

**Student  
Information  
Packet**

**CSI: Stratford  
College Search Institute  
For Rising Seniors**



## Senior Year Timeline

### August/September

- If you have not done so already, complete your Recommendation Survey on Naviance. Meet with your counselor
- Athletes: Register on [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org) if you plan to compete in a Division I or Division II sport.
- Narrow your college lists down to 5 to 10. Meet with your counselor about them and download the college applications and financial aid forms. Plan to visit as many of these colleges as possible.
- Mark your calendar with your colleges' admissions, and financial aid deadlines.
- Gather all materials you will need. Personally ask your teacher, principal or counselor for a letter of recommendation if it is required by the University you are applying.
- Register for the September ACT or SAT if needed. Register online at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) or at [collegeboard.com](http://collegeboard.com)
- Attend the Senior/Parent College Information Night
- Begin preparing your college application. Follow the instructions and pay close attention to deadlines!
- Meet with admissions representatives who are visiting STRATFORD HS. On Naviance you will find the list of colleges visiting and you will be able to sign up to see the representative.
- Work on college admission application essays.
- Keep a log on your phone and in your personal portfolio of all your login

### October & November, December

- Continue preparing your college applications.
- Finalize admission applications
- Watch your deadlines. Do NOT ask for recommendations or transcripts at the last moment. Give yourself and the educators at least a 2 week window to comply with your request. Remember, there are over 500 students at SHS applying to college.
- Prepare Early Decision, Early Action or rolling admission applications as soon as possible.
- Complete your application essays, proofread them rigorously for mistakes.
- Many colleges have November or December 1st application and/or scholarship deadline.
  - o Investigate the scholarship opportunities offered by the colleges that you are applying to. Check the due dates.
  - o Note: Many times you have to be admitted to the college to be considered for scholarships.
- Visit your top college choices.
- If your top choice college is visiting STRATFORD HS—sign up on Naviance and meet the Admissions Counselor. He/she is the first person to view your application and MANY colleges track demonstrated interest.
- Attend the financial aid seminar—Date to be determined.
- Begin to work on your FAFSA—more information about FAFSA changes will be covered at the financial aid seminar
- **Finalize admission applications.**
- Apply for outside funding or scholarships. Check your Naviance scholarship list page.
- Complete your online FAFSA application.
  - o If you have not received your Student Aid Report email within four weeks after submitting your FAFSA, contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-433-3243 or check the status on [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).
  - o KEEP COPIES OF ALL FAFSA FORMS YOU SUBMIT
- Keep copies of all your applications and essays.

### **January- February**

- Watch your housing deposit deadlines! Large universities fill up quickly!
- Watch your email for financial aid packages.
  - o Compare the financial aid awards you receive.
  - o Compare the amount of grants received to the amount of loans received. Do not just look at the 'bottom line' figure.
- Check with your college of choice about the details of signing financial aid award letters.
- Make your final decision and send in a deposit by the deadline. (May 1 is usually the deadline) If a university has accepted you, notify them that you have accepted and will be attending their university. If you are declining their acceptance offer, let them know. Each university maintains a waiting list. Give another deserving student a chance for that university that you do not plan to attend.

### **March, April, May**

- Watch for important deadlines at your college of choice (housing, orientation sign up etc.)
- No senioritis, please! Accepting colleges do look at second semester senior grades.
- Keep active on school. If you are wait-listed, keep in touch with that university and update your files an activities.
- As soon as acceptance letters haven been received, notify your counselor and put that information into Naviance.
- Take Advanced Placement (AP) examinations.
- Complete the Senior Survey (May 2018) on Naviance. This provides data for future studentsat STRATFORD HS.

## **The Common App**

### **2017-2018 Essay Prompts**

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
  
2. The lessons we take from failure can be fundamental to later success. Recount an incident or time when you experienced failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
  
3. Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?
  
4. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, and an ethical dilemma - anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
  
5. Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community, or family.



## Spring Branch ISD 2017-2018 College Application Season Documents & Timelines

Dear Parents & Students:

As your child approaches the close of the junior year, we know preparing for the post-secondary application process may have already begun. Whether your child is applying to a technical program, 2-year or 4-year college or university, the process involves many moving parts. In an effort to support each student and family in the college application process, we have updated our district-wide timelines and procedures for the Class of 2018. Though a vast majority of institutions will open Fall 2018 applications on August 1, colleges and universities typically will not begin reviewing applications until mid-September or later. We have included a few resources to help parents and students prepare for the application process.

### Unofficial Transcripts

Students can print unofficial transcripts through Skyward Family Access. Many colleges and universities will accept unofficial transcripts for purposes of applying for admission; however, please carefully read each institution's policies regarding transcript submission.

### Official Transcripts

All official transcript request forms must be submitted directly to the Registrar's Office. Transcript requests cannot be accepted or processed between July 3rd-14th.

Transcript requests processed between **July 17th-31st** will display a junior classification, and will not include summer school course work or class rank. During this week, Skyward is unavailable as the system is rolled over for the new school year.

Transcript requests processed beginning **August 1st** will display a senior designation and will include rank if a student has submitted a Class Rank Form and made the request to have rank displayed. Transcripts will be sent via the method utilized by the college or university (Navlance eDocs or other electronic method as soon as this method is available for the 2017-2018 application season) unless the student specifically requests to receive a paper copy in a sealed envelope.

### Special Requests: Texas A&M University

Because Texas A&M has established a July 1 open date for applications, Students applying for admission to Texas A&M University, who wish to make application during July, may request an official transcript on or before June 15th. These transcripts will be official, issued to the student in a sealed envelope, and will be available for pick-up on campus beginning July 3rd. Upon receipt, students can mail the transcript or upload it once completing an application for admission and receiving log-in instructions for the **TAMU Application Information System (AIS)**. Texas A&M recommends using AIS over mailing to bypass the processing delay associated with sending mail to the university. Please keep in mind, because the application for admission will not open until July 1, and a student will not receive AIS portal login credentials until 5-7 days after an application has been submitted, having access to the official transcript on July 3rd will provide the student adequate time to upload and submit their transcript for admission.

### Class Rank Forms

High school registrars send Class Rank Forms with Class Rank Letters in July. Students may submit signed forms beginning July 17th; however, students are encouraged to meet with their Counselor or Post-Secondary Counselor prior to making a decision about reporting or not reporting class rank on the transcript. Once submitted, Class Rank decisions are considered final. Signed Class Rank Forms are due no later than **October 13, 2017**. Transcripts may be requested prior to submitting the signed Class Rank Form; however, transcripts requested prior to submitting the class rank form will not show class rank unless the student is in the top 10% of their graduating class (per Texas and SBISD policy).

### Letters of Recommendation & Supplemental Forms

Counselors begin writing letters of recommendation and completing supplemental documentation for seniors after **August 1st**. Students are encouraged to meet with their counselor to discuss requested letters, supplemental documentation, and submission deadlines.



**Spring Branch ISD  
2017-2018 College Application Season  
Documents & Timelines**

**Registrar Office Hours**

Normal Registrar Office Hours	7:30 am - 3:45 pm
July 3- July 14	Registrar Offices closed
Summer Hours	8:00 am - 4:00 pm, Monday through Thursday

Updated Senior class schedules and official school profiles will not be available until after September 1st.

Skyward will update student classifications by **August 1st**. At this time, student accounts will also be updated in Naviance allowing a student to begin senior level activities in their Naviance account.

Naviance is scheduled to open its systems (including features such as letters of recommendation, linking Naviance with Common Application accounts, and electronic document submission) on **August 1st** for the 2017-2018 application season. Prior to this date students will not be able to request letters of recommendation or submit eDocs.

**Helpful Checklists:** Students click [here](https://goo.gl/CwNBqQ) (https://goo.gl/CwNBqQ) | Parents click [here](https://goo.gl/FPDdmN) (https://goo.gl/FPDdmN)

**2017-2018 Essay Prompts:** [Common Application](https://goo.gl/vVLZt) (https://goo.gl/vVLZt) | [Apply Texas](https://goo.gl/kKIFM) (https://goo.gl/kKIFM)

**Additional Application Methods:** [Coalition Application](https://goo.gl/9457a5) (https://goo.gl/9457a5)

**Find Your Fit:** [Big Future](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/) (https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/) | [CollegeMeasures](http://launchmycareertx.org/) (http://launchmycareertx.org/) | [College Scorecard](https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/) (https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/)

**Make an FSAID for the FAFSA Process:** [Get an FSA ID](https://goo.gl/C0GB5Q) (https://goo.gl/C0GB5Q)

Learn more about the **TASFA** (Texas Application for State Financial Aid) [here](https://goo.gl/R4DkPI) (https://goo.gl/R4DkPI)

Sincerely,  
Lance Stallworth  
Executive Director for Student Support Services  
Spring Branch ISD

***“High achievement always takes place in the framework of high expectation.” –Charles Kettering***

## 2) T-2-4 POSSIBILITIES & MY T-2-4 PROFILE

Now that you’ve explored your interests and possible careers, let’s think about the different types of higher education you can pursue. Not sure exactly what your T-2-4 options are? Let’s have a look at the possibilities.

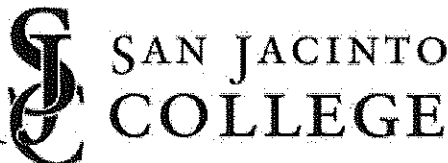
Remember, in today’s world, nearly every job requires some type of training and/or higher education.

### **“T” (Technical Training or Trade Certificate)**

Credentials in the “T” category are commonly offered at community colleges. Students electing this path of higher education are prepared for the workforce with training in a specific trade career and/or certification in a technical field of study. Credentials in this category typically require anywhere from 14 weeks to 18 months of study and/or hands-on training. With a few exceptions, credits earned in this category are not typically transferable to a 4-year college or university. **Examples of training/certificate programs include:**

<b>Heating, Ventilating, &amp; A/C Technician</b>	<b>Computer Aided Drafting</b>	<b>Basic Firefighting</b>	<b>Certified Nurse Aide</b>
<b>Cyber Security</b>	<b>Desktop Support &amp; Networking Specialist</b>	<b>EKG Technician</b>	<b>Electrician Technician</b>
<b>Machining</b>	<b>Paralegal</b>	<b>Truck Driving</b>	<b>Welding</b>
<b>Accounting Payroll Specialist</b>	<b>Basic Air Conditioning &amp; Refrigeration</b>	<b>Light Automotive Maintenance Tech</b>	<b>General Drafting</b>
<b>Electrical Helper</b>	<b>Machining Technology</b>	<b>Medical Coding</b>	<b>PC Support</b>
<b>Plumbing Helper</b>	<b>Plumbing Technology</b>	<b>Infant &amp; Toddler Teacher</b>	<b>Basic Welding Helper</b>

*\*You may already be taking classes at the Guthrie Center or any of the colleges listed below that are preparing you for some type(s) of certification.*



### **"2" (2-Year Associate Degree)**

Degrees in the "2" category are commonly offered at community colleges. Students electing this path of higher education are prepared for careers in a wide range of industry fields or use this as a starting point for transfer to a 4-year college or university. Credentials in this category typically require at least 2 years of study. Degree seekers must meet certain academic standards to earn credit for their coursework toward degree completion and must verify the transferability of coursework if planning for a 4-year degree.

