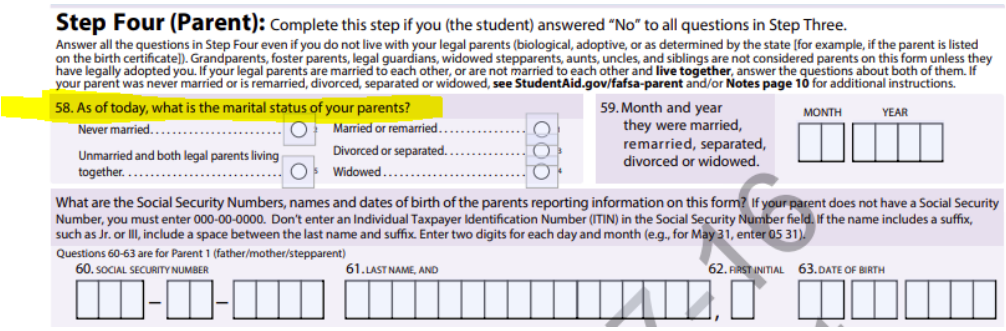
Financial Aid: Tips and Tricks

Here are some Tips to assist students and parents with filling out their financial aid applications that can help avoid conflicts or errors down the road.

- Creating and FSA ID for FAFSA completion tutorial: https://youtu.be/yj1Pn-shze8 Both the student and one parent will need to have an FSA ID to complete the FAFSA. **IMPORTANT! The student and parent should not use the same email or phone number to create their FSA ID. The email address and phone numbers are used to reset lost passwords per individual accounts.**
- Students often confuse graduate/professional with meaning graduating from high school. The question is asking about **what DEGREE** will the student be working on after graduating high school.
- The 2023-2024 FAFSA **uses the 2021 Tax Return** information. Both the parent(s) and the student that earned wages in 2021 will need to report their income.
- Parent's that have untaxed income must report it on the FAFSA. Untaxed income include worker compensation, unemployment benefits and disability benefits, etc.
- Students that did
- not earn income for the 2021 tax year, should still address all the questions; even if the answer is zero. **Do not leave fields blank.**
- The FAFSA is asking questions **as of the date of completion**, what is the parent's **current marital** status and who is a part of the household.



Step Four (Parent): Complete this step if you (the student) answered "No" to all questions in Step Three.

Answer all the questions in Step Four even if you do not live with your legal parents (biological, adoptive, or as determined by the state [for example, if the parent is listed on the birth certificate]). Grandparents, foster parents, legal guardians, widowed stepparents, aunts, uncles, and siblings are not considered parents on this form unless they have legally adopted you. If your legal parents are married to each other, or are not married to each other and **live together**, answer the questions about both of them. If your parent was never married or is remarried, divorced, separated or widowed, **see StudentAid.gov/fafsa-parent** and/or **Notes page 10** for additional instructions.

58. As of today, what is the marital status of your parents?

Never married. . . . . 1 | Married or remarried. 2
Unmarried and both legal parents living together. . . . . 3 | Divorced or separated. 4
Widowed. 5

59. Month and year they were married, remarried, separated, divorced or widowed. MONTH YEAR

What are the Social Security Numbers, names and dates of birth of the parents reporting information on this form? If your parent does not have a Social Security Number, you must enter 000-00-0000. Don't enter an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) in the Social Security Number field. If the name includes a suffix, such as Jr. or III, include a space between the last name and suffix. Enter two digits for each day and month (e.g., for May 31, enter 05 31).

Questions 60-63 are for Parent 1 (father/mother/stepparent)

60. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER 61. LAST NAME, AND 62. FIRST INITIAL 63. DATE OF BIRTH

Chart to determine Who is the parent(s) to go on the FAFSA:

Parents' Marital Status:	Provide Information for:
Never Married	The parent that you lived with most during the last 12 months. If you did not live with one parent more than the other, provide information about the parent who provided more financial support during the last 12 months, or during the most recent year that you actually received support from a parent.
Unmarried and both legal parents living together	Both of your legal parents
Married	Both of your parents
Remarried (after being widowed or divorced)	Parent and Stepparent
Divorced or Separated	The parent that you lived with most during the last 12 months. If you did not live with one parent more than the other, provide information about the parent who provided more financial support during the last 12 months, or during the most recent year that you actually received support from a parent.
Widowed	Your parent