Student Onboarding Akin to “Chutes and Ladders”
Uncommon Persistence and College Navigation Skills Needed

**Legend**
- Apply Online
- Begin FAFSA
- Finalize and Submit FAFSA
- Take Placement Exam
- Over Two Days
- See an Advisor
- Visit Financial Aid Weekly After Classification as International Student
- Attend Orientation
- Register for Classes
- Follow Up on Financial Aid
- Re-Register because of Commute

**TIME REQUIRED**
- 1 hr.
- 5 hr.
- 10 hr.

**LOCATION**
- On-Campus
- Off-Campus

**STUDENT ONBOARDING SCENARIO**

**Early Bird Applicant**
- Apply Online
- Begin FAFSA
- Finalize and Submit FAFSA
- Take Placement Exam
- Over Two Days
- See an Advisor
- Visit Financial Aid Weekly After Classification as International Student
- Attend Orientation
- Register for Classes
- Follow Up on Financial Aid
- Re-Register because of Commute

Even the Early Bird Applicant Encounters Delays and Difficulties

**Last Minute Applicant**
- Apply On-site
- Take Placement Exam
- See Advisor
- Attend Orientation
- Register for Classes

**PAYMENT CLEAR**
- Schedules Classes
- Selected for FAFSA Verification
- Finds On-Campus Childcare
- Visits Veterans Affairs Office

**Cannot Balance Class and Work Schedule**
- Waits Until Peak Times to See an Advisor
- Underenrolled Sections Are Dropped Day One of Classes
- Changes Program of Study

**SIS Unavailable**
- Friendly Prof. Provides Assistance
- Sees Advisor Before Peak Period
- Selected for FAFSA Verification
- Sees Financial Aid Advisor
- Sees Advisor Before Peak Period

**Location**
- START
- Apply Online
- Re-Register because of Commute
Not As Easy As One-Two-Three
For Students, Onboarding Is a Complex Web of Services

Administration’s Perspective
College administrators and staff often see intake and orientation as a linear path from application to enrollment. A series of subprocesses comprise the onboarding process, from application to advising and financial aid, to enrollment. However, students experience anything but a simple process.

Student’s Experience
Students enter into a highly distributed and multi-step application, orientation, and enrollment process. To troubleshoot, most students make frequent trips to campus; this defines their experience. While on campus, students often do not know the right questions to ask, which leads to key information being missed.

Consequences
- Weak Sense of Goals
- Underplaced in Courses
- Poor-Fit Schedule
- Delayed Financial Aid

Legend
- Process
- Location

Diagram:
- Start Here: Apply to College
- Receive Acceptance: 1 hr.
- Advising Center: 5 hr.
- Testing Center: 8 hr.
- Parking Services: 1 hr.
- Student Services: 1 hr.
- Orientation: 5 hr.
- Office of Financial Aid: 10 hr.
- Registration: 5 hr.
- Payment Center: 1 hr.
- Day One of Classes

Changes in program of study or in their non-academic lives will restart much of the process.

Few students retake their exams to improve their course placement.

Students may re-register for classes well after the first day of classes.

Many students only begin the financial aid process after reaching this stage.

Financial aid issues may follow a student well into the first term which necessitates additional trips.

For most students, advising serves as their first-stop when troubleshooting issues.

Students may repeat the registration process several times to build a working schedule. They may also revisit advising.

Students may not see an advisor after their placement exam.

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