**Examples of 2-year degree programs include:**

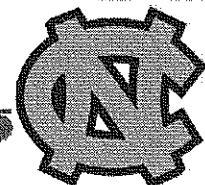
<i>Accounting</i>	<i>Automotive Technician</i>	<i>Biology</i>	<i>Business</i>
<i>Computer Programming</i>	<i>Cosmetology</i>	<i>Criminal Justice</i>	<i>Culinary Arts</i>
<i>Dental Hygiene</i>	<i>Digital Gaming</i>	<i>Engineering</i>	<i>Licensed Vocational Nurse</i>
<i>Physical Therapist Assistant</i>	<i>Respiratory Therapist</i>	<i>Surgical Technology</i>	<i>Teacher Education</i>

*\*You may already be taking classes at the Guthrie Center or any of the colleges listed above that are preparing you for some type(s) of certification.*

### **"4" (4-Year Bachelor's Degree)**

Degrees in the "4" category are commonly offered at public and private 4-year colleges and universities. Students electing this path of higher education are prepared for careers in a wide range of fields as well as for continuing study for Master's and Doctoral degrees. Credentials in this category typically require at least 4 years of study. Prospective students seeking a 4-year degree must meet certain admission criteria before enrolling in a college or university. Admission standards vary greatly among institutions across the nation. Most colleges and universities offer hundreds of degrees with the opportunity to choose from and combine different majors and minors of study. **Examples of 4-year degree programs include:**

<i>Marketing</i>	<i>Dance</i>	<i>Languages</i>	<i>Genetics</i>
<i>International Studies</i>	<i>Kinesiology</i>	<i>Business</i>	<i>Psychology</i>
<i>Sports Management</i>	<i>Leadership Studies</i>	<i>Zoology</i>	<i>Mathematics</i>
<i>Music</i>	<i>Construction Science</i>	<i>Engineering</i>	<i>Art</i>



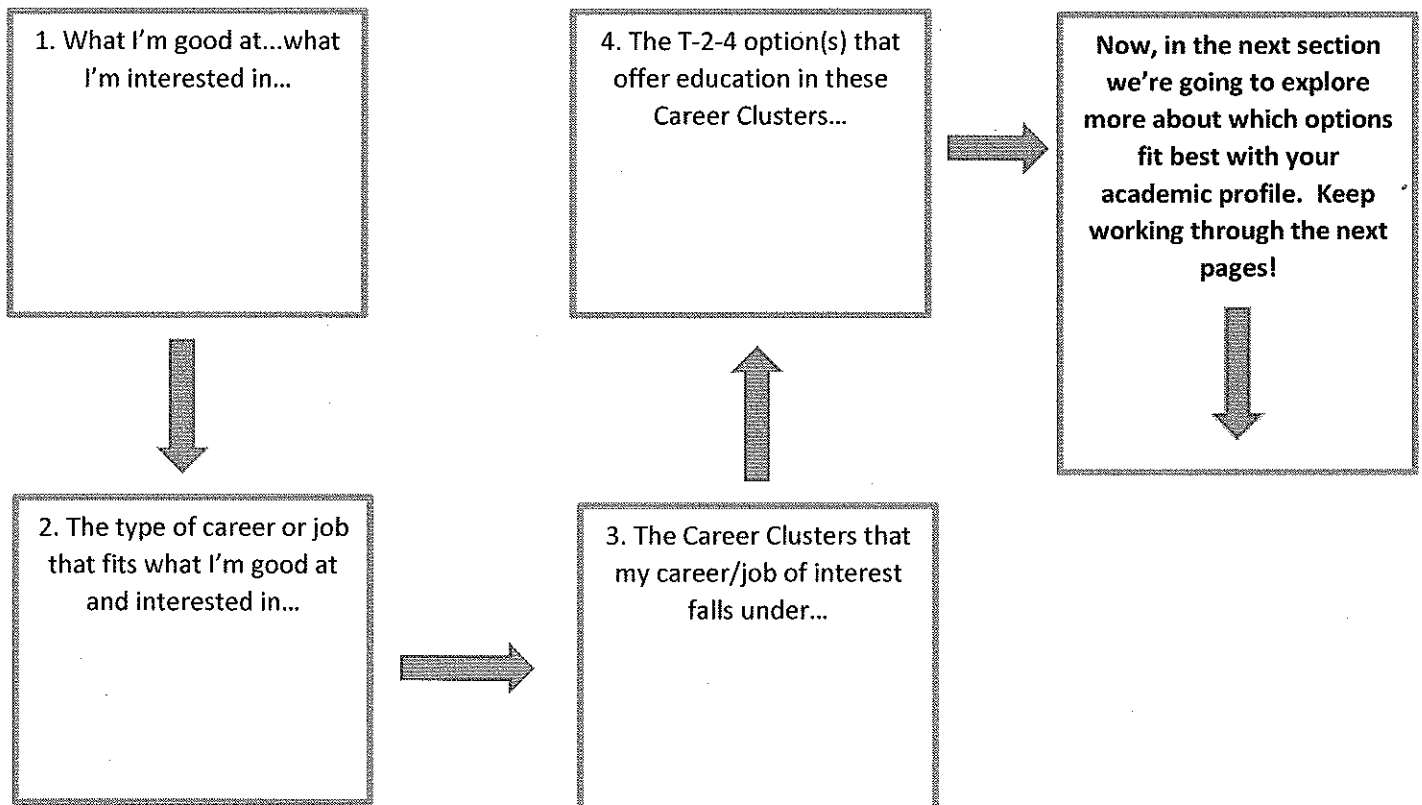


## “M” (Military Training)

Included in the T-2-4 options are various pathways to military training. **Examples of military options include:**

<u><b>Direct Enlistment</b></u>	<u><b>Military Academies</b></u>	<u><b>ROTC Programs</b></u>	<u><b>Reserves</b></u>
<p>Students may enlist in the military at 17 with parental consent or at 18 years of age without consent. Branches of the military include Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Marine Corps. Many branches require at least a GED for enlistment. The average service time is 4 years and most branches encourage enlisted members to continue their education while enlisted and even after being discharged from service.</p>	<p>The most competitive and rigorous route to the military. Students earn a 4-year degree upon completion. Applicants must be recommended to attend and must follow strict timelines to apply.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Federal Service Academies require students to enter military service upon graduating from an Academy.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(US Air Force Academy, US Coast Guard Academy, US Merchant Marine Academy, US Military Academy- West Point, US Naval Academy)</i></p>	<p>ROTC programs provide students with tuition scholarships for the pursuit of a 2-year or 4-year degree while also taking ROTC courses. Students must be eligible for admission to the college/university in addition to being admitted to the ROTC program. Upon graduation from the college/university students will be required to enter active duty service for a minimum number of years as designated by the military branch.</p>	<p>Reserve programs offer part-time employment, training, and financial and educational benefits. A majority of those serving in the Reserves have other full-time careers or are continuing their education.</p>

### LET'S PUT TOGETHER WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED SO FAR...



## T-2-4 POSSIBILITIES & MY T-2-4 PROFILE

There are a wide range of requirements associated with every T-2-4 option. It is important to know what those are and how your work in high school has prepared you to meet those requirements. Let's take a look at general requirements:

T (Trade/Training)	2-Year (Associate)	4-Year (Bachelor's)	Military
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ High school diploma or GED required</li> <li>➤ No minimum TSI scores required to enroll</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ High school diploma or GED required</li> <li>➤ Test scores at or above TSI "College Ready" levels or exemption from TSI through SAT/ACT scores required to enroll in credit bearing courses <b>**Not meeting minimum scores requires students to take remedial courses for which students have to pay but receive no credit toward their degree plan.**</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ High school diploma or GED required</li> <li>➤ Test at or above TSI "College Ready" levels <b>The following can be considered in varying levels at 4-year colleges/universities:</b></li> <li>➤ Academic rigor, GPA &amp; class rank</li> <li>➤ SAT/ACT Scores</li> <li>➤ Extracurricular activities &amp; work/life experiences</li> <li>➤ Recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ High school diploma or GED required <b>The following can be considered in varying levels depending on preferred military path:</b></li> <li>➤ Academic performance</li> <li>➤ Extracurricular activities</li> <li>➤ Work &amp; life experiences</li> <li>➤ Recommendations</li> </ul>

### MORE ON THE "4"

While the "T" and "2" programs do not have minimum entrance requirements and are what we call "Open Admission" the "4" options do publicize grade and test score ranges that applicants should aim to meet. Keep in mind these are general ranges for these types of colleges/universities and you should check each institution's website for more information. The varying degrees of "competitive" refer to the academic profiles of students typically securing admission to schools in each category. **\*\*GPA's are on a 4.0 scale\*\***

<u>Most to Extremely Competitive</u>	<u>Highly to Very Competitive</u>	<u>Competitive</u>	<u>Less Competitive</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Top 1-5% of graduating class</li> <li>➤ GPA= 4.1-4.2+ (on 4.0)</li> <li>➤ SAT=1300-1400+</li> <li>➤ ACT=30-32+</li> <li>➤ SAT Subject Test=650-700+</li> <li>➤ AP Test=3-4+</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Top 6-10% of graduating class</li> <li>➤ GPA= 3.8-4.09+ (on 4.0)</li> <li>➤ SAT=1100-1200+</li> <li>➤ ACT=23-27+</li> <li>➤ SAT Subject Test=530-600+</li> <li>➤ AP Test=3+</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ GPA= 3.7-3.79+ (on 4.0)</li> <li>➤ SAT=&lt;1100</li> <li>➤ ACT=&lt;23</li> <li>➤ SAT Subject Test=&lt;530</li> <li>➤ AP Test= 2-3+</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ GPA range= &lt;3.5 (on 4.0)</li> <li>➤ SAT=&lt;1000</li> <li>➤ ACT=&lt;20</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Not Competitive</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ GPA= &lt;3.0 (on 4.0)</li> <li>➤ SAT= &lt;900</li> <li>➤ ACT= &lt;19</li> </ul>

*Some colleges and universities in the Most Competitive to Competitive categories are test optional and/or flexible, meaning more emphasis is placed on other factors besides test scores.*

**Mostly Competitive to Competitive schools place a stronger emphasis on:**

- Did you take advantage of the most challenging classes offered at your school?
- What do your teachers say about you as a student?
- Were you successful over time in high school or does your transcript show fluctuations in your performance? If there are fluctuations, is there a particular reason why?
- Do you show academic promise (the ability to succeed in college level courses)?
- Did you exhibit leadership in your community and extracurricular involvement?
- Have you experienced some life hardship or disadvantage?

## Important Definitions Regarding Applying to College

### Data Checklist created by Peter Van Burskirk

- **Application Fee/Deadline** You don't want to be late when competing for admission. Create separate lines for the fee and the deadline. Under what conditions the application fee might be waived?
- **Application Type** Does the college have its own application? Is it a member of the Common Application or Universal Application groups?
- **Selectivity** Also known as admit ratio and acceptance rate, the relationship between applications and acceptances provides a quick shorthand regarding the intensity of competition you are likely to encounter. If you are considering universities, track the selectivity of the college or degree program within the university that interests you as well as the overall selectivity for the school.
- **Interview** Is it offered and where (on campus or off-campus with a staff member or alumnus)? Take advantage of an interview if it is offered.
- **Test Requirements** Know which tests you need to be prepared to take (SAT/ACT and others). Create at least three lines on which you can list the dates for the tests that are required.
- **Test Scores** Make note of the range of test scores reported for admitted students. In particular, record the values for the 75th and 25th percentiles as these represent the competitive margins within which you want to fall in order to have hope in the admission process.
- **Test Optional** More than 850 colleges and universities now welcome applications without testing. Go to [www.FairTest.org](http://www.FairTest.org) to find out if any of the schools you are considering have a test-optional admission policy.
- **Location {city/state}** This will be helpful when you sort on preferred regions of the country.
- **Placement of School (urban-suburban-rural)** There are advantages and disadvantages to each. Make sure you know the type of community in which the school is located.
- **Size** This may not seem important initially, but it is often a determining factor after the data is collected and processed. Styles of instruction vary dramatically with size of institution.
- **Type of Support {public, private}** This is another factor that is often underestimated as it often speaks to institutional mission
- **Structure (college, university)** Schools vary in their complexity-and can offer programs that are similar in name only, but feature styles of instruction as different as night and day. Again, there are advantages to each.
- **Student/Professor Ratio** These are important numbers that tell a lot about the accessibility of faculty. Make sure the ratio reflects undergraduates only as well as the professors who teach them.
- **Program** Record the availability of key majors or programs in which you are interested. You may choose to add a notation that reflects the relative strength of program.

