude anyone. If I have plans, I always want to invite someone who may not have plans or may be left out. This strength seems like a strength that would benefit others more than myself, but overall it has benefited me more than anyone I have met. I have made some of my best friends at Northwest, by simply just including rather than excluding. If I had not reached out to so many people I would not have met some of my best friends, met four future roommates, or be surrounded by such a strong, family-like support system here at school. Not only has being an includer helped my social life, but has also helped me in the classroom. Including one extra person in a group project, talking to the random person next to me, or involving them in a study group has allowed me to form great connections with other students. Making this effort gives me the ability to branch out to either offer help, or ask for help whenever I need it.



Should You Go To Graduate School?

Submitted By: Kelsey Knowlton

Is graduate school right for you? Only you can answer that question. Don't take the decision lightly. Consider your interests, goals, dreams, and abilities. Assess your skills, competencies, and weaknesses with brutal honesty. In-depth soul-searching is unpleasant, but vital to making a choice you can live with for the next two to seven years. Consider the following questions:

Why do I want to go to graduate school? Is it for the right reasons?

Students choose graduate school for many reasons, including intellectual curiosity and professional advancement. Some choose graduate school because they aren't sure what to do or they don't feel ready for a job. These aren't good reasons. Graduate school requires an intense commitment of time and money. If you are not sure that you're ready, then it's best to wait.

What are my career goals? Will graduate school assist me in meeting my career goals?

Some careers, such as those in medicine, dentistry, and law, require education beyond the bachelor's degree. A job as a college professor, researcher, or psychologist also requires an advanced degree.

What will I specialize in? What are my interests?

Whereas an undergraduate major is a broad introduction to a given field, graduate school is very narrow and specialized. For example, graduate school in psychology requires choosing a specialization such as experimental, clinical, counseling, developmental, social, or biological psychology. Decide early because your choice determines the programs to which you'll apply. Consider your interests. What courses did you especially like? On what topics have you written papers? Seek advice from professors about the differences among the various specialties in a given field. Inquire about existing employment opportunities for each specialization.

Do I have the motivation for another two to seven years of school?

Graduate school is different from college because it requires a higher level of academic commitment. You must enjoy and excel at reading, writing, and analyzing information. Speak with professors and graduate students to get a better idea of what's involved in graduate study. Most first-year graduate students are overwhelmed and realize that they have under-estimated the commitment that they have made. Seek a first-year student's perspective for a reality check.

Can I afford to go to graduate school?

Make no doubt about it: graduate school is expensive. The cost varies by university. Public universities are less expensive than private universities, but regardless of institution you can count on paying \$10,000 to \$25,000 for public universities and as much as \$40,000 per year for private universities. Fortunately most students qualify for some form of financial aid. If you decide that you must work during graduate school, take care in selecting your job to ensure that it doesn't interfere with your studies.

Do I have the academic and personal qualities to succeed?

Generally, it is expected that students will maintain at least a 3.0 average during graduate school. Some programs deny funding to students with less than a 3.33 average. Can you juggle multiple tasks, projects, and papers at once? Can you manage time effectively?

Going to graduate school affects the rest of your life. There are both pros and cons to continuing your education. Seek information from multiple sources including Career Services, your family, graduate students, and professors. Take your time with it. Most importantly, trust your judgment and have faith that you'll make the choice that's best for you.

Article Information gathered from <http://gradschool.about.com/cs/shouldyougo/a/should.htm>.



Student Support Services Grant Aid

For the past several years, Northwest's Student Support Services (SSS) offers grant aid scholarships to a select group of program participants. The United States Department of Education dictates certain eligibility requirements. If you meet all of these requirements, then you could be eligible for consideration for one of these scholarships.



Eligibility Requirements

1. Must be currently receiving a Pell Grant through the Federal Government
2. Must be in 1st or 2nd year of college
3. Must use the scholarship to offset unmet financial need or to supplement loans
4. Must be willing to participate in SSS activities.

In addition, SSS program staff believe that **recipients must be willing to participate actively in program activities.** Students who are interested in being a recipient of the SSS Grant Aid Scholarship should be prepared to demonstrate their intent through participation in financial literacy, career, and academic workshops. Grant Aid students are also strongly encouraged to participate in the following SSS student organization:

Student Leadership Council—This group plans events and activities that are designed to enhance the SSS experience and to provide the students with an opportunity to improve their leadership skills as well as facilitate fundraising events for the SLC scholarship fund.

History

Northwest's SSS Program has offered the SSS Grant Aid Scholarship since 2001. The program is funded through the United States Department of Education. Since its inception, the program has helped over 100 SSS students offset the rising costs of completing a college education.

What is the size of the scholarship?

Awards will vary depending on each individual's needs and the number of recipients. However, it is anticipated that the awards will range between \$750-\$1,600 each trimester.

Once I receive the award, what must I do to remain eligible for subsequent trimesters?

The SSS staff have some expectations for those who are awarded a scholarship. Among these are:

- Actively participate in Student Advisory Council Meetings and/or Community Service Discussion Group.
- Secure 5 and 10 week grade progress reports from each of your instructors and seek assistance if you are receiving a grade below a C in any course.
- Meet routinely with your Student Mentor.
- Actively participate in one SSS-sponsored community service project.
- Attend an SSS-sponsored Financial Assistance Workshop.
- Maintain "good academic standing" status at Northwest.

