

# The Gold Book

Written by Capri W.

College Survival  
Guide

COLLEGE SURVIVAL GUIDE

# THE GOLD BOOK

VOLUME #1

# COLLEGE SURVIVAL GUIDE

## **DISCLAIMER:**

These are GENERAL guidelines and tips, not everything will be applicable to your specific situation/institution. Each college and university will be different. Public schools have different rights than private institutions. Student cultures and practices at HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) may be different when compared to those at Predominately White Institutions (PWIs). This means that I am encouraging you to take control and get to know: policies and procedures of the institution the local laws of the area resources that your institution provides

Also, please note I am not an expert in many of these fields. I have reached out to an array of experts within the realm of Higher Education assist me in this process. This is not a one size fits all guide.

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## **VOLUME #1**

Code of Conduct Consultant:

Prince Robertson, M.S. Ed.

[prrober@siue.edu](mailto:prrober@siue.edu)

The student code of conduct is an agreement between the student and their institution. It is composed of policies and expectations that guide the student body. Every student should thoroughly review their student code of conduct. Students are expected to conduct themselves according to those guidelines at all times during their college tenure.

Whether a student is enrolled or not, they are a representation of their college/university. When a student is accepted, and they are assigned a student identification number, the student code of conduct should be applied. Because the student is enrolled, they are now a representation of the institution. The student can possibly face infractions while off campus, depending on what's printed in their respective code of conduct.

If students fall short of certain circumstances, your conduct office will inform you of the possible outcomes as well as the process related to violations of the code of conduct. Understand most institutions have different documents explaining their disciplinary process.

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Again, students should be knowledgeable of their code of conduct.

Students have rights and due process should be followed. Students should make sure that if acts of misconduct within the code is potentially violated, due process procedures are to be ensured. Due process assures fair treatment for each student charged with a potential violation.

Lastly, know that the student code of conduct should outline your institution's appeal process. An appeal is an opportunity to formally challenge a decision that is made against you.

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## Email Etiquette

Please, PLEASE, P L E A S E...email people professionally. Emails are often your first line of communication/first interaction with someone. Give your best first impression! Those who are emailing would rather focus on the problem, rather than focus on your grammar. No shade, no jabs...BUT poorly written emails really bothers many professionals! No matter how well you know someone, please keep your emails professional. Allow the person you are emailing to introduce a more casual form of conversation if that is their desire.

Tips:

1. Write a subject line related to the body of your email
2. Create a salutation (formal greeting) to the person you are emailing
  - a. Do not assume pronouns or titles (look the person up or just say Greetings)
3. Introduce yourself and tell the purpose of the email
4. Keep it brief/get straight to the point
5. Remember to keep it professional
  - a. No emojis, text language, slang
6. Use a proper form of closing
7. Re-read your email aloud and spellcheck, too!

***\*Pri-tip\*: Create an email signature that includes: pronoun, program, degree obtained/completion date, phone number, and email***

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## Example #1:

To: awest@siue.edu

SUBJECT: Question about Assignment 14

Dear Professor West,

I hope this email finds you in safe and in good spirits. My name is Capri Wroten (800\*\*\*\*\*). I am in your ENG 111 class on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:30-2:45. I am emailing you because I wanted to get a head start on assignment 14 just as you encouraged. I have a question about the second prompt. I am confused on what you are specifically assessing and would like to get a better understanding of the assignment.

Thank you in advance,

Capri J. Wroten (she/her/hers)

SIUE, CSPAMSEd '21

Mobile: (773)312-1708

Email: jane.doe@gmail.com

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## Example #2:

To: johndoe@siue.edu

SUBJECT: Concerns about the Semester

Greetings Professor Doe,

Hello, I hope all is well. I am Capri Wroten (800\*\*\*\*\*)\*, a student who has successfully completed the Summer Success Program. I am slightly concerned about the transition from the program to the actual fall semester. I am emailing you to inquire if we can set up a meeting or lunch date to discuss these concerns and find some solutions.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Thank you,

Capri J. Wroten (she/her/hers)  
SIUE School of Business  
BS in Business Administration '19  
Mobile: (773)312-1708  
Email: jane.doe@gmail.com