- **Ratio of Operating Budget to Student** If you can get it (check with the President's Office or the Office of Institutional Research), this ratio reveals a lot about the institution's ability to support the undergraduate educational experience.
- **Total Cost of Attendance** Sooner or later, you need to deal with issues of cost and affordability.
- **Availability of Financial Assistance** Know what you might expect in terms of need and merit based assistance. What percentage of students received need-based financial aid? Merit based? What is the average student debt upon graduation?
- **Distance from Home (travel time)** Some want to get away, others want to stay close to home. Travel time is more relevant than "Miles to be traveled" if considering great distances.
- **Travel Costs** Estimate round-trip expenses. Make sure you know what it will cost to make the trip several times a year.

## Tips for undertaking the application process

### Getting started

- Set up a folder for each application. Keep all material relevant to each college in its own folder.
- Request letters of recommendations at least two weeks (a month is better) before the deadlines.
- Review all application requirements. Set up a schedule for completing them. You might want to put off this task as long as you can, but procrastination is risky. There is a lot to do, especially if you have several essays to write. You may not do the application (and yourself) justice if you leave it until the last minute. Remember: Leave enough time for correcting and revising.

### Completing the application process

- Review each page of the application and its directions completely before you start to work on it.
- Be accurate, honest and neat. Spell correctly and use correct grammar.
- Don't type your essay directly into the application. Draft it separately, then upload the final, proof-read version.
- Request the testing organization to send your official test scores directly to the colleges. Do not send a photocopy of your own test score report unless requested to do so. Sometimes, a college accepts a photocopy as a means of obtaining preliminary information, but it will need the official report to make an offer of admission.
- When you have completed your application, ask someone to review it and check it for errors.
- Print and save to your hard drive the completed application before you send it.
- If you file an online application, be sure to tell your counselor when you have submitted the application and which materials the school needs to send to the college (such as recommendations or the transcript).

# Tips for undertaking the application process (page 2)

## Tips for online applicants

- Make sure a person whose opinion you trust reviews the application for errors before you send it.
- Use standard spelling and grammar — not email-ese: Treat this like a paper application.
- Spell your name the same way on the online application and on other components that are sent via mail; this will help the colleges match the components of your application in a timely way.
- Have your test scores sent to the colleges to which you are applying, if you haven't already.
- Print out a paper copy for your records.
- Do not apply electronically and send a paper copy in the mail: Wait for confirmation that the electronic copy was received (you should get that within three or four days, if not sooner).
- Tell your counselor of every online application you send, so he or she can send transcripts and letters of recommendation.

**Source:** Susan Stagers, Cary Academy, North Carolina

## College application FAQs: Students ask, counselors answer

### **Do I have a better chance of getting in if I apply early?**

This can vary from school to school and year to year and may depend on the applicant pool at the school to which you are applying. Check to see what percentage of students in the previous graduating classes at your high school were admitted as Early Decision to a specific college. Are you qualified to apply for Early Decision? If you are, and this is a school you really wish to attend, then apply for Early Decision.

### **How much time should I give my teachers to write letters of recommendation for me?**

Teachers should always receive a minimum of two weeks' notice before the postmark date. Be sure to ask in a way that allows a teacher to decline comfortably if he or she does not have time to do an adequate job. For example: "Do you feel you know me well enough, and do you have enough time, to write a supportive letter of recommendation for me?" Give the teacher a stamped envelope addressed to the college, along with any recommendation form provided by the college.

### **How many times should I take the SAT®?**

Some students are satisfied with their SAT scores the first time they take the test. Others believe they will benefit from taking it a second time. Most students will take the SAT in the spring of their junior year and the fall of their senior year. There is no evidence that taking the test more than twice results in significant score gains for most students.

### **My SAT scores are very low, and my grades are very high. Will this affect my chances of admission?**

While SAT scores are an indicator of success in college, admissions staff look at many different factors when making a decision about whether to admit a student. One of the main things they are looking for is to see if your high school academic profile indicates that you have the potential for academic success on their campus. What kind of courses have you taken? Have you taken rigorous courses such as honors or AP® courses? Have you taken AP Exams so that there are scores to indicate how you may perform in a college-level course? That said, you should always check with the college or university you are applying to if you have questions on their score use policies.

### **My parents don't make a lot of money — will colleges hold this against me?**

Colleges should tell you whether they have a "need-blind" admission policy. Those that do never consider ability to pay as an admission requirement. Other schools, which are "need conscious,"

## College application FAQs: Students ask, counselors answer (page 2)

may consider ability to pay, but only for a very small proportion of the admitted group. My advice is always: Don't worry about this.

### **How can I improve my chances of getting in from the wait list?**

If a college is your first choice, let the college know that — although the college may not ask for this information. Write a letter to the director of admission expressing your continuing strong interest and updating the admission office with any new information that enhances you. In addition, you may wish to ask your counselor to make a call on your behalf. Many colleges keep track of these kinds of contacts, and students who are enthusiastic and persistent will get looked at first. Colleges want to admit students off the wait list who will accept the offer of admission.

### **Do colleges really care about your senior-year grades?**

Absolutely! Many colleges will not make a decision until receiving seventh-semester grades. They expect to see a performance that indicates you are ready for college-level work. The college at which you make your enrollment deposit will ask for a final transcript at the end of the senior year. (Admission letters often say something like, "Your admissions is contingent upon your continued successful performance.") It is not at all rare for a college to withdraw an offer of admission when grades drop significantly over the course of the senior year. (I have a folder full of copies of these letters.)

Answers provided by Mary Lee Hoganson, a former counselor at Homewood-Flossmoor High School, Illinois, and Nadine K. Maxwell, a former coordinator of guidance services for Fairfax County Public Schools, Virginia.

**Source:** *The College Board*



## Some typical admission policies

### Early Action

Students who apply under a college's Early Action plan receive a decision before the standard response date but are not required to accept an offer of admission or to make a deposit prior to May 1. Most Early Action deadlines are in November, December or January, with notification some weeks later. Approximately 200 colleges have Early Action plans. Students should be sure to read the college policy carefully. Some colleges have "single choice Early Action" plans. In these plans, colleges place some restrictions on the applicant's right to make applications to other Early Decision or Early Action plans.

### Early Decision

Students who apply under Early Decision commit to enroll at the college if they are admitted and offered a satisfactory financial aid package. Application deadlines are usually in mid-November, with a mid- to late-December notification date. Approximately 230 colleges have an Early Decision plan. Some colleges have both an Early Decision and an Early Action plan.

### Open Admission

Under this policy, a college admits students without regard to conventional academic qualifications, such as taking appropriate high school subjects and receiving suitable high school grades and admission-test scores. Virtually all applicants with high school diplomas or the equivalent are accepted. Most community colleges practice open admission, although many have requirements for certain programs — for example, nursing.

### Rolling Admission

In this frequently used procedure, a college considers each student's application as soon as all the required credentials, such as school record and test scores, have been received. The college usually notifies an applicant of its decision without delay. At many colleges, rolling admission allow for early notification and work much like nonbinding Early Action programs.

### Candidates Reply Date Agreement

A college subscribing to this agreement does not require applicants offered admission as first-year students to notify the college of their decision to attend (or to accept an offer of financial aid) before May 1 of the year the applicants apply. The purpose of the agreement is to give students time to hear from all the colleges to which they have applied before having to make a commitment to any of them.

*Source: The College Board*

### Handout 4D

## Should You Apply Early Admission?

Deciding whether to apply early is a big fork in the road to college. As tempting as it may seem, it is not a decision to be made lightly.

Some of your friends may be cheering the fact that their application stress will be over before the holidays. Should you join them?

### Applying Early Is Perfect for Some—and a Bad Move for Others

If you are thinking of applying early—either early decision or early action—ask yourself these three questions:

1. **Am I happy with my grades and test scores?** If not, you will be better off using fall semester to improve them and applying during the regular admissions cycle.
2. **Do I know what I want in a college based on extensive campus visits and research?** If not, you may end up at a college you won't like. Skip applying early and dedicate time to finding out what you really want in a college.
3. **Do I need substantial financial aid?** If so, you are better off skipping an early decision application so you can compare and negotiate aid offers from multiple colleges.

### The Two Types of Early Admission

Early Decision is binding. If you are accepted—and you get enough aid—you must attend. You are allowed to apply to only one college for an early decision.

Early Action is not binding. You are usually free to apply elsewhere and you are not obligated to attend if accepted.

### More Food for Thought

**Does applying early boost your chances?** Applying early, especially for an early decision, shows the college you are interested. However, many highly qualified and recruited students apply early, so the odds are just about as competitive as for regular admissions.

**Early rejections can lead to hastily completed regular applications.** You might be tempted to delay work on regular admission applications until you've heard from your "early" colleges. But if you do, you'll scramble to meet admission deadlines, and risk submitting less-than-stellar applications.

**Resist the urge to "just get it over with."** No doubt about it, an early acceptance can relieve some of your application stress. But there's a big payoff to taking time to put together a well-researched list of colleges and weathering the stress of applying to each one. Your reward is ending up at a college where you know you will thrive.

**An early application might lead to a deferral.** One outcome of applying early is being "deferred" to the regular application pool. The college is not saying "no," but it is looking for more reasons to say "yes." If this happens, your best strategy is to work hard to earn top grades throughout your senior year and show your interest to the admissions office.

## Should you apply under an Early Decision program?

### What is Early Decision?

Some colleges have an Early Decision (ED) plan. Under this plan, a student submits his or her credentials early (usually by Nov. 1 or Nov. 15) and signs a statement (binding) that he or she will accept the college's offer of admission.

### Who should apply for Early Decision?

Ideal candidates for ED should fit both of these profiles:

- You have researched colleges extensively (visited at least three or four) and are absolutely sure that College X is your first choice. If you are accepted under an Early Decision program, you have committed yourself to attending that college and must withdraw all other applications.
- You meet or exceed the admission profile of students at College X (i.e., your SAT® scores, GPA and class rank should be comparable to students at College X). You should have completed one round of the SAT and SAT Subject Tests™ by October of your senior year. Some colleges, however, will accept November test scores if the scores are rushed to the admission office. You have an academic record that has been consistently solid over time.

If you know that your senior-year grades will be much better than your grades in previous years, you may wish to apply under the regular admission program and allow the college to evaluate your improvement.

### What are the advantages of Early Decision programs?

Your application is reviewed early and you receive notification of your admission status by Dec. 15. If you are accepted, you avoid having to complete other applications. Your application is reviewed against a smaller applicant pool. (However, it is usually a much stronger pool than the group of candidates for regular admission.)

### What are the disadvantages of Early Decision programs?

Obviously, you could be rejected early. And next April, when other students receive their acceptances, you may end up wondering, "Could I have been accepted to Y University?" You might change your mind, but you are bound by contract to attend College X. Additionally, ED leaves applicants without leverage to negotiate better financial aid packages.

## Is Early Decision Right for You?

One way to cut down your waiting time is to apply for an early decision. But what are the trade-offs? And does the early bird really have a better chance of getting in?

Asking for an early decision means you are committed to attending that college if accepted. Your application is usually due in November, and you will know your fate before your winter break.

### How Early Decision Works

You are allowed to apply for an early decision to only one college. If you are accepted by that school, you must attend it. You must withdraw all applications already submitted and you may not apply elsewhere. There is only one exception: If the school does not meet your financial need, you are free to decline admission and apply to other colleges.

### Applying Early Decision Means You Are Committed

Because you must enroll in the college if it accepts you, the worst thing you can do is apply for an early decision from a college you know little about. Be sure you have done plenty of college visits and research so you are utterly convinced that this is the best college for you.

### Deciding on Early Decision—or Not

#### Early Decision vs. Early Action

About 15 percent of colleges offer early action, which provides an early admission decision without a commitment to enroll. These schools usually allow early applications to other colleges at the same time.

Generally, colleges that offer early decision do not allow students to apply to another college for an early decision, but some will allow students to apply elsewhere under early action.

If your top-choice college offers early decision and you feel prepared and ready to apply, then go for it. However, there are times when applying for an early decision might not be the best idea. If getting substantial financial aid is critical, you are better off applying for a regular decision. That way, you can compare and negotiate aid offers before choosing a college. If there's a chance you can improve your grades and scores, you will also be better off applying in the regular admission cycle.