The time commitment for these activities usually works out to be about 15-20 hours each trimester.

How do I apply?

The application process is quite simple and involves only two steps:

1. Fill out the Grant Aid Application.
2. Write a one page typed essay on why you should be considered for this award. The essay should cover three main points:
 - A) How the award will help you as you pursue your degree
 - B) What you can contribute to the SSS program
 - C) How you believe the SSS program can benefit you

You should turn in your application and essay to **Brenda Johnson**, Student Development Specialist, 363 Administration Building. In order to be considered for a spring trimester award, the essay should be turned in by **Friday, December 2nd, 2011.**

How will I know if I receive an SSS Grant Aid Scholarship?

Decisions will be made as to who the recipients are within two weeks of the application deadline. Attendance logs will be kept at all SSS-sponsored activities and will be utilized to determine your level of participation.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Brenda Johnson at 660.562.1259.

Looking for an Internship?

Finding a worthwhile internship can seem daunting. There are several important factors to consider, including field, location, duration, and, of course, pay. The following steps can help reduce your stress while finding an internship well suited to your needs.

- 1) Determine your internship goals by answering who, what, where, when and why: WHO would you like an internship with? If you have no particular company or organization in mind, then WHAT field are you interested in? WHERE, geographically, would you like the internship? Locally, or overseas? WHEN do you want this internship? WHY are you seeking an internship (for college credit, to develop skills, to explore new fields)?
- 2) Decide whether you can consider both paid and non-paid positions. Take into consideration that un-paid internships offers more opportunities, but you need to be able to afford this option.
- 3) Brush up on your cover-letter, resume and interview skills.
- 4) Find internship positions. Check your school career services or guidance center and academic departments. Talk to professors, friends and coworkers. Go to local job, internship and career fairs. Visit online job and internship websites. Contact companies and organizations directly to inquire about position availability.
- 5) Keep track of your findings. Record internship positions of interest to you, noting the following information: company or organization, position title and general description, location, start and end dates, hours, compensation and any position requirements. If possible, speak with potential supervisors, coworkers, and fellow interns.
- 6) Compare your options. Apply for several of your top choices.
- 7) Follow through with the companies and organizations to whom you have applied via phone calls, notes, or formal emails.
- 8) Commit yourself to learning and to having fun. This attitude will make any internship valuable and worthwhile.



Study Skills for College Success

Submitted By: Michael Hoffman



Good study skills are absolutely necessary to succeed in college. Without them you will struggle in college classes because you are required to cover much more material than in high school. Good study skills will help you excel by helping you retain more of what you study. They will improve your note taking abilities; memory; stress management and time management skills, as well as test taking techniques. Like any skill set, you can always improve your studying methods.

Note Taking

Taking good notes is a very important part of ensuring success in college. It is essential to take good notes in class. You do not need to write down word for word what the professor is saying. You will probably miss a lot of valuable information if you try to do this.

Instead, write down the key points, i.e. names, dates, charts, formulas and a few short sentences about the significance of each. Make sure to write down anything the professor stresses numerous times. Also, write down any questions asked in class by you or a classmate and record the answer. These tips on note taking can improve your study skills significantly.

Time Management

Time management is another one of the essential study skills for college. Poor time management skills can make it very difficult for you to perform at your best. In college you must prioritize your time. You should make a study schedule each week and plan when you will study for each class. It is important to make time for relaxation and social activities but it is crucial to find an appropriate balance between academic and social activities. Frequent study sessions in an environment free of distractions will allow for better retention of the material.

You Can Do It!

Having good notes and employing good time management skills are key components to your success. Utilize your notes, textbook, and other related resource material available at the library.

Review Your Work

Review the material regularly. Seek to understand the material you are studying because this will help you retain the information. Do not simply cram for exams because you will not learn anything and will likely forget most of the material very quickly. Form study groups with other people in your classes. Working with other people can be extremely beneficial because they may have picked up on things that you may have missed in class.

Written by Tony Buzan

<http://www.study-skills-for-all-ages.com/study-skills-for-college.html>

ZUMBA!

By: Ally Varner

Zumba Fitness, LLC

You may already be wondering what Zumba is all about. It is an exercise workout featuring a variety of dance styles. Although the main rhythm is Latin, other international influences are also present in the mix. Knowing the basic principles will help you become better at it and burn extra calories and fat.

Starting Zumba

Zumba lasts for about an hour and presents different dance moves originating from regions in Latin America. Some of the moves are influenced by meringue, salsa, reggaeton, belly dancing, and even hip hop. It provides an excellent cardiovascular workout, where you can burn as much as 450 calories an hour. Choreographing the program can be quite challenging, so it is important that you begin each session by doing a few stretches and toning exercises. These exercises should last for 15 minutes. Aim to warm up all the major muscle groups during the pre-exercise.

The Choreography

Start choreographing the Zumba workout by doing samba moves for about 5 minutes. You can use the basic forward and back movements to keep your heart rate up. After that, switch to merengue dance movements for another 5 minutes. The merengue is composed of 3 basic motions; namely the forward basic motions, the side basic motions, and the back basic motions. These can be combined in many ways by using variations in posture as you dance.



Upcoming SSS Events!

22 November— Thanksgiving Recess Begins at 5.00 p.m.

28 November— Classes Resume

December 8 - SSS Open House and Graduation Reception
11:00 a.m.—1:30 p.m.

December 12-16— Finals Week

December 16—Fall Commencement