## **The Art and Exposure of Journaling**

**Submitted by: Ebony Davis**

I discovered I was an infinite writer a couple years ago. I knew I always had the gift of birthing some pieces that were either well-thought out, thought provoking, emotionally rooted, or all the above. As an adult, I have always been complimented on grammar, syntax, penmanship, and organization—all skills anyone can grow from taking a standard English, literature, or writing course. There were moments when my writing was poor and there were moments when my writing was exceptional. Even after compliment after compliment, I still do not feel like class or college courses can be credited for how much I have grown as a writer. What has truly made me a great writer, who can project amazing tone, has been journaling. Yes, strictly journaling.

If there is anything I do know, I do know that most Black people (like myself) have a habit of shying away from writing. This can be for a number of reasons. However, journaling has been my sacred and personal space to truly dissect and unpack the art of writing.

Here are some random short facts that speak to the benefits and importance of putting thought and emotion on to paper:

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## **1. There is emotional attachment to journaling.**

My first encounters with writing were with a diary I had in 6th grade. I would write about how my days were and about experiences I had while being in middle school. Since I did not utilize people to drain off my emotions as a young teen, my diary became the place where I hosted all my emotional inventory. This is a habit that has traveled into adulthood for me. I keep a journal nearby and when things come up for me, I write them down. The emotional attachment comes from being able to have a venting piece and dialogue with yourself that you are not required to share with anyone. Journaling can also help boost anyone's mood by organizing scattered thoughts, dissecting fears, and relieving some anxieties through providing people with an opportunity to engage in positive self-talk or identify negative thoughts, reactions and triggers.

## **2. Journaling can be used as an opportunity to improve your writing.**

So, let's take it back to my childhood. By the age of about six, I knew how to properly date my papers and sign my name. Journaling is best known for artistry and expression, but it can also birth new writing skills and techniques. When I was younger, I always considered myself to be a "bad" writer because I did not know all the fancy rules that came with knowing how to write. There are rules and expectations about grammar that made me feel overwhelmed and dumb. Journaling is the perfect space for people to unlearn how "bad" of a writer they are and to be open to growing. There is a tie and relationship to writing that we, as Black people, need to break away from. You may have not been the best reader, spelling bee champ, or AP English student, but the power is truly in the pen and when you're consistently carving out time and putting in the practice by way of expression, your writing will take on more sophistication.

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## **3. Journaling can be a gateway to achievement.**

Journaling can create space for your every dream to progress. Allocating time to put ideas, dreams, and goals down on paper can be one form of accountability. Why? Because there will always be something tangible to refer back to when you are doing your dream work. Not only does this provide a sense of accountability, but these same written down dreams and goals can be used as a way to visualize your future self. What you choose to journal and write down can function as a personal coach. Writing down ideas, dreams and goals can assist in identifying a pathway to those goals.

### **Closing:**

There is no how-to when it comes to journaling. What people choose to write about and share is solely up to their own discretion.

I suggest getting started right now. You're in college, and you're already in the midst of writing more than you ever have before. Start navigating through learning how to create your own safe space that leads you to express yourself freely. It helps, especially while being in college. Busy schedules, high demands and expectations, and the pace of being in college can result in college students missing out on the opportunity to vent; to make peace; to set goals that align with their overall dreams; and to simply reflect. Journaling provokes students to reflect and serve themselves emotionally with a sense of purpose. Gratitude.

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## MONEY\$

Whether you call it dinero, coin, bag, guwop, cheddar, bread or just money, we need to talk about the way you are budgeting and spending it. I'll give you the budget I (try to) use.

I will start by saying that most institutions have resources for their students from personal advisors to workshops about money. Do not wait until you are in a financial crisis in order to speak up. A simple Google search can assist one with some answers to your money related questions.



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Let's talk about everyone's **FAVORITE** time in the semester, the direct deposit when your refund check hits! Please understand that some of you are requesting and receiving excess loans, which means you need to pay this back in full PLUS interest. Remember this before you blow through a few thousand dollars that you cannot show how you benefited from it a year later.