Be aware that applying for an early decision does not necessarily boost your chances, since early applicants are often better qualified than regular applicants.

### How to Apply for an Early Decision

You will have to start the application process a few months earlier than most applicants and complete your standardized tests no later than October. Otherwise, early decision applications are the same as regular applications.

### Suppose You Don't Make the First Cut?

The college may automatically add you to the regular admission application pool. If it does not, you are usually (but not always) free to reapply by the regular admission deadline. Check the admission policies of the college.

## Application ethics: What students need to consider

In recent years, college admissions officers and college counselors have seen a growing number of students and parents who, in an attempt to manipulate the system in their favor, are crossing the boundary between helping ensure a desired outcome and taking inappropriate actions.

The admission process is not a game to be won at any cost. It is a complex process that demands a great deal of integrity on everyone's part, especially the school's. Here are some examples of what we consider crossing the boundary:

- Applying to binding Early Decision programs at more than one college or university. The whole point of a binding ED program is to make a contract: "If you accept me, I will withdraw all my other applications and attend your university." Many colleges now require that the college adviser sign the application along with the student and parents. The school will not send transcripts to more than one ED school or to any other schools once a student has been admitted under a binding ED program.
- Failing to withdraw your applications to other colleges when you have been admitted under a binding ED program. It isn't fair to those colleges or to the students who have applied to them for you to continue in the process just to see what happens.
- Attempting to gain release from an ED decision because you have changed your mind. The only acceptable reason for requesting release from your contract with your ED college is the inability to work out appropriate financial aid. You and your parents should discuss the cost factor when you are deciding whether to apply for ED in the first place.
- Having someone else write or heavily edit your essays. When you sign an application, you are indicating it is your work. If it is not, then you may be subject to the school's honor code.
- Submitting deposits to more than one college. If you are admitted to a college that requires a deposit by May 1 and wait-listed at your favorite college, call the college that admitted you and discuss the matter before you send your check. Your counselor can advise you how to conduct this conversation and what the appropriate behavior is.
- Stating an intended major that you have no intention of pursuing, because you think it might help your admission chances.
- Inaccurately describing your activities and accomplishments. Putting things in the best light is one thing; fabrication is something else.
- Stating to more than one college that it is your first choice.

**Source:** Adapted from material provided by Cary Academy, North Carolina

### Handout 4F

Show  
colleges  
how ready  
you are.



The SAT® is a fair and straightforward test.

It looks a lot like what you're learning in class and focuses on what you'll actually use in college.

Here's what you can expect on the SAT:



**No Guessing Penalty**

Straightforward scoring — on the SAT you just get points on the questions you answer correctly.



**Optional Essay**

Check the admission policies at universities and decide whether to take the optional SAT Essay.



**Everyday Words**

The vocabulary is closer to what you'll come across often in college classes.



**Essential Math**

The SAT tests the math you'll need no matter what major or career you choose.

Show what you know. [sat.org/register](https://sat.org/register)

**Please note that the following information comes directly from the College Board website [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). College Board is the company that produces SAT. Further information regarding SAT can be found at the College Board website.**

## SAT

The SAT is the nation's most widely used admissions test among colleges and universities. It tests students' knowledge of subjects that are necessary for college success: reading, writing, and mathematics. The SAT assesses the critical thinking skills students need for academic success in college—skills that students learned in high school.

The SAT is typically taken by high school juniors and seniors. It tells students how well they use the skills and knowledge they have attained in and outside of the classroom—including how they think, solve problems, and communicate. The SAT is an important resource for colleges. It's also one of the best predictors of how well students will do in college.

Each section of the SAT is scored on a scale of 200-800, with two writing subscores for multiple-choice questions and the essay. It is administered seven times a year in the U.S. and U.S. territories, including Puerto Rico, and six times a year overseas.

For more online sample questions and preparation materials, visit the [SAT Preparation Center](#).

### SAT Question Types

The SAT includes several different question types, including: a student-produced essay, multiple-choice questions, and student-produced responses (grid-ins). Select any section below to learn more about specific question types.

[Critical Reading](#)

[Mathematics](#)

[Writing](#)

### The Unscored Section

In addition to the nine scored sections of the SAT, there is one 25-minute section that we use to ensure that the SAT continues to be a fair and valid test. Don't be worried: the section does not count towards your score. It may be a critical reading, mathematics, or writing multiple-choice section.

It is common test development to use an unscored section to try out new questions for future editions of the test. It also ensures that scores on new editions of the SAT are comparable to scores on earlier editions of the test. This helps to ensure the fairness of the SAT, which is one of our primary objectives.

### Test Order

The SAT is comprised of 10 total testing sections. The first section is always a 25-minute essay, and the last section is always a 10-minute multiple-choice writing section. Sections two through seven are 25-minute sections. Sections eight and nine are 20-minute sections. Test-takers sitting next to each other in the same session may have test books with entirely different content orders for sections two through nine (mathematics, critical reading, and writing).

## Why You Should Take the SAT

The SAT is the nation's most widely used college admissions test, a distinction that it has held for more than seven decades. The SAT is taken by more than two million students every year and is accepted by virtually all colleges and universities.

The SAT measures knowledge of subjects learned in the classroom, including reading, writing, and math, and how well you can apply that knowledge outside of the classroom. The SAT helps colleges get to know you better by giving them insight into how you think, solve problems, and communicate.

### **It's more than just a test**

The SAT experience does not start or end with the test. The College Board is there for you at each step on your path to college. From the moment you register for the test, you can take advantage of the College Board's free online practice materials and many useful tools, including SAT Skills Insight™, which helps you understand what skills are tested on the SAT; a college search tool; financial aid and scholarship information; and a profile of several careers and majors.

We're also there for you after you take the test. We'll help you understand the details of your scores with My SAT Online Score Report, and, if you're thinking of taking the test again, SAT Skills Insight will give you the guidance to improve your score.

### **It's the best predictor of college success**

The SAT, along with high school grades, is the best predictor of success in college. The SAT gives you an opportunity to show colleges what you know and what you know you can do.

Taking the SAT is the first step in finding the right college for you—the one where you'll best succeed and discover the tools necessary to pursue your passions and achieve your career goals.

### **It's fair**

The SAT is carefully designed to be a fair test for all students. It is also the most rigorously researched and analyzed standardized test in the world. Each question on the SAT goes through an in-depth pretesting and review process to ensure that every single question is fair to all students across genders and ethnicity groups.

### **We'll help you get ready for the test**

There are many ways to practice for the test. Here are some ideas:

- Study hard, read outside of the classroom, and take challenging classes.
- Take the PSAT/NMSQT®. It is great practice for the SAT.
- Take advantage of the College Board's free online readiness/practice tools, which include a free official practice test, sample questions, The Official SAT Question of the Day™, and other low-cost tools.
- Know that research proves that you don't need expensive test-preparation courses to prepare you to do well on the test.
- If you've already taken the SAT once, consider taking it again. There's a good chance that you'll improve your score.

## About the SAT Subject Tests

The SAT Subject Tests measure your knowledge and skills in particular subject areas, and your ability to apply that knowledge.

The SAT Subject Tests are the *only* national admissions tests that give you the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of content in specific subjects, such as English, history, mathematics, science, and various foreign languages.



Many colleges use the SAT Subject Tests for admission, for course placement, and to advise students about course selection. Some colleges specify the SAT Subject Tests that they require for admission or placement; others allow applicants to choose which tests to take. These tests give you and colleges a very reliable measure of how prepared you are for college-level work in particular subjects. Used in combination with other background information (your high school record, SAT scores, teacher recommendations, etc.), they provide a dependable measure of your academic achievement and are a good predictor of future college performance in specific subject areas.

The SAT Subject Tests offer you an additional opportunity to show colleges what you know and what you know you can do.

SAT Subject Tests fall into five general subject areas:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>English</b></li><li>▪ <u>Literature</u></li><li>▪ <b>History</b></li><li>▪ <u>U.S. History</u> (formerly American History and Social Studies)</li><li>▪ <u>World History</u></li><li>▪ <b>Mathematics</b></li><li>▪ <u>Mathematics Level 1</u> (formerly Mathematics IC)</li><li>▪ <u>Mathematics Level 2</u> (formerly Mathematics IIC)</li><li>▪ <b>Science</b></li><li>▪ <u>Biology E/M</u></li><li>▪ <u>Chemistry</u></li><li>▪ <u>Physics</u></li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>Languages</b></li><li>▪ <u>Chinese with Listening</u></li><li>▪ <u>French</u></li><li>▪ <u>French with Listening</u></li><li>▪ <u>German</u></li><li>▪ <u>German with Listening</u></li><li>▪ <u>Spanish</u></li><li>▪ <u>Spanish with Listening</u></li><li>▪ <u>Modern Hebrew</u></li><li>▪ <u>Italian</u></li><li>▪ <u>Latin</u></li><li>▪ <u>Japanese with Listening</u></li><li>▪ <u>Korean with Listening</u></li></ul> |
|---|--|

All SAT Subject Tests are one-hour, multiple-choice tests. However, some of these tests have unique formats:

- The **SAT Subject Test in Biology E/M** contains a common core of 60 general-knowledge multiple-choice questions, followed by 20 multiple-choice questions that emphasize either ecological (Biology E) or molecular (Biology M) subject matter. Before testing begins, you must choose which test you will take, either the ecological or molecular. **Students are not allowed to take both tests in one sitting. If you do, your scores may be canceled.**
- The **SAT Subject Tests in Mathematics (Level 1 and Level 2)** have some questions that require the use of at least a scientific or graphing calculator. Mathematics Subject Tests are developed with the expectation that most students will use a graphing calculator.
- The **SAT Subject Tests in Languages with Listening** (Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Korean, and Spanish) consist of a listening section and a reading section. Students taking these tests are required to bring an acceptable CD player with earphones to the test center.

For more detailed information, including recommended preparation, anticipated skills, test format, sample questions, and more, visit the [Subject Tests Preparation Center](#).

**Which SAT Subject Tests should you take?**

Before deciding which tests to take, make a list of the colleges you're considering. Then review school catalogs, [College Search Engines](#), or [College Handbooks](#) to find out whether the schools require scores for admission and, if so, how many tests and in which subjects.

Use your list of colleges and their admission requirements to help plan your high school course schedule. You may want to adjust your schedule in light of colleges' requirements. For example, a college may require a score from a SAT Subject Test in a language for admission, or the college might exempt you from a freshman course requirement if you do well on a language SAT Subject Test.

Many colleges that don't require SAT Subject Test scores will still review them since they can give a fuller picture of your academic background.

If you're not sure which SAT Subject Test to take from a subject area, talk to your teacher or school counselor and visit the [Subject Tests Preparation Center](#).

### **When should you take SAT Subject Tests?**

Most students take SAT Subject Tests toward the end of their junior year or at the beginning of their senior year.

Take tests such as World History, Biology E/M, Chemistry, or Physics as soon as possible after completing the course in the subject, while the material is still fresh in your mind. If you take such courses in your freshman or sophomore year, and you are eligible for fee waivers, you can request a fee waiver to test before your junior year. For foreign language tests, you'll do better after at least two years of study.



# You've got this.

You may not realize it, but you have been preparing to take the ACT® test for years. The ACT has always been about what students learn in high school.

There are many reasons to take the ACT test.

## The ACT . . .

- Is accepted by **all** US colleges and universities
- Has an optional writing test
- Is the nation's most taken college entrance exam
- Includes an educational and career planning component
- Provides four free score reports\*
- Is scored based on correct answers only

\*If ordered at time of registration

The **ACT**®



## How to prepare for the ACT

Take challenging courses

Study hard

Go to [www.act.org](http://www.act.org) for free resources:

- Practice questions
- Testing tips for each subject
- *Preparing for the ACT*, downloadable test prep booklet

For more information about the ACT and preparation resources go to [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org).

