

Community college an underused option for seniors

Low prices, easy transfers, 2-yr colleges benefit students

by Connor Josellis

While community colleges continue to become more popular nationwide, only 3 percent to 5 percent of New Trier students attended a community college last year according to Post-High School counselor Michael O'Connor.

After two years at a community college, one receives an associate's degree certifies two years of courses have been completed.

Depending on the major, many students nationwide transfer directly to a four year college. This is an extremely popular option for many U.S. college kids.

Transferring from Oakton Community College to a university such as the University of Illinois is easier than it seems, O'Connor said.

"There's an engineering agreement to get into U of I: if you complete this engineering sequence at Oakton or any community college, they say 'we'll take you automatically,' O'Connor said. "But I think some students have a hard time buying into that."

Although community colleges offer great financial savings, some



Oakton Community College, a popular two year college | Facebook

New Trier students don't find a two year college favorable. O'Connor said he thinks students want more of a "normal" college experience. "Dorm room, social experience, that's kind of an added piece that is expected [in a traditional college]," O'Connor said.

Junior Chloe Becker said she feels that there is a stigma around two year colleges and that her family also affects her choice.

"My family has always gone to a four year college, so that kind of influences me a lot in my decision," Becker said.

Senior Lauren Engelhard, said

she might consider it for summer school credits, but that there is an expectation to attend a renowned school.

"I would consider it for summer school to get extra credits," Englehard said. "I think around here there is an expectation to go to a more prestigious school, rather than a community college, because around here it is not viewed as the same quality."

Junior Peter Jacus agreed, "I might go to a community college for summer school to get credits, but I'd probably still want to go to a state school."

Jacus cites a state school experience as one reason he might choose a four year college, but often, two year colleges are located near larger, four year colleges. For example: in Champaign, near the U of I, is Parkland Community College.

Similarly, Kirkwood Community College is near the University of Iowa. These schools allow a student to get their freshman and sophomore courses out of the way at a lower cost, with a college atmosphere around them. It can also help a student adjust to a larger college campus atmosphere if a student plans on transferring there.

While at the community college, college classes are offered that are near identical to those at a four year college, but with smaller class sizes.

The credits gained during the first two years can then transfer over to a new college. These class credits are received at a smaller price, compared to a Big Ten or Ivy League school.

Social Studies teacher Todd Maxman said that since most freshman and sophomore year classes are general education, it's smart to get them out of the way at low cost.

O'Connor agreed, saying that the ideal candidate for a two year college is a student who is aware of the costs and the financial benefits,

and could benefit from a small class size during the high school to college transition.

Engelhard also acknowledged the financial benefits. "For some students and their families, it's a really good idea to attend community college for one or two years to save money and get your requirements out of the way."

According to College Simply, Oakton's current total average in-state cost, including tuition, books and other fees is less than half of the University of Illinois's. U of I's website puts the total average in-state cost at the University of Illinois in between \$30,346 and \$35,350 per year.

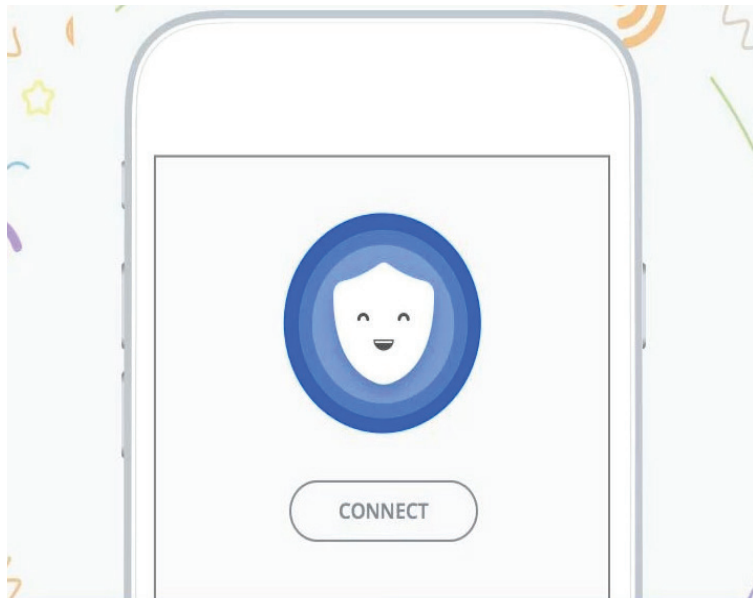
In Jan. 15, President Obama announced plans to make community college free for low income students. In July 2015, a bill was introduced to reinforce the President's wishes.

There has been a push in recent years to find a way to lower tuition at all levels of schooling, especially at expensive state schools.

One answer might be as simple as not attending them for all four years.

Jacus commented on the rising trend. "Raising tuition costs are creating a gap between the rich and the poor, and I think community colleges will become more popular as that happens."

VPN poses security threat to users



You have access to all websites and apps.

Betternet, one of the most widely used VPN apps at New Trier | Google Play

Are VPNs putting student privacy at risk?

by Daniel Fay

While trying to use banned websites like Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram at school, students could be compromising their pictures, passwords and even credit cards.

Many students are using Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) instead of the school's network to access social media websites that the school blocks. Unfortunately, while these free VPN apps are convenient and easy to install, they are deceptively dangerous.

A VPN is a network. It could be created by anyone, and then when it is used, all your information goes through this network. "This means that your iPad's info is being accessed by a person that you don't know," warned lead technology Technician Mike Valadez, "The info could now be sent anywhere without your knowing, and every

iPad at the school is registered with a credit card. That is now potentially compromised."

Valadez thinks that the main reason they can be so dangerous is that students don't know what they are.

"VPNs don't have any risks, right?" Sophomore Jason Born asked. "My friend put it on my iPad and now I can use Snapchat. It's pretty cool."

But there are many risks. One VPN user, who requested anonymity, said that she had her Snapchat hacked two days after downloading the app.

"This man I didn't know just started sending things to me and my friends," she said. "It was the creepiest thing I've ever experienced."

Some students think that social network sites shouldn't be blocked at all. Freshman Leo Kim argued, "I mean we are at school for seven hours, and even more with extracurriculars. I think we have the right to at least check social media."

The widespread opinion among the student body is that social media should be allowed, and that the students themselves should be responsible for the consequences of

their actions.

Lead Mac technician Moira Gitau explained that by law gambling and pornography websites must be blocked. Other sites are blocked to protect the school from a legal standpoint if anything controversial were to happen on social media over the school's network.

"It is up to administration and the school's lawyers to decide what is blocked for liability reasons," Valdez added.

But VPNs aren't all dangerous and insecure. On fact, their professional application is to provide a secure work domain.

"The teachers are actually provided with a VPN to ensure that they can access the school network securely from their home," Valdez said.

The difference is the VPN provided for the staff is credible and paid for by the school, while the ones used by students are free and not at all secure or credible.

"That is why I don't use a VPN anymore. I realized that it wasn't worth it," junior Matthew Kim said.

"Once it's out there, it's out there, there is no getting it back," warned Gitau. Any passwords, online banking, or apple ID purchases made on the VPN have been irreversibly compromised.

Using VPNs also prevents many of the features of the iPad that are necessary from working properly. Students with VPNs have trouble with the printing and remote file access.

"We have had a flood of students with iPad problems and when the VPN is disabled, the problems completely stop," Gitau said.

As technology becomes more and more a part of the everyday, it's important to understand how it works so that you are safe online.

Gitau added, "If you don't know how it works then don't take the gamble. Instead of being a question of Facebook, or no Facebook it should be a question of being secure or being vulnerable."

AP bio changes continued from page 1

this year. Due to the 2014 restructuring of AP Physics from AP Physics B to AP Physics 1 and 2, the science department has been revisiting the curriculums of all AP courses to see how students can be better prepared in their earlier science classes.

curriculums within 4-level PCB Bio and AP Biology, and decided that motivated students would be able to be successful in the class without taking 4-level Bio as a prerequisite.

Burnside doesn't feel that students who take AP Bio without the prerequisite of another bio class will struggle more than others. "I think the way we have it [the AP Bio class] set up affords everybody the

opportunity to be successful," he said.

But Burnside also stressed that the choice to take AP Bio is ultimately influenced by the rigor of the rest of the schedule. "It's a load issue. This is very philosophical, but in all our lives we can't do everything. You need to kind of pick and choose and decide. It's an option for a student it will fit for and if it fits into their schedule," Burnside said.

Students are aware of this, and those who are planning on taking AP Bio seem to be up for the challenge. Sophomore Mia Lecinski said, "I don't think it'll be that much more stressful because it's mainly more textbook reading."

Ethics bowl continued from page 1

greatest thing about these types of conversations we have is that, in the end, we get to the best answer."

While it was a competition between five schools, junior Louis Shaw noted that it was more of a group effort.

"It has a similar structure to a debate, except opposing teams don't necessarily have to disagree with each other," Shaw said. "Instead, it is a collaborative discussion between two teams about the issues of a real-world scenario."

Christensen agreed with Shaw. She said teams don't go into the bowl with the sole objective of winning. Rather, the team's main goal is to work off of their opponents' ideas to develop the strongest argument.

Each round, one of the judges asked the teams a specific question based on one of the given scenarios.

There was an array of professors and graduate students in different areas of ethics, such as philosophy and bioethics, who served as judges on Saturday.

The teams of students were given two minutes to figure out their stance and five minutes to present it. After it was presented,

the opposing team had one minute to confer and three minutes to provide a commentary with their counter argument.

The first team had another minute to confer again and three minutes to respond. The judges then questioned the first team for ten minutes, asking follow up questions about the same scenario.

For the second half of the first round, the teams' roles were reversed, and the second team presented their argument first.

"This was enjoyable because they weren't trying to shoot down our arguments as much as understand them better," Shaw said.

Although this was a small, regional bowl, Christensen believed the team had great momentum and will continue in the years to come.

"Certainly if it happens again, I would love to take another team next year," Christensen said.

Shaw also had hopes for the club's future.

"We feel as though we can engage in deeper discussions and that the Philosophy Club is heading in a forward direction for next year."