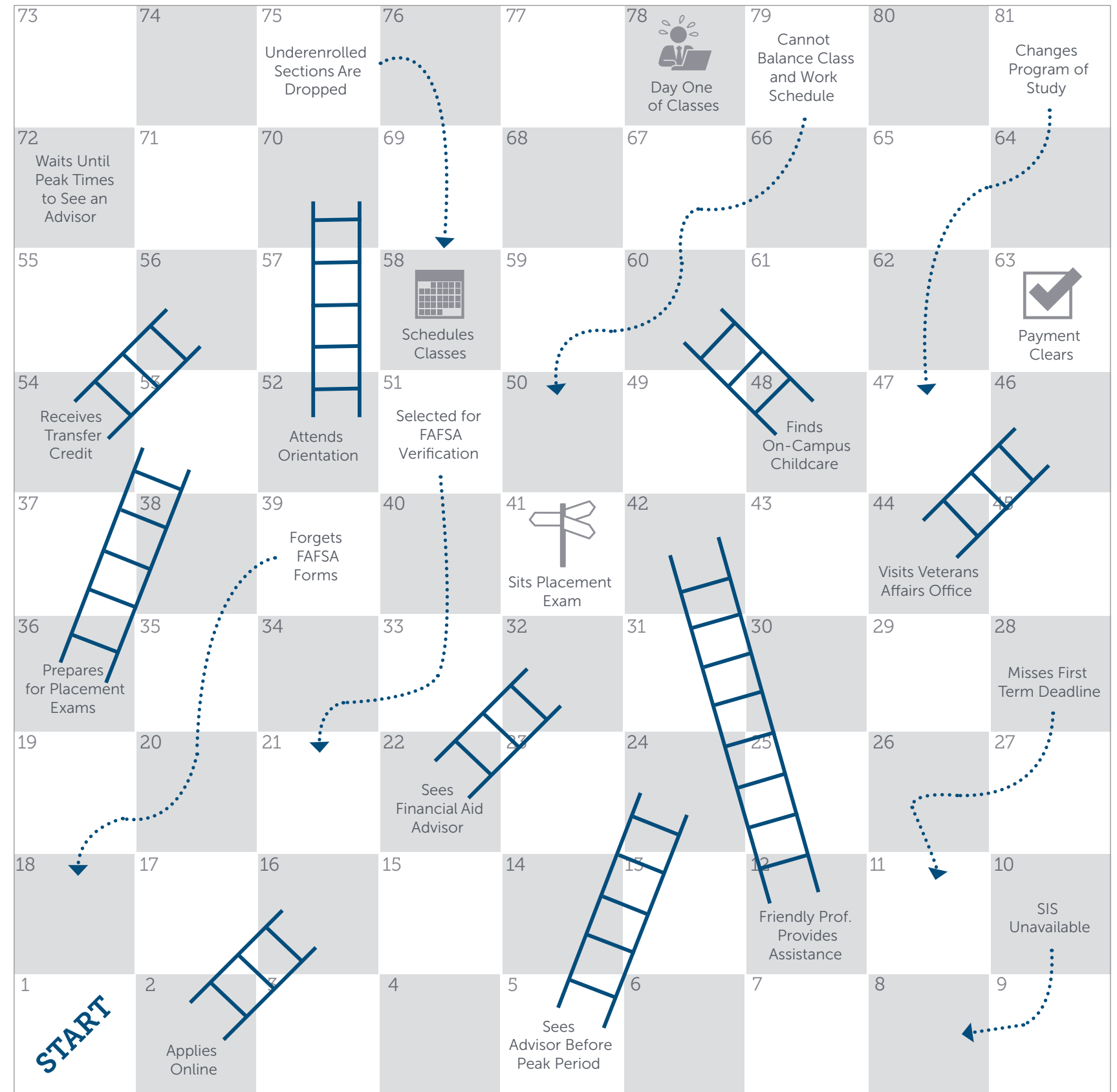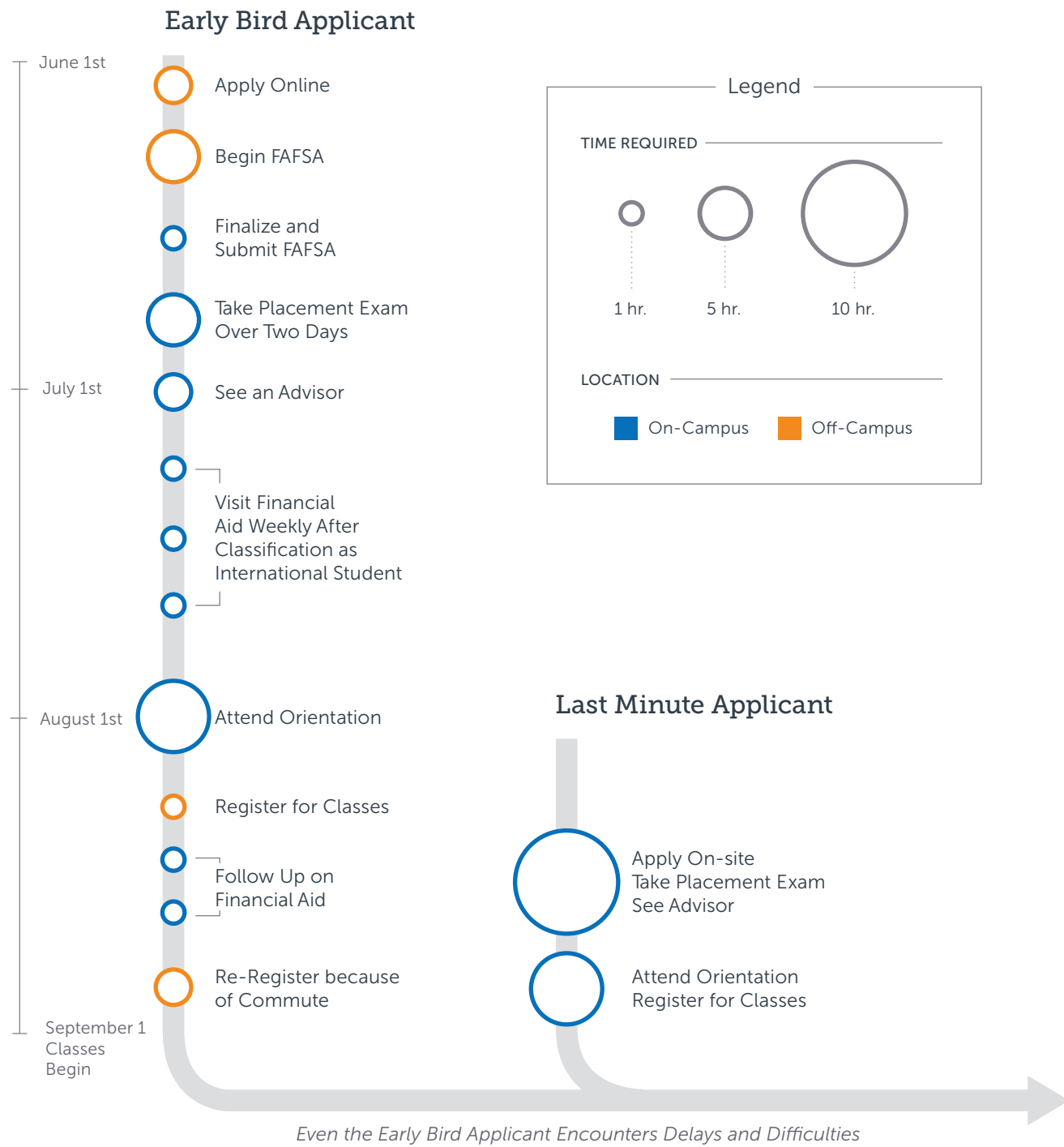# Student Onboarding Akin to "Chutes and Ladders"