## Based on what you learn in school

The ACT test has always been about what you learn in high school core courses. Every day you attend class you're preparing for the ACT. Students frequently tell us that they feel more comfortable taking the ACT since it is directly related to what they learn in most of their high school courses.

## Accepted by all US colleges

ACT scores are accepted by all four-year colleges and universities in the United States.

## Optional Writing Test

Since not all colleges and universities require a writing test for admission, ACT offers students the choice to take the writing test—it's optional. Check to see if the schools you are interested in require the ACT with writing by visiting: [www.actstudent.org/writing](http://www.actstudent.org/writing).

## More than an admissions exam

In addition to being a college admissions exam, the ACT includes a profile and education/career planning section to help you plan for life after high school. You will receive personalized career information and develop a comprehensive profile that tells colleges about your work in high school and future plans. You can also see your strengths and weaknesses in the subject areas tested to help direct your future education.

## No penalty for guessing

Your ACT scores are based on the number of correct answers, with no deductions for incorrect answers. Do your best, and be sure to mark an answer to every question.

## You choose which scores to send

If you take the ACT more than once, you can select which test date results you would like to send to the schools of your choice. Scores are only sent for the test dates you select. When registering for the ACT, you can select up to four colleges to send your scores to for free.

## A good value

Preparing for college can be expensive. The ACT is a good value because it offers a college admissions test, college course placement, and a career planning component for one modest fee. And you can make yourself visible to colleges and scholarship agencies across the country by taking the ACT. It's a complete package of services to help you get ready for life beyond high school.

**You've  
got  
this.**



<b>ACT Test Dates &amp; Deadlines</b>		
<b>ACT Test Date</b>	<b>ACT Registration Deadline</b>	<b>ACT Scores Available</b>
<b>June 10, 2017</b>	<b>May 5, 2017</b>	<b>Jun. 20, 2017</b>
<b>September 9, 2017</b>	<b>Aug. 4, 2017</b>	<b>Sept. 19, 2017*</b>
<b>October 28, 2017</b>	<b>Sept. 22, 2017</b>	<b>Nov. 7, 2017*</b>
<b>December 9, 2017</b>	<b>Nov. 3, 2017</b>	<b>Dec. 19, 2017*</b>
<b>February 10, 2018</b>	<b>Jan. 12, 2018</b>	<b>Feb. 20, 2018*</b>
<b>April 14, 2018</b>	<b>Mar. 9, 2018</b>	<b>Apr. 24, 2018*</b>
<b>June 9, 2018</b>	<b>May 4, 2018</b>	<b>Jun. 19, 2018*</b>
<b>July 14, 2018</b>	<b>Jun. 15, 2018</b>	<b>Jul. 24, 2018*</b>
<b>SAT Test Dates &amp; Deadlines</b>		
<b>Test Date</b>	<b>Normal Registration</b>	<b>Test Scores Available</b>
<b>June 3, 2017</b>	<b>May 9, 2017</b>	<b>Jul. 12, 2017</b>
<b>August 26, 2017</b>	<b>Jul. 28, 2017</b>	<b>Sept. 28, 2017*</b>
<b>October 7, 2017</b>	<b>Sept. 8, 2017</b>	<b>Nov. 9, 2017*</b>
<b>November 4, 2017</b>	<b>Oct. 5, 2017</b>	<b>Dec. 7, 2017*</b>
<b>December 2, 2017</b>	<b>Nov. 2, 2017</b>	<b>Jan. 10, 2018*</b>
<b>March 10, 2018</b>	<b>Feb. 9, 2018</b>	<b>Apr. 12, 2018*</b>
<b>May 5, 2018</b>	<b>Apr. 6, 2018</b>	<b>Jun. 7, 2018*</b>
<b>June 2, 2018</b>	<b>May 3, 2018</b>	<b>Jul. 11, 2018*</b>
<b>*estimated</b>		

## Responsibility to Get Things Done:

(Adapted from BestCollegeFit.com by Peter Van Buskirk)

Complete Prior to your Senior Year	Student	Parent
Complete an Interest Inventory	X	
Do What You are	X	
Complete the Career Cluster Finder	X	
Add 3 Possible Careers to Naviance	X	
Use Road Trip Nation to Explore Various Careers	X	
Investigate Career Opportunities	X	
Complete College Super Match	X	
Add 5 to 8 Colleges that you are interested	X	
Begin a log on community service activities	X	
Actions that Need to be Complete Prior to applying to College	Student	Parent
Get on mailing list of colleges you are interested	X	
Attend local college fairs	X	X
Visit with local college recruiters	X	
Schedule a college campus visit	X	
Make arrangements for overnight visits	X	X
Make hotel arrangements		X
Drive/fly to college campuses		X
Continue proper communications to college reps	X	
Actions that Need to be Complete When applying to College	Student	Parent
Learn SHS transcript procedures	X	X
Understand College Application Procedures	X	X
Begin Test Preparations for ACT/SAT	X	
Sign UP for SAT/ACT	X	
Decide Where to Apply to College	X	X
Complete the Applications for each College	X	
Pay the Application Fee	X	X
Using common app prompts, choose an essay topic	X	
Write your essay	X	
Keep a spreadsheet of timelines and deadlines	X	
Complete your Brag Sheet and Survey	X	
Complete Parent Brag Sheet		X

<b>Related Actions that Need to be Complete When applying to College</b>	<b>Student</b>	<b>Parent</b>
<b>Personally ask teachers and counselor for a recommendation letter when needed</b> <i>(Give them at least a 2 to 3 week window to complete the letter)</i>	X	
<b>Make sure the teacher/counselor who is writing a letter knows you personally</b>	X	
<b>Submit your application before the deadline</b>	X	
<b>Complete the FAFSA along with financial details for the CSS Profile and Scholarship Applications</b>	X	X
<b>Complete Financial Aid Forms</b>	X	X
<b>Keep track of Log-ins and Password Information for applications and FAFSA</b>	X	X
<b>Provide parental and moral support for student</b>		X
<b>Apply for Scholarships</b>	X	
<b>Actions Needed After a Student Has Been Accepted</b>	<b>Student</b>	<b>Parent</b>
<b>Take a second look at colleges that have accepted you</b>	X	
<b>If possible, spend the night in a residence hall</b>	X	
<b>Eat at least 2 meals on campus during a second visit</b>	X	
<b>Attend 2 classes in your major field</b>	X	
<b>Talk with the financial Aid office in person with parent</b>	X	X
<b>Evaluate each college that has accepted you</b>	X	
<b>Is the college a good fit for you</b>	X	
<b>Notify College you have accepted to attend</b>	X	
<b>Notify Colleges that you have declined their acceptance to attend</b>	X	
<b>Prepare for your move to College</b>	X	X

## Application Dos and Don'ts

Filling out college applications can be daunting, no doubt about it. But these timely tips will help you do an outstanding job!

**Do read directions.** Pay attention to the instructions for each application. For example, directions usually specify a minimum and maximum number of words for essays and short answers.

**Don't rush or work on automatic pilot.** Slow down. Rushing through your application can cause you to skip key sections and leave typos and misspellings. Write your essay and short answers in separate documents that you can proof and spell check before adding them to your application.

**Do pay attention to deadlines.** A college usually won't accept a late application. Different parts of an application may have different deadlines. If you are mailing an application, allow a realistic amount of delivery time and arrange for proof of delivery.

**Don't procrastinate.** Give yourself plenty of time to work on your essay. Some students allow several weeks. Give your teachers at least a month to complete your letters of recommendation. Remember the tortoise? Slow and steady wins the race.

**Do pay attention to grammar and spelling.** You may be a fine college candidate, but admission counselors will never know that if they can't get past your poor writing. Keep your language simple and to the point. Double-check your grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Ask a parent or teacher to proof your application.

**Don't let Mom or Dad fill out your application.** They are not going to be around to hold your hand once you are in college. This is your job. Plus, admission officers are skilled at detecting a parent's hand in an application.

**Do get organized.** Staying organized is the easiest way of staying on top of your applications. Keep each application in a separate folder, make a calendar of all your deadlines, and make your own deadlines so you won't put things off.

**Don't make an extracurricular laundry list.** It is more impressive to highlight the activities that got most of your attention and show your commitment and leadership.

**Do get presentable online.** Set up an adult-friendly e-mail account that you can check from anywhere. And clean up your social networking pages. If you think colleges will never look, you may be right. But don't take the risk.

**Don't forget other pieces of your application.** It's easy to think you are done when you click the submit button. Be sure to finish all the steps, such as arranging for teacher recommendations and completing supplements and financial aid documents.

**Do keep all correspondence.** You may need to prove that you sent or received a document by a certain date. In a folder for each college, keep letters, print e-mail messages, and make notes of phone calls. Note the date and time received.

**Don't forget to breathe.** When you are stressed out you are more likely to make mistakes. Calm down, ask for help, or come back to the tough questions later. Both your peace of mind and your admission chances are bound to improve.



## Do Your Best with Apps! Get Organized!

The key to reducing application stress and getting apps done on time is organization, as many successful college applicants will testify.

Here are three common ways to get all your application tasks done without hitting the panic button.

### The Folder

Set up a folder for each college you are applying to. Put all paperwork related to your application in the folder, including:

- All correspondence between you and the college (including printouts of e-mail messages and notes from phone conversations with admission officers)
- A copy of your entire application, even if you sent it electronically
- Other documents, such as completed financial aid forms, transcript requests, and letters of recommendation

### The Application Calendar

Fill in a calendar with application deadlines and test dates. Use different colors for different colleges. Put the calendar where you will see it every day, whether that means taping it up in your locker, attaching it to your bathroom mirror, or putting it on your phone. Here's what to put on the calendar:

- Deadlines for all parts of your college applications, such as recommendation letters, and transcripts
- Your own personal deadlines, such as starting your essay
- Test dates, including registration deadlines
- Any scholarship application deadlines

### The Application Chart

Many students find it helpful to display all the tasks needed to complete an application in a chart or spreadsheet. Make a separate chart for each college. Here are just some of the tasks that could appear on such a chart:

XYZ College			
Action to Take	Tasks	Deadline	Completed
Write draft of personal essay.	Outline topics, review with Mom, and write draft on chosen topic.	Aug 1	Aug 1
Revise essay.	Review draft with English teacher. Revise accordingly. Repeat.	Sept 15	Sept 10

Finalize essay.	Ask parent to proof essay. Make corrections and proof again.	Oct 15	Oct 1
Arrange for recommendation letters.	Supply forms, due dates, and stamped envelopes addressed to the admissions department.	One month before due date	Jan 3
Send school report and transcript to college.	Submit to counselor the school report and transcript request forms supplied by high school and college.	One month before due date	Jan 3
Thank recommenders.	Send note of thanks to each recommender.	Jan 10	Jan 5
Send FAFSA results to colleges.	Enter college ID code in the college list section of the FAFSA. Submit FAFSA.	One week after FAFSA opens (Jan 1)	Jan 7
Complete and review application.	Check that all fields are filled in, all parts are complete, and all written responses are error-free.	Three weeks before due date	Jan 12
Submit application.	Check that credit card information is accurate and confirm receipt online.	Two weeks before due date	Jan 15
Confirm application arrived.	E-mail or call admissions office to confirm receipt.	Two weeks after app. is sent	Feb 1

### Tips for Application Success

**Create a Command Center.** Decide where you will keep your folders, calendar, charts, etc. Just make sure it isn't the bottom of your backpack or under your laundry.

**Use your system consistently.** Spend quality time in your command center every week. Review where you are in the application process with each college and assign yourself upcoming high priority tasks.

**Find out your high school's process and timeline for sending transcripts and recommendations.** You don't want to miss deadlines just because you "didn't know" how requests should be submitted and when they are due.

## 6) FINANCIAL AID & BEYOND

Continuing your education after high school is an important part of you achieving your goals and dreams. Cost is not a reason to not pursue higher education or training. Here is an introduction to basic financial aid and scholarship info. Financial aid describes any funding you receive to pay for educational expenses.