I am guilty of literally blowing a refund check (or a few) on purchases I cannot even account for. I am currently sighing at my levels of unnecessary student loan debt. Given my trial and tribulations with my money management, I encourage you to only request as much loan money you NEED to cover your expenses. If they give you extra loan money, give it back! Your future finances will thank me.

For those who get a refund check from scholarships, please use it wisely or put the money into a savings account and forget about it. Many college students are in between blessings (broke), so you can wait until you get that degree to buy that Louie bag or Moncler or take that trip to Cancun . Know your limits, and create habits that will propel you for a lifetime.

# COLLEGE SURVIVAL GUIDE

Below you will find a sample budget with an exhaustive list of likely expenses for an academic year:

## FALL SEMESTER

Income	Amount
Estimated monthly income (jobs and allowances)	
Refund check	
Other income	
<b>Total income</b>	<b>0</b>
Monthly Expenses	Amount
Rent	
Water/Sewer/Trash	
Electricity	
Gas (utility)	
Car note	
Car insurance	
Gas (car)	
Groceries	
Credit Card	
Laundry	
Wi-Fi	
Entertainment	
Travel	
Get Me Lit	
Medical Expenses	
Toiletries(body wash, paper towels, toilet paper, face wash, toothpaste, etc)	
Hair (barber, stylists, products)	
Nails (nails, polish)	
Personal care (massages, facials, waxes)	
Miscellaneous/incidentals	
<b>Total Monthly Expenses</b>	<b>0</b>
School Expenses	Amount
Tuition	
Books	
Room & Board	
Transportation	
Parking	
Other (lab fees, technology, etc.)	
<b>Total School Expenses</b>	<b>0</b>
Estimated Semester Income	<b>0</b>
Estimated Full Semester Expenses	<b>0</b>
Estimated gap	<b>0</b>

# COLLEGE SURVIVAL GUIDE

Below you will find a sample budget with an exhaustive list of likely expenses for an academic year:

## SPRING SEMESTER

Income	Amount
Estimated monthly income (jobs and allowances)	
Refund check	
Other income	
<b>Total income</b>	<b>0</b>
Monthly Expenses	Amount
Rent	
Water/Sewer/Trash	
Electricity	
Gas (utility)	
Car note	
Car insurance	
Gas (car)	
Groceries	
Credit Card	
Laundry	
Wi-Fi	
Entertainment	
Travel	
Get Me Lit	
Medical Expenses	
Toiletries(body wash, paper towels, toilet paper, face wash, toothpaste, etc)	
Hair (barber, stylists, products)	
Nails (nails, polish)	
Personal care (massages, facials, waxes)	
Miscellaneous/incidentals	
<b>Total Monthly Expenses</b>	<b>0</b>
School Expenses	Amount
Tuition	
Books	
Room & Board	
Transportation	
Parking	
Other (lab fees, technology, etc.)	
<b>Total School Expenses</b>	<b>0</b>
Estimated Semester Income	<b>0</b>
Estimated Full Semester Expenses	<b>0</b>
Estimated gap	<b>0</b>

# COLLEGE SURVIVAL GUIDE

Below you will find a sample budget with an exhaustive list of likely expenses for an academic year:

## SPRING BREAK

Expenses	Amount
Flights	
Ubers & Transportation	
Hotel	
Breakfast/Lunch	
Dinner	
Excursions	
Ger Me Lit	
Parties/Clubs	
Souvenirs	
Outside US Phone Bill	
Miscellaneous/incidentals	
Trip Total	0

### Trip Tips

- Use student websites that may give flight discounts like STAtravel or StudentUniverse
- Plan ahead & create possible itineraries to get close to an accurate trip budget
- Momondo is a good website if you want to go anywhere on a specific budget
- Only book a housing accommodations under your name if you trust ALL parties involved
- Live within your means, people only post the good on IG anyway

I like numbers and am an excel freak, so if you do not like my spreadsheet I recommend utilizing apps, like Mint. I will forewarn you that Mint counts EVERY cent and my first few months I would get frustrated with myself because I didn't know my true spending habits were that bad. Be ready for that reality check and accountability partner all within an app! No they didn't sponsor me. However, if somebody from Mint sees this you can start a scholarship on my behalf ;)

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Next we are going to focus on everybody's favorite subject credit cards!

