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Engaging Modern Learners
For Life

Texting Tips

Avoid spam filters, choose the right type of
message, and manage texting etiquette

Agenda

1. Intro
2. FCC Rules
3. Contact Segmentation
4. Vary Message Types
5. Other Tips
6. Q&A
7. Close

FCC Texting Rules

Frequency and content

- Text messages should not be sent excessively or in a manner that could be considered harassing or abusive. Guideline is no more than 1 or 2 per week.
  - This limitation does not apply to the back-and-forth of a conversation, just initial nudges

- Messages cannot be sent between 9pm and 8am local time

- Content cannot be misleading, deceptive or illegal
  - Not a problem for typical higher education use cases

Target the right contacts

Target the correct audience – data, data, data!

- Are you sending FAFSA reminders to seniors?

- Are you reminding folks to apply who are enrolled?

- Graduation reminder to a first year?

🎯 **Bad vs. Better Targeting Examples**

❌ **Poor Targeting:**
"Don't forget to complete orientation!"
(Sent to students already enrolled for 2 semesters.)

✅ **Better Targeting (new admits only):**
"Welcome again! Orientation opens next week! Want a sneak peek at what to expect?"

🎯 Bad vs. Better Targeting Examples

❌ **Poor Targeting:**
"Time to register for next semester!"
(Sent to students who already registered.)

✅ **Better Targeting (only unregistered):**
"Spots are filling fast! Finish registration now to lock in your ideal schedule! Need help?"

🎯 **Bad vs. Better Targeting Examples**

❌ **Poor Targeting:**
"Apply for graduation today!"
(Sent to first-years.)

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✅ **Better Targeting (based on credits > 90):**
"You're almost there! 🎓 Ready to apply to graduate? Here's your next step: [link]"

⊙ Bad vs. Better Targeting Examples

❌ **Poor Targeting:**
"Need help choosing a major?"
(Sent to students with declared majors.)

✅ **Better Targeting (undeclared students):**
"Still exploring majors? Take our 2-minute quiz to match with your strengths: [link]"

🎯 **Bad vs. Better Targeting Examples**

❌ **Poor Targeting:**
"Still thinking about coming to Message University?
(Sent to enrolled students.)

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✅ **Better Targeting (prospects or admits who haven't enrolled):**
"We're holding your spot! Need help with registration or housing? Let's talk."

Segment your audience

- Specificity matters

- Use Advanced Search to segment your audience

Advanced Search

Match if [All ⌄] rules are met

Rule #1   (rename rule)   (delete rule)

If [All ⌄] of the following conditions are met

[fafsa_submitted ⌄] [equals ⌄] [False ⌄] ✕

+ add another condition

+ add another rule

Cancel   Search
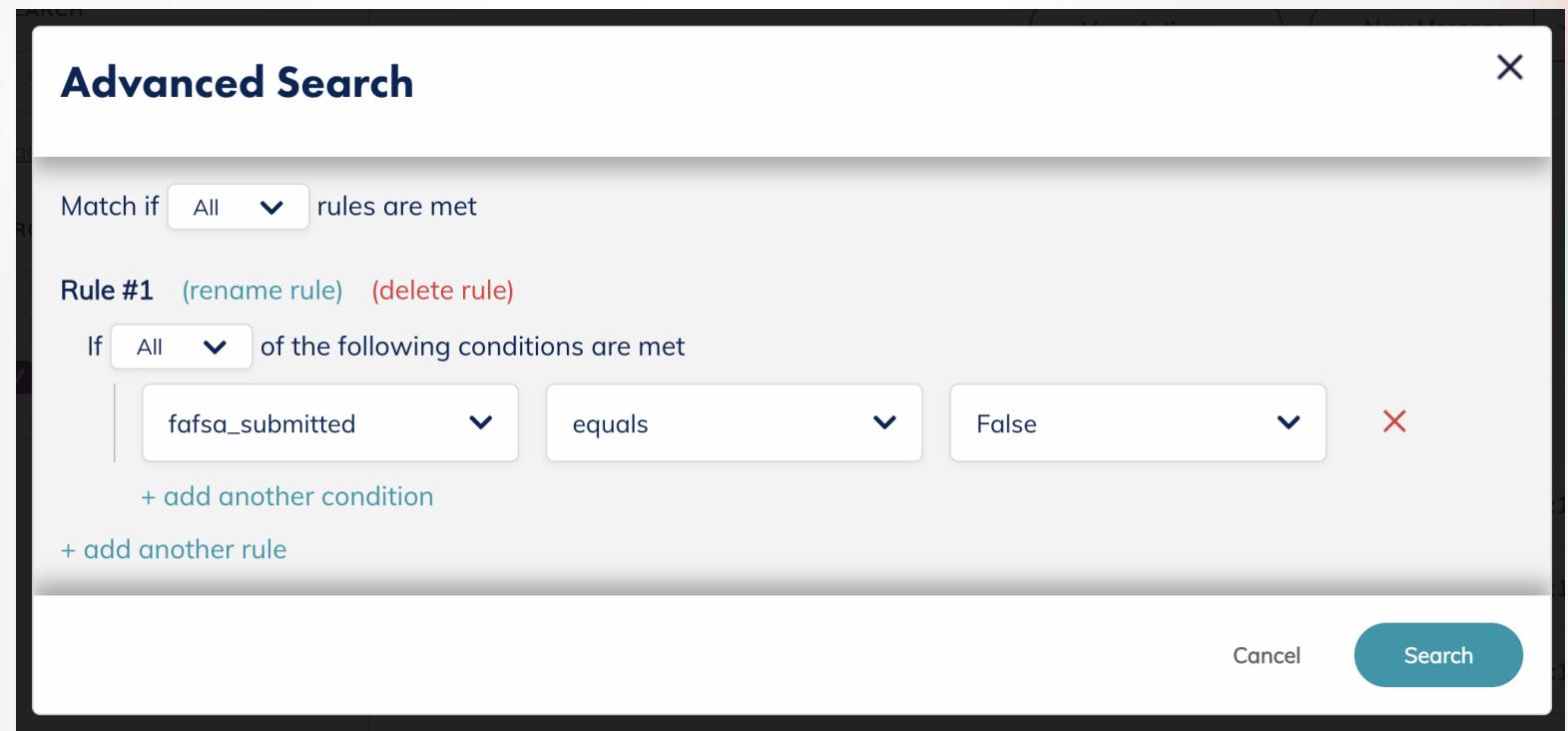
Demo how to use advanced search

Learning styles and interests vary. The more diverse your approach, the more likely you are to **reach someone right when they're ready to act.**

Vary Your Message Content

🚫 **Avoid Copy-Paste Fatigue** – Slightly vary your wording even within a campaign.

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👤 **Personalized vs. Generic** – "You told us you're interested in nursing. FAFSA can help pay for it!"

📷 **Use Images/Links/GIFs** – A GIF can draw attention, a FAFSA help link can remove friction.

Vary Your Message Types

✅ **Tips** – "Hot tip: You can submit the FAFSA before choosing a school."

💻 Resources – "You can find your FAFSA ID here: https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/sign-in/retrieve-username"

⏰ **Reminders** – "FAFSA deadline is coming up! Need help?"

📚 **Informational** – "FAFSA can help you get grants, not just loans."

🤝 **Check-ins** – "Hey, how's the FAFSA going? Need help or stuck?"

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Examples: Tips

📌 Tips

Instead of…	Try…
"Complete your FAFSA soon."	"Tip: You don't need your final tax return to start the FAFSA—get a head start!"
"Start your application today."	"Hack: FAFSA takes less than 30 min if you gather your info ahead of time. Need the list?"

📌 **Tips**

Instead of…	Try…
"Don't forget to meet with your advisor."	"Tip: Meeting your advisor before midterms can unlock better class choices (and help avoid stress later). Want a link to book?"
"Use the writing center for help with essays."	"Essay due? The writing center isn't just for English majors. They'll help brainstorm too!"

Examples: Reminders

⏰ **Reminders**

Instead of…	Try…
"Don't forget your FAFSA deadline!"	"Psst… 5 days left to grab free money for college. You in? Y/N"
"You haven't finished your FAFSA."	"Still thinking about college/training? Your FAFSA is waiting—and it's not too late."

⏰ Reminders

Instead of…	Try…
"Registration opens Monday."	"Hey [First Name], class sign-ups start Monday! Want help picking your best-fit schedule?"
"Career fair today at 4pm!"	"📣 Free food, resume tips, and alumni connections. Career fair at 4pm in Mariano Hall!

Examples: Informational

📚 Informational

Instead of…	Try…
"Did you submit your FAFSA?"	"FAFSA = access to work-study, scholarships, and state aid. Not just loans."
"Have you applied yet?"	"You don't need perfect grades to qualify for FAFSA funding. Want help starting? Y/N"

📚 Informational

Instead of…	Try…
"Join student orgs here: [link]."	"Being in just one club boosts your chance of staying in college. Want recs for clubs that match your interests?"
"It's time to check your degree audit."	"Your degree audit is your GPS. It shows what you've done and what's left. Want help checking yours?"

Examples: Don't Assume Knowledge

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❗ Don't Assume Knowledge

Instead of…	Try…
"Use your FSA ID."	"FAFSA = access to work-study, scholarships, and state aid. Not just loans."
"Have you applied?"	"You don't need perfect grades to qualify for FAFSA funding. Want help starting? Y/N"

❗ Don't Assume Knowledge

Instead of…	Try…
"Complete your hold forms."	"You've got a 'hold' on your account. That means you can't register yet. Want help clearing it?"
"Attend tutoring."	"Tutoring = free one-on-one help from trained students who passed the class. Interested?"

Examples: Check-Ins

🤝 Check-Ins

Instead of…	Try…
"I see haven't finished FAFSA. What's going on?"	"What's holding you back from finishing FAFSA? Text: A) Time B) Parent info C) ID stuff"
"We can help if you need it."	"Hey [First Name], need a hand with FAFSA? We've got a few 10-min slots this week. Sign up here: www.message.edu/slots"

🤝 Check-Ins

Instead of…	Try…
"How are classes going?"	"Midterms done? How are you feeling? Text A) Good B) Meh C) Need support"
"Use campus resources."	"Stressed? Campus has free wellness coaches and therapy dogs this week 🐶 Want info?"

Examples: Personalize

👤 **Personalized vs. Generic**

Instead of…	Try…
"FAFSA helps pay for school."	"Want to be a welder? A dental assistant? FAFSA can help cover trade school too."
"FAFSA deadline is here."	"[First Name], based on your interest in child development, FAFSA could cover classes to help you get certified. Want to chat?"

👤 Personalized vs. Generic

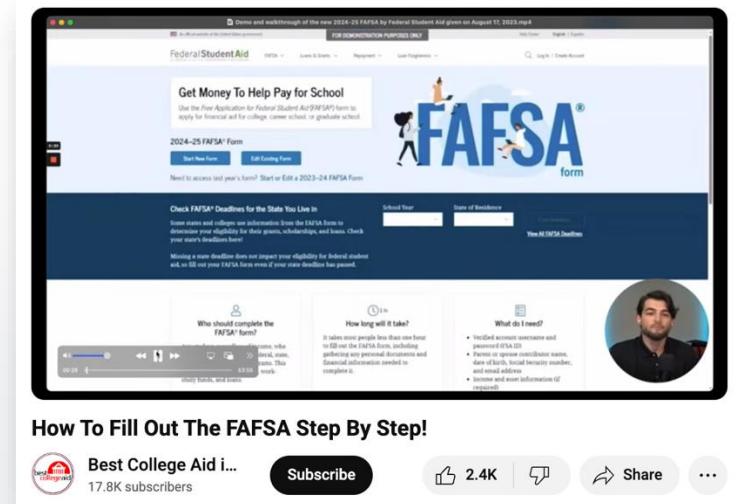| Instead of…	Try…
"Student support is available."	"Want to be a welder? A dental assistant? FAFSA can help cover trade school too."
"Join our student events."	"You said you're into photography—there's a free photo walk and editing workshop Friday. Want to RSVP?"

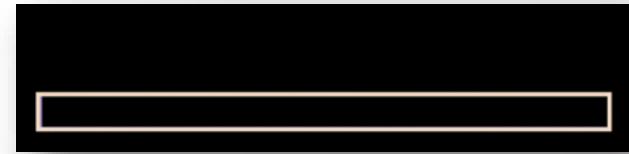# Examples: Images, Links, Gifs

📷 Images, Links, GIFs

- Use a progress bar GIF for "You're 60% done—just a few more steps!"

- Link to a FAFSA walk-through video

- Share a meme: *"Trying to do FAFSA without help? Cue the confusion face. We got you—text 'HELP' anytime."*

How To Fill Out The FAFSA Step By Step!

Best College Aid i...   Subscribe   👍 2.4K   👎   ↗ Share   ...
17.8K subscribers

📸 Images, Links, GIFs

- **Image:** "Here's the campus shuttle route—zoom in to see all stops 🚌"

- **GIF:** Animated countdown for "3 days until Fall Fest!"

- **Link:** "Need a job on campus? Start here: [job board link]"

NO LINK SHORTENORS!

- Always use the full url
- Using bitly or tinyurl can result in carrier rejection!

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Shorter Texts

Text Length

- Try to keep texts under 160 characters

- Splitting long messages helps with readability and makes the communication feel more conversational, especially for mobile-first students.

- Have a long text? Consider a program message with multiple parts!

Programmed Multi-Part Messages

Programmed Multi-Part Message Example

Part 1:
"Thinking about transferring? We've got options that save time & money."

Part 2:
"Join our info session Wed @ 6 PM. RSVP here: [link] or reply Y for a calendar invite."

Programmed Multi-Part Message Example

Part 1:
"Want to earn while you learn? Our apprenticeship programs pay you to build skills."

Part 2:
"Explore open spots here: [link] or reply INTERESTED for details."

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Programmed Multi-Part Message Example

Part 1:
"Hey [FirstName], we saw you didn't attend last week's advising session."

Part 2:
"Want to reschedule? We're holding slots just for you. Pick a time: [link]"

Timing and Responses

Timing

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- High schoolers respond best after school – around 2pm

- College students respond best between 10am-2pm

- Keep it to weekdays!

Make time to monitor your inbox

- Time messages that ask for response or will have questions, make sure you are staffed in the next few hours

- Keep that in mind when you're sending "after school"

- 2pm vs. 4pm

Response Tips

- Text the way you would talk on the phone or in person

- Seem human

- Don't be AI

- When you're chatting back and forth, wrap up the conversation

Be Natural – you're not AI and that's a plus!

Instead of…	Try…
"Thank you for your inquiry. Our office hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM EST. Please contact us if you require further assistance."	"Hey! Got your question — we're here 9–5 Mon–Fri if you wanna chat. Want me to send you the link now?"

Be Natural – you're not AI and that's a plus!

Instead of…	Try…
"Your appointment is confirmed."	"You're all set for your advising appointment 🙌 Let me know if anything changes!"

5.

Mini-Conversation

Message 1: "Hey Sarah — saw you started your registration but didn't finish. Want help?"

Student: "Yeah I got confused about the major stuff."

Message 2: "Totally get that. Want me to walk you through it or send a how-to guide?"

Student: "Guide would be great"

Message 3: "Here you go! [link] And hit me up if anything's unclear. You're almost there!"

When you're in a back-and-forth convo, wrap it up clearly.

Student: "Thanks, that helped!"

You: "Awesome — glad it worked! Text me if you hit a snag again. You've got this 💪"

Consistency

Be consistent

- Use your expertise and judgment
  - Weekly, biweekly for bulk and program
  - Personal messages as needed!

- Texting on regular schedule can help contacts get in the habit of receiving your messages and responding

- Avoids the "who is this?"

- Use program messages and bulk schedule messages

- You don't always have to demand something, you can send out a fun fact or well wish.

Examples: Keep the convo going!

Nudge vs. Nag

- **Nag**: "You still haven't filled out your FAFSA. Do it now."
- **Nudge**: "FAFSA unlocks money for your future. Need help finishing it up?"
- 👉 *Framing matters. A nudge guides and empowers. A nag can shut down engagement.*

Consistent Program or Weekly/Biweekly Texts

Example 1 – Info-Only:

"Hey! Quick heads-up: Library hours are extended for finals week 📚 Open til midnight Mon–Thurs."

Example 2 – Light Touch Reminder:

"Just your friendly weekly ping 📲 Still thinking about switching majors? Let's chat about options!"

Example 3 – Encouragement:

- "Midterms are no joke — just a reminder that tutoring is free and easy to book. You got this 💪"

Personal Touch Check-Ins (as needed)

Example 4 – Low-stakes, no demand:

"Hey Jordan — just checking in. How's your first week back going?"

Example 5 – Random kindness:

• "Hope your week's off to a good start! Don't forget to drink water and take breaks 🌟"

Prevent the 'Who is this?' Problem

Keep it casual but clear, especially if it's your first outreach in a while:

"Hey! It's Kai from Student Services 👋 Just wanted to say good luck on finals, we're rooting for you!"

Fun & Friendly Filler Messages

Example 6 – Just because:

"Random trivia Tuesday: Today is national taco day! The dining hall serving up tacos until 9pm!?"

Example 7 – Seasonal + Helpful:

"Winter weather = commute chaos. Stay safe & check campus alerts if snow hits!"

Example 7 – Highlight Resources:

You've got access to free LinkedIn Learning! Build skills at your own pace

Start here: [link]

You don't have to keep up with the cool kids!

Slang and Abbreviations

- Avoid outdated abbreviations
- Don't use slang if you don't know the meaning!

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Avoid Outdated or Confusing Abbreviations

Instead of…	Try…
"Gr8 job on ur reg! Plz LMK if u need hlp."	"Nice work registering! Let me know if anything's confusing."
"You're killing it fam! Let's vibe on some course scheds 😎"	"Hey! You crushed your first week 🎉 Need help finding your next class?"

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UC user conference

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Q&A

Please put your questions in the Q&A box.

I'll get to as many as possible and follow up via email if more research is needed!

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Survey Time!

2 minutes! Thank you so much!

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* 3. Overall, were you satisfied with your training?

○ Yes

○ No

* 4. On the following scale, how **helpful** and **informative** was the training **_webinar?_**

1 - Not Helpful	2	3 - Neutral	4	5 - Helpful
○	○	○	○	○

Additional comments to reflect your score.

5. Additional feedback? We value your feedback and use it to improve the quality of our training webinars over time.

6. Don't see a session that sparks your interest? Leave us a comment with a topic that we can build a session around in the future!