Federal  
Student  
Aid

### **FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)**

The Department of Education through the Federal Student Aid FAFSA awards billions of dollars to students every year in the form of grants, scholarships, and low-interest loans. U.S. Citizens, Permanent Residents, and eligible Non-Citizens can submit a FAFSA using their 2015 taxes beginning on October 1, 2016 to compete for funding for the 2017-2018 academic year. The FAFSA does not require a minimum income nor does it have an income maximum to apply and compete for aid. The application is FREE and can be submitted electronically.

**TAFSA**

### **TAFSA (Texas Application for State Aid)**

The State of Texas through the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board awards eligible Non-Citizens and DACA students state financial aid through the TASFA application. Students must have lived in Texas for 36 consecutive months leading up to graduating from a Texas high school and must live in Texas for 12 months prior to attending a Texas college or university. The TASFA requires submission of a notarized Residency Affidavit (which can be notarized on campus), a tax transcript, proof of registration for selective service (males only), and a statement of cash earnings if taxes are not filed. The application is FREE and cannot be submitted electronically but must be delivered to each institution via their preferred method of delivery.



### **CSS/Financial Aid Profile**

The College Board, in cooperation with colleges and universities across the nation, utilizes the CSS/Financial Aid Profile to award students institutional aid using similar information as is required on the FAFSA. This form is not used to award federal financial aid. There is a fee to submit the application. Students qualifying for a submission fee waiver will be notified once they have entered all necessary information and arrive at the payment page for the application.

Federal Student Aid  
**FAFSA4caster**



Net Price  
Calculator

### **FAFSA4caster & Net Price Calculator**

These tools are designed to assist students and families with determining the potential cost of higher education. The FAFSA main page contains a link for the 4caster and every college and university is now required to have a Net Price Calculator on their financial aid webpage.

**uaspire**

PREPARE \* AFFORD \* SUCCEED

**uAspire**

In partnership with this college affordability organization, SBISD students have access to cutting edge financial aid information and with their families can receive assistance with interpreting financial aid award letters and making the best financially fit decision for continuing their education.

## SCHOLARSHIP RESOURCES

*\*The following resources require students to create an account/profile for each site. Please read Terms of Use and Privacy Policies on each site before completing sign up.*



### **Naviance Family Connection**

Family Connection includes a scholarship directory that students can browse to find scholarships and also includes a "scholarship match" link on the College tab to will assist students with finding scholarships that match their profile. *Please keep in mind, scholarships on the "scholarship list" are updated by SBISD and may not reflect the most recent information or due dates for each scholarship. Students are encouraged to visit company/organization websites for the most updated information.*



### **Raise.me**

As early as freshman year students can begin earning "micro-scholarships" to pay for their higher education. Students earn scholarship dollars from colleges & universities across the nation for their high school accomplishments like taking certain classes, earning certain grades, and participating in certain activities. Raise.me is completely free to students.



### **redkite**

Red Kite Matching Engine searches through \$20 billion in scholarships to find the opportunities that best fit a student's profile. The site also allows students to compare costs between college and universities and track their scholarship and loan applications.

***\*\*As you apply for and receive scholarship awards please see your Counselor or Academic Advisor for instructions on how to update you campuses scholarships registry. \*\****

## Twelve myths about paying for college

Billions of dollars in financial aid are available to those who need help paying for college. Yet a lot of misinformation clouds the facts about what type of aid is available and who is eligible. Here are some myths dispelled for those confronting the process of securing financial aid.

### **College is just too expensive for our family**

- Despite the media hype, a college education is more affordable than most people think, especially when you consider that 44 percent of undergraduates attend colleges with tuition and fees of less than \$9,000. The average yearly tuition for in-state students at a four-year public college in 2011-12 was just \$8,244. There are some expensive schools, but high tuition is not a requirement for a good education.

### **There's not a lot of financial aid available**

- In fact, more than \$177 billion in student financial aid is available for undergraduates. Most students receive some form of aid. 44 percent of this aid is in the form of grants, and 39 percent in the form of low-interest loans. You should carefully consider the financing packages you've been offered by each college to determine which makes the most financial sense.

### **My family's income is too high to qualify for aid**

- Aid is intended to make a college education available for students of families in many financial situations, and there is no cut-off based on income. College financial aid administrators also take into account other family members in college, home mortgage costs and other factors. Don't count yourself out — apply for aid and let the process work.

### **My parents saved for college, so we won't qualify for aid**

- Saving for college is always a good idea. Tucking away money could mean that you have fewer loans to repay, and it won't make you ineligible for aid if you need it. A family's share of college costs is based mostly on income, not assets such as savings.

### **I'm not a straight-A student, so I won't get aid**

- It's true that many scholarships reward merit, but most federal aid is based on financial need and does not even consider grades.

### **If I apply for a loan, I have to take it**

- Families are not obligated to accept a low-interest loan if it is awarded to them. One financial aid administrator recommends applying for aid and comparing the loan awards with other debt instruments and assets to determine the best financial deal.

## Senior-year calendar for students applying for financial aid

### Summer Before Senior Year

- **Research scholarship opportunities** that you might be eligible for. An early start will give you time to meet deadlines and to prepare a competitive application.

### September

- **Ask your school counselor about local scholarships** offered by church groups, civic associations and businesses in your area.
- If you are going to apply **Early Decision** to a college, ask that college if they have forms for an early estimate of your financial aid eligibility.

### October

- Find out if there will be a **family financial aid night** at your high school or elsewhere in your area.
- Use the **online financial aid calculator** on collegeboard.org to estimate your family's expected family contribution (EFC).
- If you need to fill out the **CSS /Financial Aid PROFILE**, you can register on collegeboard.org starting Oct. 1.
- **If any scholarship applications require recommendations**, you should request them now, or at least four weeks in advance of the deadline.

### November

- **Get PINs for the FAFSA** for both yourself and one of your parents at [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov).

### December

- **Contact the financial aid office** at the colleges on your list to make sure you have all required **financial aid forms**.
- Start gathering what you need to complete the FAFSA. A list of needed documents is on FAFSA on the Web.

### January

- If a college you're applying to has an **early financial aid priority date**, submit your FAFSA as soon as you can after Jan. 1. Use estimates based on your end-of-year pay stubs and last year's tax returns.

## What you should know about FAFSA: The Free Application for Federal Student Aid

### Read the form

Many questions on the FAFSA are straightforward, such as asking for your social security number or your date of birth. But many require you to read the instructions to make sure you answer the question correctly. Words like *household*, *investments* and even *parent* all have common meanings but are specifically defined for purposes of student financial aid. So be sure to read the instructions.

If you have a special family situation, you may have additional questions. You should ask for clarification from a financial aid administrator at a college you wish to attend.

### Apply early

Deadlines for aid from your state, school and private sources tend to be much earlier than deadlines for federal aid. To make sure that any financial aid package your school offers you will contain aid from as many sources as possible, apply as soon as you can after January 1 of your senior year or the year you apply to college.

The U.S. Department of Education will process your FAFSA right up until June 30 of the year you will enroll in college. However, for you to actually receive aid, your high school must have your correct, complete information before your last day of enrollment as a high school student. So it is important to apply early to make sure you leave enough time for your high school to receive your information and make any necessary corrections.

### Your family doesn't need to file a tax return before you submit your FAFSA

Filling out a tax return first will make completing the FAFSA easier, but don't miss any college deadlines because your parents haven't done their taxes yet. Use estimates from W2s or pay stubs, and last year's tax returns. After you submit the FAFSA, you will be able to correct the estimated figures later.

### You can file your FAFSA online

The fastest way to apply for financial aid is to fill out and submit a FAFSA online. Also, your information is edited before you submit it, so if you made errors or left out any information, you can make the necessary corrections before you submit the form. This reduces the chance that your data will be rejected and makes it less likely that you will have to correct your information later. To submit your application using FAFSA on the Web, go to [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).

**Source:** U.S. Department of Education

### Handout 8G

## Creative avenues of financial aid

### Credit through testing

Students can earn college credit by taking an examination. Through programs such as the College-Level Examination Program® (CLEP®), and the Advanced Placement Program® (AP®), you may receive college credit for a course by passing a standardized test. The more courses a student tests out of, the fewer courses he or she pays for and more time is available for other interests or other courses. There are usually requirements for testing out of courses before college credits may be earned.

### Cooperative (co-op) education

Co-op programs are a blend of classroom study and work experience related to the major. During the undergraduate program, co-op students alternate work assignments with college studies. The college arranges the job and work schedule, but the employer pays for the time worked. The money earned on the job helps cover college costs.

### Accelerated graduation

Students may take the maximum course load, to earn more credits for the same price and thus graduate earlier. Some colleges offer a “time-shortened degree option” for students who want to graduate in three years, thereby saving a year of college costs. This accelerated option should be considered only by students who believe they can manage the heavy academic load. Ask the admissions counselor for advice on this option.

### Two years, then transfer

Because costs at a community college generally are lower than at four-year colleges, students can attend a community college for the first two years, then transfer to a four-year college. Students who do well at the community college are likely to qualify for a financial aid package at the four-year college. Two years at a community college can save a bundle on room, board and transportation costs.

### The military

If a student is bright and physically fit, the armed forces will definitely be interested. The armed forces can offer an array of attractive educational benefits to help pay for college. Full college scholarships, education assistance plans and career experience are just a few of the benefits students can enjoy courtesy of Uncle Sam. Students will be required to complete the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery to qualify for certain careers. The high school counselor can arrange for students to take the test and can also suggest materials that will help them prepare for the test.



## Avoiding scholarship scams

Scholarship scams have been around for years. According to the Federal Trade Commission, if you hear these lines from a scholarship service, you may be getting duped:

- “The scholarship is guaranteed or your money back.” No one can guarantee that you’ll get a grant or a scholarship. Refund guarantees often have conditions or strings attached. Get refund policies in writing, and read the fine print.
- “You can’t get this information anywhere else.” There are thousands of scholarships you can research through free means. It’s highly doubtful that a company would have an exclusive list of scholarships that you can’t find through another source.
- “I just need your credit card or bank account number to hold this scholarship.” Don’t give your credit card or bank account number without getting information in writing first. You might become the victim of an unauthorized withdrawal from your account.
- “We’ll do all the work.” Don’t be fooled. You must apply for scholarships or grants yourself.
- “The scholarship will cost money.” Don’t pay anyone who claims to be “holding” a scholarship or grant for you.
- “You’ve been selected” by a “national foundation” to receive a scholarship, or “You’re a finalist” in a contest you never entered. Before you reply to a scholarship offer you didn’t initiate, check it out. Make sure the foundation or program is legitimate.

### What to do if you suspect an offer is a scam

Start with your school counselor. Also, the following organizations can help you decide if an offer is legitimate. They will tell you whether they have received any complaints about the company, or whether the company is currently under investigation. Look for these organizations online or call for more information:

- Better Business Bureau in the city where the scholarship service is located
- Federal Trade Commission, 1-877-FTC-HELP or [www.ftc.gov/scholarshipscams](http://www.ftc.gov/scholarshipscams)
- State bureau of consumer protection
- State attorney general’s office
- National Fraud Information Center (NFIC), [www.fraud.org](http://www.fraud.org)

For more information about scholarship scams, visit [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org).

For more information about college costs and financial aid, visit the Pay for College section at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org).

**Source:** *The College Board*

### Handout 8J

## Twenty questions to ask about financing college

1. What's the average total cost of attendance (tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, travel, and other personal expenses)? Do any of these costs vary by program?
2. What are the ranges of costs for the different housing options and meal plans?
3. By how much should I expect my costs to increase each year? (A three- to five-year history of cost increases should be available.)
4. Does financial need have an impact on admission decisions?
5. How is financial aid affected if I apply via an Early Decision or Early Action program?
6. Does the school offer scholarships or other types of aid that aren't based on financial need?
7. What forms are required to apply for financial aid?
8. What is the priority deadline to apply for financial aid?
9. When will I be notified about financial aid award decisions?
10. Will the financial aid offer take into account the full cost of attending, including books and supplies, transportation and personal expenses?
11. What percentage of need does this college attempt to meet on average?
12. Will the financial aid office provide me with an explanation of how my financial need and award package were determined?
13. What financing options are available to help us pay our share of the costs?
14. What is the average amount of student loan debt incurred by graduates?
15. If the financial aid package isn't enough, can I appeal? Under what conditions, if any, will the aid office reconsider the offer?
16. How will the aid package change from year to year? What will happen if my enrollment status or my family's financial situation changes?
17. What are the academic requirements or other conditions for the renewal of financial aid, including scholarships?
18. When can I expect to receive bills from the college? Is there an option to spread the yearly payment over equal monthly installments?
19. How much money will I need during the first week of school for books, supplies and other initial expenses? Can these expenses be charged to my account?
20. Regarding student employment, including the Federal Work-Study Program: How are jobs assigned? How many hours per week are students expected or allowed to work? How often and in what manner are they paid?

**Source:** The College Board

### Handout 8L

## Financial aid resources for students and families

### Websites

**AmeriCorps.** AmeriCorps is a network of national service programs that connects more than 75,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet our country's critical need in education, public safety, health and the environment. Full-time AmeriCorps members who complete their service are eligible to receive an education award. Members who serve part-time receive a partial award: [www.americorps.gov](http://www.americorps.gov).

**Casey Family Programs.** This site offers excellent information on helping students in foster care apply for and obtain adequate financial aid: [www.casey.org](http://www.casey.org).

**College Board.** Here you'll find a scholarship search, and various tools in the Financial Aid Easy Planner. You will also be able to apply online for CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE®, which is required by some colleges: [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org).

**FAFSA on the Web.** The website for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. This form must be completed in the senior year (after Jan. 1) for families applying for need-based aid. Students may complete it electronically: [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).

***Finding Education Beyond High School: The Guide to Federal Student Aid.*** This is a comprehensive resource on financial aid from the U.S. Department of Education. Grants, loans and work-study are the three major forms of aid available through the department's Federal Student Aid office. Updated annually. Available in English, Spanish and Braille. Go to [www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov) and type Student Guide into the search engine.

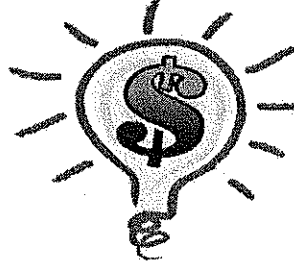
**Foster Club.** This is a site for foster children, with an easy search for state offerings, including scholarships, for these students: [www.fosterclub.com](http://www.fosterclub.com).

**Internal Revenue Service.** Get information on Hope and Lifetime Learning tax credits: [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

**Mapping Your Future.** Here you'll find general information about scholarships, financial aid, planning a career, selecting a college and paying for it: [www.mappingyourfuture.org](http://www.mappingyourfuture.org).

**Student Aid on the Web.** Get general information from the U.S. Department of Education: [www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov).

## Looking for Scholarships?



1. *Be sure to check in Naviance for updated comprehensive listings of scholarships!*
2. *Check each of your college websites carefully to ensure that you are applying for all grants and scholarships available at the time you are completing your application.*
3. *Check with your parents' employers, as many companies have scholarships for employees' children.*
4. *Religious organizations or other organizations to which you or your parents belong often offer scholarships to members' children.*
5. *Choose one or two FREE Scholarship Search Engines and make a plan to work on collecting names of scholarships to which you want to apply. Here are some examples of search engines:*

**CollegeNet.com**

**BigFuture.org**

**Scholarships.com**

**Scholarshipmonkey.com**

**Niche.com**

**Fastweb.com**

**Cappex.com**

**WeirdScholarships.com**

### **Other important resources-Data is your Friend!**

- [www.collegedata.com](http://www.collegedata.com)
- [www.collegexpress.com](http://www.collegexpress.com)
- [www.collegeresults.org](http://www.collegeresults.org)
- <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org>
- *Net price calculators*

# An International Student's Guide to U.S. Scholarships

**There are many options for college aid for non-U.S. citizens to study in the United States.**

By Scholarship America, Contributor | March 22, 2012, at 10:00 a.m.

The idea of the "American Dream" means many things to many people, but one of its most common—and important—elements is the ability to further one's self by getting a college education. And for students born outside the United States, scholarships can be an invaluable help toward achieving that dream. Whether you're a new immigrant, a student going on to graduate school, or a learner returning to college, there's international scholarship assistance out there for your studies in the United States.

Before you do any scholarship searching, it's important to know that you should never have to pay to find or apply for scholarships. If a scholarship search engine or application asks you for a credit card or other financial information before you can use it, stay away. Reputable scholarships never charge to apply, and there are plenty of excellent free search engines. (Scholarship Experts, in particular, features a search specific to international students.)

[Learn more about studying in the United States.]

One of your best sources of financial aid will be the college you attend. If you were born outside the United States but are now a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, start by looking at colleges within the state where you live. Generally speaking, state residents pay a much lower tuition rate than out-of-state residents.

For example, a year of tuition and fees at the University of Virginia costs around \$12,000 for students who live in Virginia, and around \$36,000 for those who don't. Establishing residency in a state can instantly cut a great deal off of your ultimate college price tag.

If you don't live in the United States, you can do some very thorough research on colleges and financial aid opportunities at EducationUSA. This service of the U.S. Department of State and the Institute of International Education provides a ton of online information; there is also a frequently updated list of financial aid opportunities and, most usefully, a guide to advising centers in countries around the world, where you can meet face-to-face with experts in your country that can help you search schools, translate information, and learn about your options.

You should also take a look at ForeignBorn.com for useful information on applying to schools, obtaining a student visa, and more.

[See which colleges offer international students the most financial aid.]

No matter where you live, or decide to go to school, your college's financial aid office (and its website) should be your next stop. Most colleges have scholarship programs specifically for international students attending their institutions. To use just one example, the University of Oregon awards more than \$1 million each year to students born outside the United States.

You'll notice on that page that some of this funding is for students from specific countries, some is open to students worldwide, and some requires that you study a certain field or do specific customer service—it can be confusing, but college admissions officers and financial aid experts are there to help you find as much money as you qualify for.

These resources will go a long way in helping with your education in the United States, no matter where you're from; you can also seek out opportunities specific to your country or even your gender. If you're a native of a Latin American or Caribbean nation, check out the listing of scholarships provided by the Organization of American States's Leo. S. Rowe Pan American Fund. The fund exists to provide interest-free student loans to students, and this brochure also features a useful listing of scholarship opportunities (starting on page 5), sorted by your country of residence.

If you live in one of the 17 countries (across four continents) where the Aga Khan Foundation has a presence, and you're doing graduate or postgraduate work, don't miss out on the Foundation's International Scholarship Programme, though note that awards made through this program are 50 percent scholarship and 50 percent loan, so you will have to pay part of the award back over time.

[See more ways to find scholarships for international students.]

And, finally, if you're a female graduate student and a non-U.S. resident, the venerable AAUW International Fellowship provides a tremendous opportunity; in 2011, the fellowship program awarded nearly \$1 million to women dedicated to improving life in their home countries. This highly competitive program usually opens in August for the next academic year, so keep it in mind if you're an exemplary grad or postgrad student.

*Matt Konrad has been with Scholarship America since 2005. He is an alumnus of the University of Minnesota and a former scholarship recipient.*

## **AUTO ADMIT - TOP 10 %**

Students who are in the top 10% of their high school graduating class are eligible for automatic admission to any public university in Texas.

To meet the requirements for automatic admission, you must:

- Graduate in the top 10% of your class at a public or private high school in Texas, or
- Graduate in the top 10% of your class from a high school operated by the U.S. Department of Defense and be a Texas resident or eligible to pay resident tuition;
- Enroll in college no more than two years after graduating from high school; and
- Submit an application to a Texas public university for admission before the application deadline. (Check with the university for specific deadlines).

The university may review the admitted student's high school records to determine if the student is prepared for college-level work. If additional preparation is needed, a developmental, enrichment or orientation course prior to the first semester of college may be required.

Admission to a university does not guarantee acceptance into a particular program of study or academic department.

### **Modifications to UT Austin Automatic Admission**

- The University of Texas Austin is to automatically admit enough students to fill 75% of available Texas resident spaces.
- Each fall by September 15 the university will notify Texas school officials of the class rank that current high school juniors need to attain by the end of their junior year in order to be automatically admitted two years out.
- Current class rank to be automatically admitted: Top 7%

### **Top 25% Admissions**

Not in the Top 10% of your graduating class? Don't give up! You might still qualify for automatic admission. Some universities in Texas have automatic admission for students that graduate in the top quarter (25%) of their graduation class. You will probably need higher ACT or SAT scores to qualify. Go to Texas Institutions of Higher Education to find the schools you need to contact to learn more about automatic admissions and Top 25% requirements.

<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Where</b>
Tuesday June 6th or June 13th	8:00- 8:20 am	Check-in & Breakfast	Students	Cafeteria
Tuesday June 6th or June 13th	8:30- 9:15 am	Naviance T-2-4 Tools Career Interest Inventory Career Clusters Do What You Are Super Match	Students (Parents)	Computer Lab
Tuesday June 6th or June 13th	9:15- 9:45 9:50- 10:10 10:15- 10:45	Available Applications Apply Texas Common Application Coalition Application	Students (Parents)	Computer Lab
Tuesday June 6th or June 13th	11:00-11:30	A Completed Application & Timelines Review all possible parts of an application Personal Statements Resume Letters of Recommendation Supplements	Students and Parents	Auditorium
Tuesday June 6th or June 13th	11:30- 11:40	How to Request Transcripts Overview of process & timelines	Students	Auditorium
Tuesday June 6th or June 13th	11:40- 11:50	College Visits Process & Policies Seeking Approval & Excused Absence	Students	Auditorium
Tuesday June 6th or June 13th	12:00- 12:30 pm	Naviance T-2-4 Tools Research Relevant Careers Road Trip Nation Colleges That I am Interested In	Students	Computer Lab



## APPLICATION FEES INFO SHEET

An application fee is the fee that a college charges you for applying to their institution.

### WHERE DO I FIND COLLEGE APPLICATION FEES?

There are several places you can go:

- Within your Common App account, use the College Search tab to look up a specific college
- Once you've added colleges to your list, use the My Colleges tab to review a specific college's fees
- Click on the 'Application Requirements' box on the College Search tab to access the full list of Common App schools and their application fees and requirements

**PRO TIP:** Colleges may charge different application fees for Transfer and International applicants.

### DO ALL COLLEGES CHARGE AN APPLICATION FEE?

No, there are over 250 Common App member colleges with no application fee.

### WHERE CAN I FIND COLLEGES WITH NO APPLICATION FEE?

You can find colleges with no application fees two ways:

- Use the Application Fee search criteria on the College Search tab to look for schools with no fees
- Click on the 'Application Requirements' box on the College Search tab to access the full list of Common App schools and their fees

### WHAT IF I CAN'T AFFORD TO PAY THE COLLEGE APPLICATION FEE?

Our member colleges want to make sure that application fees do not pose a barrier for any student who wishes to apply for admission. In the Profile section of the Common App, you will find the Common App Fee Waiver request. Some colleges may also offer their own application fee waivers that are not tied to financial circumstances.

If you still have questions, talk with your family and counselor, or visit [appsupport.commonapp.org](http://appsupport.commonapp.org).

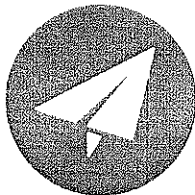
# A QUICK GUIDE TO THE APPLICATION

This guide previews the different sections of the Common Application so you'll be ready to get started as soon as you create your account.

