

# 10 Tips for Parents of Prospective College Students

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## 1. Choosing a career/choosing a major

Security vs. adventure. Accountant, Peace Corps volunteer, journalist, college professor. Ultimately, your son or daughter should make the choice. Of course, you may want to mention factors to consider, such as job market demand, salary ranges, long-range opportunities, skills required, etc. Just because an occupation is "hot" now does not mean it will be equally in demand in 10 years or that your child has the aptitude or motivation for it.

## 2. Choosing to double major/choosing a major and minor

Most employers do not place a premium on a double major. It usually requires an extra one or two semesters to obtain a second major and does not particularly enhance a student's marketability. Exceptions would be a second major or a major and minor chosen for a specific career, such as English and chemistry for technical writing, or a health policy major and business minor for hospital administration. Of course, some students may choose to double major primarily for academic/intellectual purposes.

a high priority beginning with his or her freshman year. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that it may take him or her a while to adjust to the rigorous academic demands of college. S

## 4. Obtaining marketable skills

Most employers today put more emphasis on graduates' skills than on their academic majors. Encourage your son or daughter to develop strengths in at least two or three of the following areas:

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## **7. Graduating early, graduating late**

Some students graduate early through advanced placement credits, heavy course loads, and summer school courses. The advantages are lower educational expenses and the ability to start employment or graduate school earlier. The disadvantages may include the sacrifice of academic honors, work experience, and extracurricular and volunteer activities that may contribute to a student's maturity level and qualifications. Other students graduate late due to light course loads, academic difficulties, changing majors, poor academic advising, lack of direction, or reluctance to leave the cocoon of the college environment. Advantages to late graduation include the ability to improve grades with light class loads, extra time to change majors, the ability to take additional electives to improve marketability, and extra time to gain more career-related or leadership experience. Disadvantages to late graduation are higher tuition and fees, and the loss of time and money spent on tuition and fees that could have been used for other purposes.