

Podcast - FAFSA

Dave: Welcome to Illinois State University's Financial Aid Podcast for MONTH 2008. As always, I'm Dave Kreuger your guide to the exciting world that is Financial Aid.

Bridget: And I'm Bridget. I'm here to make sure what Dave says actually makes sense.

Dave: ...right. So Bridget, you know it's getting to be that time of year again...

Bridget: I know! I've already got everything planned out. I am totally ready.

Dave: Wha...really? Well I have to say I'm impressed!

Bridget: Duh, I don't know why you doubt me. I've got the brackets printed, I've got everyone's food assignments ready; I am on top of things.

Dave: ...uh...what are you talking about?

Bridget: March Madness! It's the most exciting time of the year! So who do you like this year? I can give you some pretty good odds...

Dave: I see. Well, that's one way to make sure you have enough money for school next semester, but what I was trying to allude to was that its time to be filling out the FAFSA.

Bridget: FAFSA? Who are they playing in the first round?

Dave: ...no, they're not playing anyone in the first round.

Bridget: They have a bye? Wow...

Dave: No. FAFSA? The Free Application for Federal Student Aid? You were here last year at this time looking for help on how to fill it out?

Bridget: Oh that. I have to do that again?

Dave: Only if you want financial aid. You have to fill out the FAFSA each year you want to receive financial aid. The preferential filing date is March 1 – which is just around the corner.

Bridget: So that means I don't have to do it yet, right? If it's preferential, I can still fill it out later than that.

Dave: I suppose, but that's the date Illinois State University uses as a cut-off date for certain types of aid. If you get it in by the first, you're sure to be considered.

Bridget: What types of aid are you talking about?

Dave: Those certain types of aid include federal work-study, which allows students to work numerous on-campus jobs, The Perkins Loan, which is the lowest interest loan program, the Student to Student Grant, and the Illinois State MAP Supplemental grant.

Bridget: So say, hypothetically of course, that I don't get it turned in by March 1. What then?

Dave: Well, you'll still be considered for the federal Pell grant, the state's MAP grant, and student and parent loans. It's just that those other types of aid are very limited, and the funds will run out with just the students who apply by March 1.

Bridget: This sounds familiar... Oh yeah, I remember why. I have this...uh...cousin who asked me for help filling it out.

Dave: Uh huh...

Bridget: And, I mean, I already KNOW all of this stuff, but for her sake, why don't you tell her where you can fill one of these FAFSA things out?

Dave: ...of course. Well, since over 90% of people have applied online the past few years, we don't even get the paper copies to hand out anymore. Filing online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) is the fastest, most efficient way to complete the FAFSA.

Bridget: Well, that kinda makes sense.

Dave: Do you remember last year when you tried to fill out the paper copy?

Bridget: Yeah, I was totally confused. Then I ended up skipping like three questions because I didn't think they were important...

Dave: Exactly, the Web version walks you through the application step-by-step and if you make a mistake or accidentally skip a question, it won't let you continue until you give a complete answer.

Bridget: Doesn't it ask for a PIN number or something?

Dave: It does, but once you start the FAFSA on the Web, it directs you to either enter a PIN or tells you how to apply for one.

Bridget: Right, so what kind of things do I need to do the FAFSA?

Dave: Don't you remember from doing this before?

Bridget: Its not FOR me, its for my roommate!

Dave: I thought you said your cousin...

Bridget: My roommate is my cousin! Will you keep up?

Dave: A thousand apologies. Well, let's start at the beginning. When you go into FAFSA on the Web, it gives you a link to the FAFSA on the Web Worksheet. I recommend that students and parents take a look at this.

Bridget: So that's not the form?

Dave: Not exactly. The worksheet allows you to get all of the necessary information together – and that makes the process even easier. There is a list of items you will need to complete the application.

Bridget: Makes sense. What happens when I'm done with all that?

Dave: Well, as long as you list Illinois State as a school choice on your FAFSA, we will get the information electronically within a few days. The new Financial Aid channel walks you through the entire process step by step, so you always know where you're at.

Bridget: So after I fill out the FAFSA online, I should just be checking in on iCampus to see what my status is?

Dave: Well you, your cousin, your roommate, whomever really...

Bridget: Yeah, yeah, whatever. Hey, so do you want in on our tournament pool or not? I've got an extra blank bracket right here...

Dave: I would, but it looks like we're just about out of time. Tune in next time when we give you specifics about parent and alternative loans. You can listen to this and other podcasts by visiting [IllinoisState.edu/financialaid](http://IllinoisState.edu/financialaid).