Uncommon Persistence and College Navigation Skills Needed
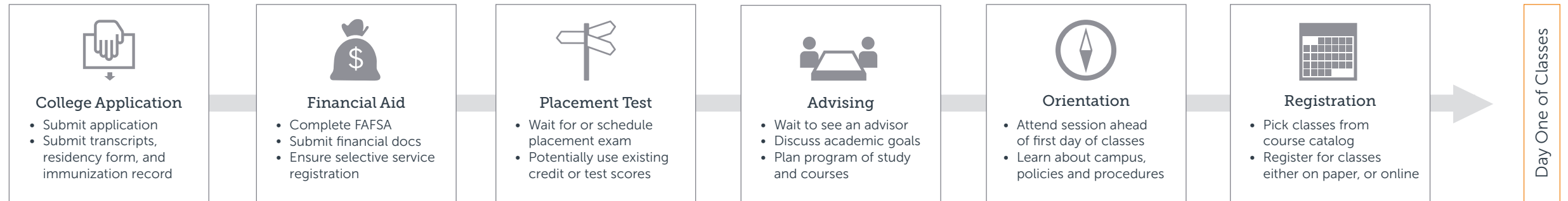
Early Bird Applicant

June 1st
- Apply Online
- Begin FAFSA
- Finalize and Submit FAFSA

July 1st
- Take Placement Exam Over Two Days
- See an Advisor
- Visit Financial Aid Weekly After Classification as International Student

August 1st
- Attend Orientation
- Register for Classes
- Follow Up on Financial Aid

September 1 Classes Begin
- Re-Register because of Commute

Even the Early Bird Applicant Encounters Delays and Difficulties

Legend

TIME REQUIRED

1 hr.   5 hr.   10 hr.

LOCATION

■ On-Campus   ■ Off-Campus

Last Minute Applicant

- Apply On-site Take Placement Exam See Advisor
- Attend Orientation Register for Classes

Game Board

73	74	75 Underenrolled Sections Are Dropped	76	77	78 Day One of Classes	79 Cannot Balance Class and Work Schedule	80	81 Changes Program of Study
72 Waits Until Peak Times to See an Advisor	71	70	69	68	67	66	65	64
55	56	57	58 Schedules Classes	59	60	61	62	63 Payment Clears
54 Receives Transfer Credit	53	52 Attends Orientation	51 Selected for FAFSA Verification	50	49	48 Finds On-Campus Childcare	47	46
37	38	39 Forgets FAFSA Forms	40	41 Sits Placement Exam	42	43	44 Visits Veterans Affairs Office	45
36 Prepares for Placement Exams	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28 Misses First Term Deadline
19	20	21	22 Sees Financial Aid Advisor	23	24	25	26	27
18	17	16	15	14	13 Friendly Prof. Provides Assistance	12	11	10 SIS Unavailable
1 START	2 Applies Online	3	4	5 Sees Advisor Before Peak Period	6	7	8	9

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Not As Easy As One-Two-Three