## **A CREDIT CARD IS NOT A SECOND OR SUPPLEMENT INCOME!**

If you decide you are disciplined enough to own a credit card, do your research and consider:

-Is there an annual fee for the credit card?

-What is the APR rate? (Annual Percentage Rate, which what the credit card company will charge

**-Do I have a limit?**

**-Can I use it outside the US?**

**-What expenses do I anticipate to use the credit card for?**

**-How much can I afford to repay on my credit card a month?**

## **Tools for Money Management: Apps**

**-Mint: Tracks spending, money, and budgets. You can use this app to see where your money is going, set alerts when you are spending too much, and even provide personalized suggestions based on your habits.**

**-Digit: An automated app that takes out money, applies it towards different saving goals and finds ways to save based on your personal spending habits. It's \$2.99 a month.**

### **Websites:**

The federal government provides information and tools specifically for college students about financial resources: <https://studentaid.gov/resources/prepare-for-college/students/budgeting>.

**-Nerdwallet.com:** Type in "student" in the search bar you will find information and resources on everything from student credit cards to student loans.

**-TheCollegeInvestor.com:** Targets college students and millennials. Discussion topics are organized as resources for specific states, personal finances, and side hustles.

### **Podcasts:**

**-Journey to Launch:** Helps Black people become more financially literate

**-The College Investor:** The podcast goes in-depth from the topics on the website

## 10 Necessary Skills to Be Successful in College

Consultant: Dr. Candace Hallcanhall@siue.edu

**1** Persistence: Not giving up is half the battle. Find your motivation to show up as your best self to work everyday. If you struggle, ask for help. Whatever you do, do not give up. Persistence is key.

**2** Communication: Learn how to communicate with others. DO NOT MAKE ASSUMPTIONS. Learn how to advocate for yourself and talk about what you need. Professors, staff, and family do not know what you may need and it is not fair to assume for they are mind readers.

**3** Resourcefulness: Learn the resources your institution provides and what is available to you as a student. Learn to take advantage of the offices you may need: financial aid, student disability office, student organizations, and other opportunities your campus may offer are a few ideas to start.

**4** Networking: Start building your network early. Get to know people on campus. Your network should include faculty, staff, peers, and possibly administration (whether in your department or for the college) who are like-minded. Networking can provide you opportunities to open doors you don't even know existed!

**5** Find focus: Find a subject matter in which you want to develop an expertise. Explore before you decide and then, focus.

## 10 Necessary Skills to Be Successful in College

Consultant: Dr. Candace Hallcanhall@siue.edu

- 6 Good decision making: You decide what your college experience will be. Do you want to go to that party or do your assignment? Are you going to spend your last for that Spring Break trip or are you going to save your money? Decisions always have an opportunity cost. An opportunity cost is what you will gain/lose from one decision compared to a different decision.
- 7 Learning to be uncomfortable: Learn to work with people who are different from you. Step outside of your comfort zone and learn to try new experiences in a safe environment.
- 8 Know your worth: No matter where you are in life, you have quality skills, experiences, and perspectives to bring to the table. You came to college as a unique individual with value to add to the experiences of others. You came with the foundation to be great! The price has been up, do not allow yourself to think less of yourself than that.
- 9 Resilience: You have to bounce back from every time you take an L! The “loss” will not define who you are as a person and you cannot allow yourself to feel like a failure! Take what happened, feel how you feel about the situation, and come back STRONGER. What Cardi say, “Knock me down 9 times, but I get up 10”!
- 10 Flexible: Things may not work out in the way that you imagined. Your pursuit to graduation might not look like a straight line! You will have some dips, bumps, and curves on your journey, but your goal of completion will be the same.

## Thank you.

Thank you for taking the time out to read this for me! Thank you to my support system who **NEVER** gave up on me during this process!

B I G thanks to teachers/professors/staff who spoke life into me and aided in guiding me through school. \*sorry for the stress I probably caused\*

Woodlawn Community School  
Andrew Carnegie Elementary School  
Kenwood Academy High School  
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville