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The Maine Word About College

Questions about college from young Maine students, answered by old Maine students.

Today's writers

Gabby Cyr, a junior at University of Maine, originally from Madawaska, ME

Alex Morang, a sophomore at Simmons College, originally from Windham, ME

Offered by Maine College Circle and the Mitchell Institute to great young students throughout Maine.

Q. Are you allowed to do whatever you want in college?

A. This is a difficult question, because I feel that college can be viewed as a “free-for-all” in comparison to high school. However, with freedom comes responsibility. College is great because you have the opportunity to design your schedule in a way that is convenient for you. You also have the opportunity to take part in extra-curricular activities, such as sports, clubs, research, or spend free time hanging out with friends and exploring the community. On the other hand, it is important to also create a work/life balance. I have found that an easy way to get schoolwork done and enjoy time with friends is having a study group! Not only does it encourage a friendly learning environment, but it also makes doing homework feel like less of a chore. Scheduling time to do homework with a study group not only holds you accountable to get the homework done, but it also allows for more free time to partake in activities of your choice. So, yes, there is a lot more freedom and independence in college, but choosing to spend your time wisely is important. While it is possible to achieve a comfortable work/life balance, this can be thrown off by not giving your education the time and effort it requires. At the end of the day, remember why you are attending a college or university, and prioritize the different aspects of your life according to your goals. —Gabby





Q. What colleges are good for sports for all people?

A. It all depends on how you want to commit your time and how much the sport means to you! There are so many different divisions, conferences, levels of play, and other options to choose from. It is important when choosing the right college and athletic program, that you consider what type of experience you would like to have. Most big Division 1 or Division 2 schools offer athletic scholarships and the commitment is very high. Division 3 schools don't offer athletic scholarships but do include all varsity sports with a competitive atmosphere. If you are looking for fun without the commitment, all schools offer intramural sports where everyone is welcome and the atmosphere is much more relaxed!

—Alex



Q. Do people ever go to two different colleges?

A. Yes! It is completely normal to start out at one university and end up transferring to another. After graduating from Madawaska High School, I made the decision to attend the University of New Hampshire in Durham, NH. The UNH campus was home to approximately 15,000 students, which is a LOT of people compared to my high school of approximately 250 students. I enjoyed the idea of being able to have a fresh start during this new chapter in my life, but over time, I realized that being so far away from home was difficult. Toward the end of my first year of college, I knew that my feelings had not changed, so I decided to transfer to the University of Maine at Orono to continue my academic journey. I was still able to continue my plans to study medicine. After transferring to UMaine, I had a newfound sense of confidence, and became involved in many extra-curricular activities that I was too nervous to partake in at UNH. The moral of this story is that if you are in an uncomfortable life situation, trust your instincts! There is nothing wrong with attending two different colleges if the first university or college you attend is not the right fit for YOU. Everyone has a different path, and just because your path is not the same as your friends', classmates', or siblings', does not mean that you will be unsuccessful. — Gabby

Q. How do you choose where to go?

A. There are many different things you can do to help the process of picking the right school for you! Some things to consider when picking the right college/university are the location, majors available, atmosphere, size, culture, etc. I highly recommend going for a visit and/or a tour at the schools you are interested in. It is super important to get the feel of the school first hand and truly experience what the college or university is like with the students, professors, and faculty there. — Alex

COLLEGE SPOTLIGHT: MAINE MARITIME ACADEMY

Every month will feature a spotlight on a different college—its benefits and challenges—from a current student's perspective!

I chose Maine Maritime Academy because I wanted to study the ocean, and what better place to learn about the ocean than on the ocean! My school is right by the water, and we have many boats that students get to learn to drive, take care of, and collect scientific research on. We also have a lab specifically for keeping sea creatures, and we run a touch tank that we keep going through the year.

The thing that appealed to me most about MMA was that the whole school is focused on the ocean. Even when you have to take a writing class you write about the ocean, or when it's a reading class you read about great sea explorers.

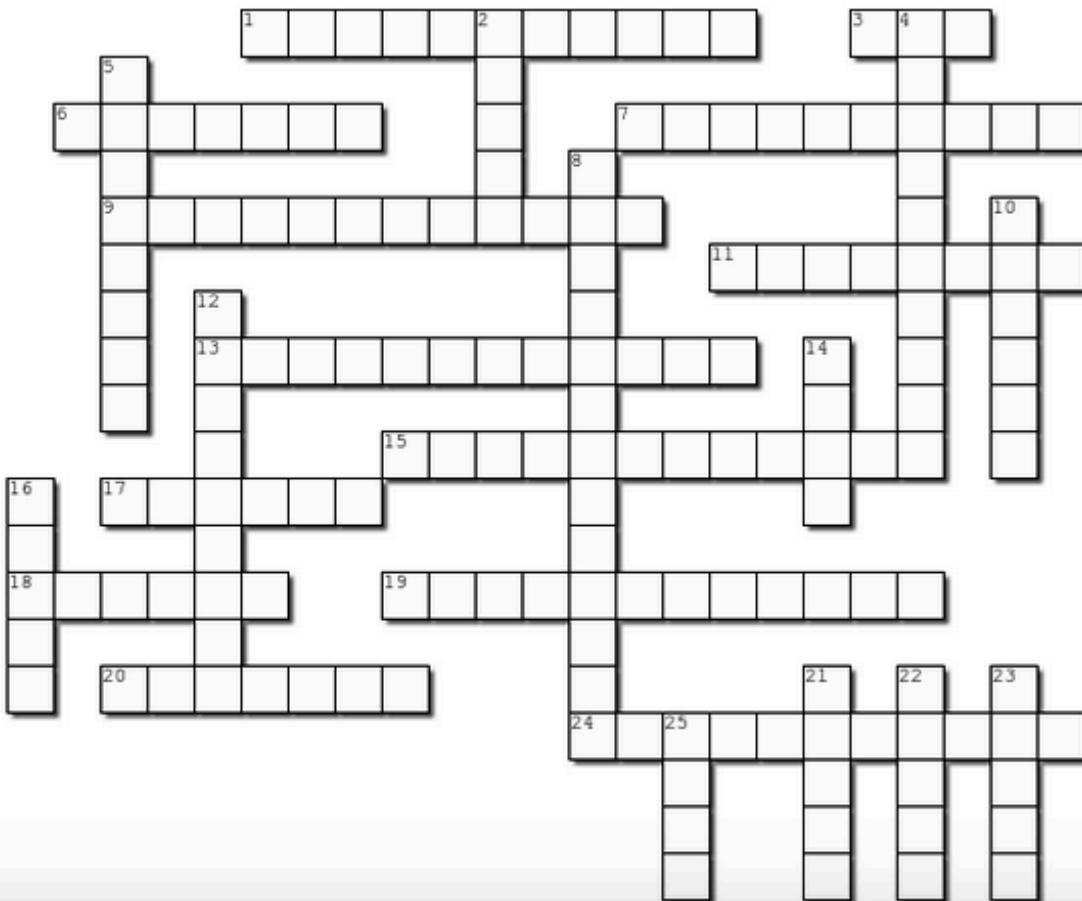
College can be challenging, as there is a lot of homework and it can feel like a lot to manage homework, hanging out with your friends, and joining clubs and sports. However, the homework I do has to do with the science of the ocean and it's something I really enjoy learning about. You also meet so many new people at college who enjoy the same things as you, so it's a great place to make friends.



— Ellie Gellerson, sophomore at MMA, originally from Blue Hill, ME

October 2019 Crossword

Complete the crossword puzzle below!



Across

- the study of numbers and quantities
- school grade average, 0-4
- the teaching and administrative staff at a college/university
- town of Colby College
- doctor that takes care of animals
- half of a college school year
- college major for studying the ocean
- college major combining biology and chemistry
- what equestrian majors study
- what majors in forensic science will solve
- the study of diseases
- New England state with Champlain College
- time when students spend a semester going to school in a foreign country

Down

- a subject that a student studies often, but is not the student's major
- major for the study of knowledge, reality, and existence
- city where UNLV is located
- home state of Boston University
- Gambier, OH college with a strong writing program
- mascot at Bowdoin College
- military program for college students
- mascot of the University of Oregon
- first college in Maine alphabetically
- town of Stephen King's university
- a top culinary arts college in RI is Johnson & _____
- abbreviation for University of Maine-Fort Kent