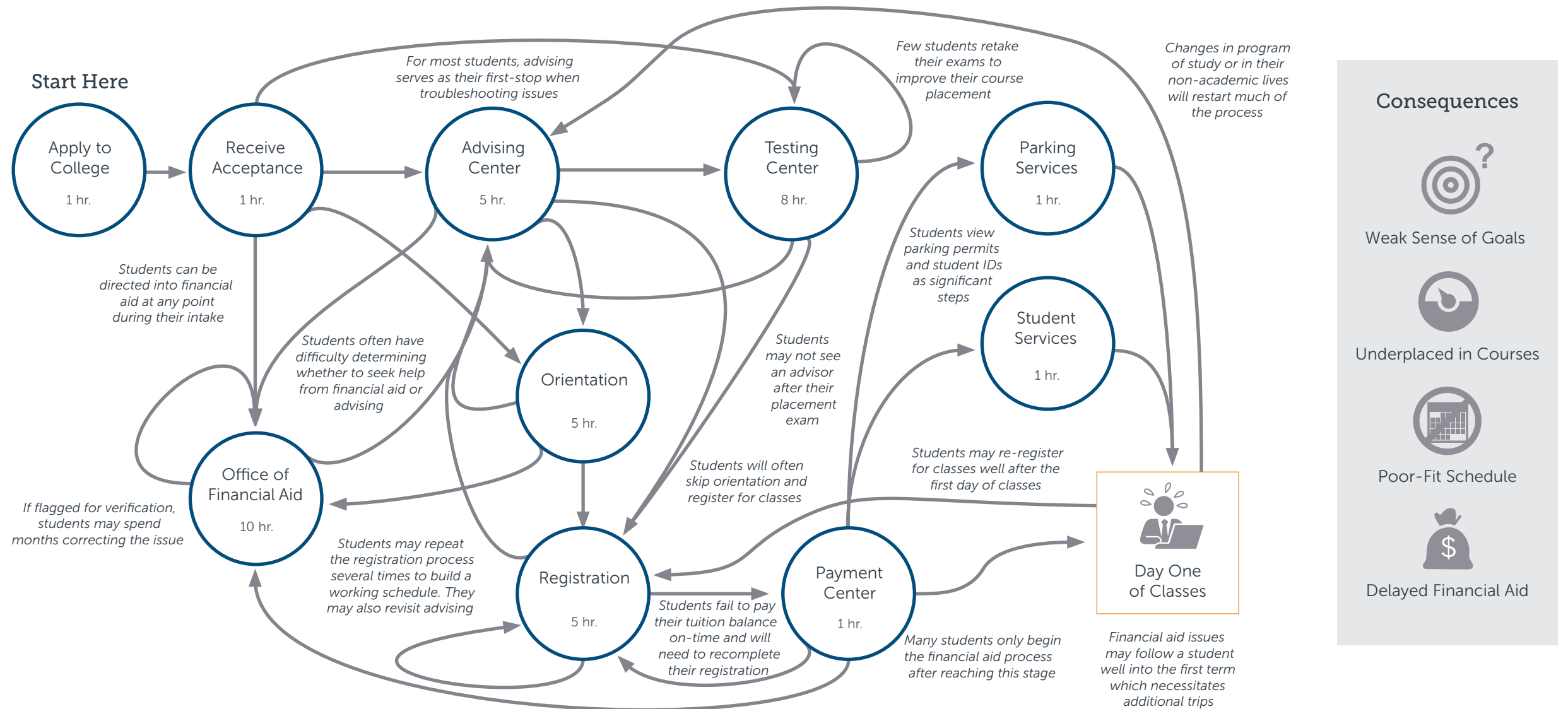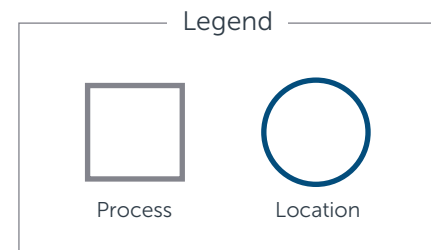## For Students, Onboarding Is a Complex Web of Services

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.

College Application
- Submit application
- Submit transcripts, residency form, and immunization record

Financial Aid
- Complete FAFSA
- Submit financial docs
- Ensure selective service registration

Placement Test
- Wait for or schedule placement exam
- Potentially use existing credit or test scores

Advising
- Wait to see an advisor
- Discuss academic goals
- Plan program of study and courses

Orientation
- Attend session ahead of first day of classes
- Learn about campus, policies and procedures

Registration
- Pick classes from course catalog
- Register for classes either on paper, or online

Day One of Classes

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.

Legend

Process

Location

Start Here

Apply to College — 1 hr.

Receive Acceptance — 1 hr.

Advising Center — 5 hr.

Testing Center — 8 hr.

Parking Services — 1 hr.

Orientation — 5 hr.

Student Services — 1 hr.

Office of Financial Aid — 10 hr.

Registration — 5 hr.

Payment Center — 1 hr.

Day One of Classes

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

Few students retake their exams to improve their course placement

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

Students can be directed into financial aid at any point during their intake

Students view parking permits and student IDs as significant steps

Students often have difficulty determining whether to seek help from financial aid or advising

Students may not see an advisor after their placement exam

If flagged for verification, students may spend months correcting the issue

Students will often skip orientation and register for classes

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

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

Students fail to pay their tuition balance on-time and will need to recomplete their registration

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

Consequences

Weak Sense of Goals

Underplaced in Courses

Poor-Fit Schedule

Delayed Financial Aid

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