<p><b>PROFILE</b></p>	<p><b>Contacts</b> Email address, phone number, mailing address</p> <p><b>Demographics</b> Religion, military service, race/ethnicity (all optional)</p> <p><b>Geography</b> Birthplace, countries lived in, language proficiency, citizenship</p>
<p><b>FAMILY</b></p>	<p><b>Household</b> Parent marital status, parent(s) with whom you reside</p> <p><b>Parent and/or Guardian</b> Name, birthplace, occupation, education, stepparent information</p> <p><b>Siblings</b> Age, grade, education</p>
<p><b>EDUCATION</b></p>	<p><b>School</b> Current school, dates attended; counselor name, phone, and email</p> <p><b>History</b> Previous schools, dates attended, past/pending education interruptions (e.g. time off, early graduation, gap year, etc.), college courses, college assistance programs</p> <p><b>Academic Information</b> GPA, class rank, current year courses, honors and awards</p>
<p><b>TESTING</b></p>	<p><b>College Entrance</b> ACT and SAT</p> <p><b>English For Non-Native Speakers</b> TOEFL, IELTS, PTE Academic</p> <p><b>Academic Subjects</b> AP, IB, SAT Subject Tests, A-Levels</p> <p><b>Other</b> Optional reporting for other relevant 9-12 testing</p>

<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<p><b>Principal Activities/Work</b> Years of participation, hours per week, weeks per year, position/leadership held (50 characters), brief description (150 characters). 10 activities maximum.</p>
<b>WRITING</b>	<p><b>Personal Essay</b> Select one of five available prompts, 650 Words Maximum</p> <p><b>Disciplinary History</b> Explanations regarding school discipline and misdemeanor or felony convictions</p> <p><b>Additional Information</b> Relevant circumstances or qualifications not reflected elsewhere in the application</p>
<b>COLLEGE-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS</b>	<p><b>General</b> Entry term, degree status, housing preference, test-optional preference, scholarship and financial aid preference</p> <p><b>Academics</b> Academic interest, program(s) applying to</p> <p>(Some colleges may also ask additional questions about your family, state of residence, activities, and general interests.)</p>
<b>COLLEGE WRITING SUPPLEMENTS</b>	<p><b>Writing Supplement</b> Additional short answer or essay responses if requested by institution</p>

**LEARN MORE**



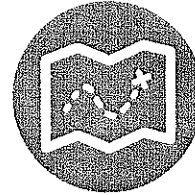
**GETTING STARTED**

Get started with your Common App with this helpful guide.



**TIPS & BEST PRACTICES**

Best practices to keep in mind as you complete your applications.



**COMMON APP TOUR**

Learn how to navigate the Common App.

Find more resources at [commonapp.org/ready](http://commonapp.org/ready)

## What you need to know about the new Common App Essay prompts

Have you seen the two new essay prompts on the Common Application? Every few years, the Common App, a tool used by more than 700 colleges to help students apply seamlessly to multiple schools, updates its essay prompts. The changes are based on feedback from students, parents, high school counselors, educational consultants and member schools following each admissions cycle. This year, the Common App added two new prompts; they also tweaked some of the current questions.

What does it all mean for high school juniors who are about to start the journey to college? Nothing, really. The task is the same. The revisions to prompts 2, 3 and 5 clarify the purpose of those questions, while the new prompts provide a few more options.

### **Reflection Matters Most**

The changes reinforce the message we share with our students and in our popular book, *How to Write an Effective College Application Essay*, which was just released in paperback. At its core, a personal statement is all about reflection. An effective essay shows insight into a student's character because it answers two central questions: 1) What happened? and 2) Why does it matter?

Why a topic matters to a student (the reflection) is more important than what happened (the experience, the activity, the idea, the concept, or the person who influenced that student).

Here are 4 simple steps to help you understand any Common App prompt so you can choose a meaningful topic that demonstrates both what happened and why it matters.

#### **1. Review the instructions**

Most students skip straight to the prompts and miss the important information built into the instructions. Make sure you read this first: "The essay demonstrates your ability to write clearly and concisely on a selected topic and helps you distinguish yourself in your own voice. What do you want the readers of your application to know about you apart from courses, grades, and test scores? Choose the option that best helps you answer that question and write an essay of no more than 650 words, using the prompt to inspire and structure your response."

#### **2. Ask one more question**

Before choosing a prompt or exploring topics, ask yourself: *What do I want colleges to know about me that they wouldn't otherwise know from the rest of my application?* Think about traits and characteristics, not accomplishments.

#### **3. Review the prompts**

Look closely at the seven prompts once you know which characteristic(s) you want to share. (We've tackled #6 and #7 below.) Do not dive into topic ideas until you've confirmed that you understand the 7 options.

#### **4. Brainstorm ideas**

The goal is to find a topic that best illustrates the trait or traits you want to share, and which also responds directly to the prompt. If you choose a story but can't explain *why* it makes a strong Common App topic, or how it demonstrates something meaningful about you, you're not ready to write a draft.

### **The New Prompts: What Are They All About?**

Just to confirm that we understood the purpose of the changes, we went straight to the source – Scott Anderson, Senior Director of Education and Partnerships for the Common Application. He said:

The prompts have changed slightly, but the instructions remain the same: What do you want application readers to know about you? The prompts simply serve to help students approach that question from as many angles as possible,

whether it be maturity, identity, curiosity, pastimes, aspirations, community, relationships, or anything else. Students should pick the prompt that supports and gets them excited about the story they want to tell about themselves.

Here's our take on Prompts #6 and #7, which have generated the most questions from our students and industry colleagues:

*Prompt 6: Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?*

The key word in this prompt is "engaging," but even that word can seem overwhelming. Remind yourself that the essay is not about the topic, idea or concept; it's about the applicant. You don't have to impress with big ideas. Try asking yourself questions like these: *Why is this topic, idea or concept so engaging? How does it make me feel? Who do I talk to about these ideas? Where do I go to research new concepts? What have I learned about myself?*

Maybe you care about social justice. Perhaps you're captivated by humor or technology. You can explore the concept overall or share an example of that concept in action. Whether you collected clothes and toiletries for a local family who lost their home in a fire or attracted ten thousand followers by tweeting a daily joke, why did you do it? How does that activity demonstrate how you think, problem-solve or process information? What did you learn about yourself? How did the idea affect or change you? If you want to focus on the big picture, make sure you know how you want to approach the concept before starting to write a first draft.

*Prompt 7: Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.*

The key word in this prompt is "choice." While #7 appears to be different from the other prompts, the purpose is the same. Yes, applicants can submit any essay they want in that 650-word space, but as the overall instructions clearly state, even an A+ paper must still illustrate something meaningful about the student.

Suppose you want to submit a critical analysis you wrote for Honors English about a character in *Jayne Eyre*. Could it work? Maybe. Ask yourself what the essay demonstrates about you. Do you yearn for more than what traditional society allows, like Jane? Does the paper demonstrate how the book propelled you toward political activism? Does it show how the book changed you? After admissions officers read the paper, will they learn something new about you? If not, it won't work as a college essay, no matter how well-written.

Both new prompts do exactly what the old ones did – maybe better.

Susan Knoppow is CEO of WOW Writing Workshop. She is an accomplished writer and teacher. Check them out at [www.wowwritingworkshop.com](http://www.wowwritingworkshop.com) or sign up for their [pro-chat](#). You can join them live or listen to the recording.

**COMMON ERRORS FOUND ON  
COLLEGE ADMISSION APPLICATIONS**

**APPLICANTS FAIL TO MEET DEADLINES!!!**

*This includes high school deadlines for requesting transcripts as well as college application and scholarship application deadlines!*

**SAT and/or ACT scores are not sent directly from the testing agency**

*Test scores written on the application are not considered official!*

**Unofficial transcripts are mailed with the application**

*Official transcripts must be sent directly from the Registrar's office to the college.*

**Official transcripts are not sent until after the college application deadline**

*Transcripts should be requested early – even before you are ready to send your part of the application.*

**Seniors who rank in the top 10% of the class do not complete the application and/or send in all required documents or meet college deadlines**

**Questions on the application are left blank**

*Students may often use "n/a" (not applicable or not available) or a dash (—) to indicate they did not overlook the question.*

**Students enter an incorrect digit for their Social Security number**

**Failure to hit "submit" when applicants finish their electronic application**

*PROOFREAD carefully and print a copy before submitting your application!*

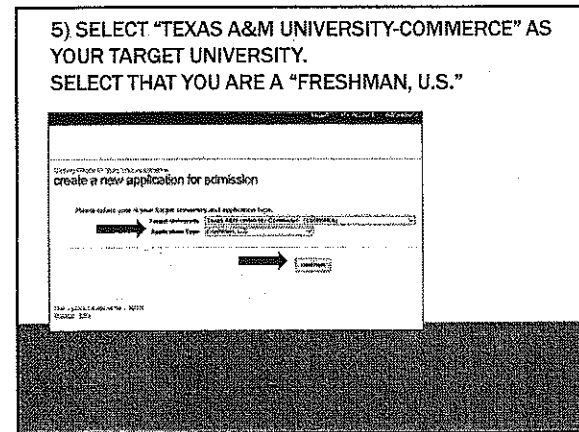
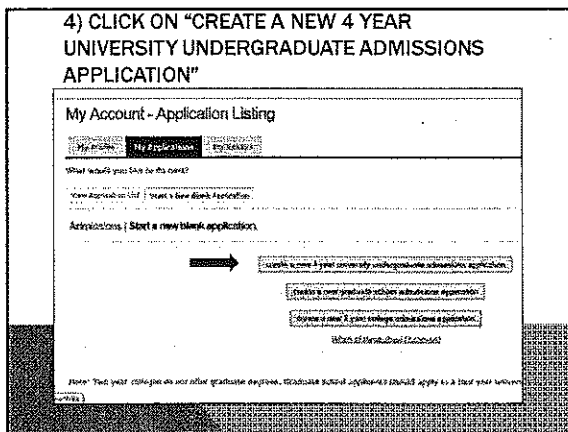
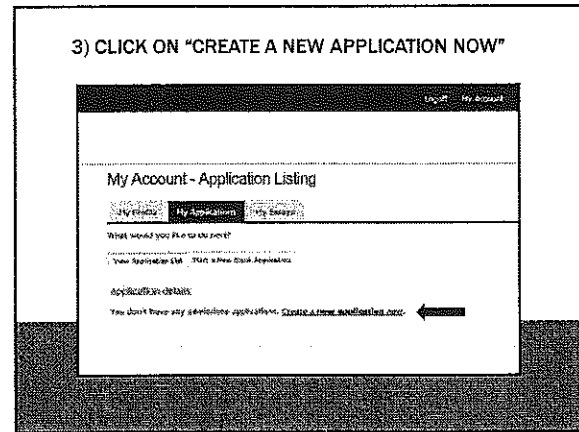
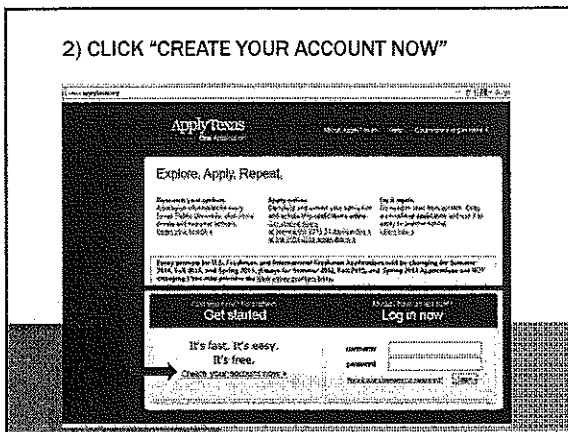
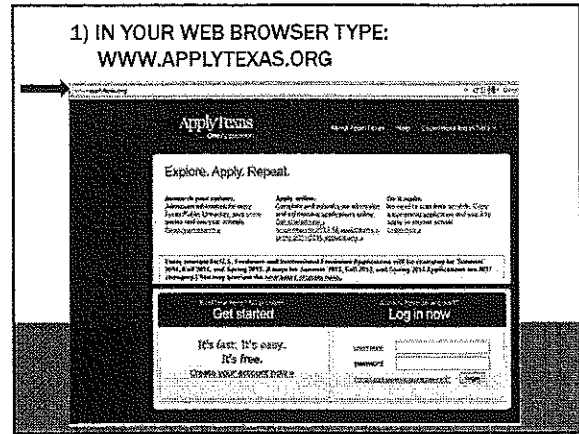
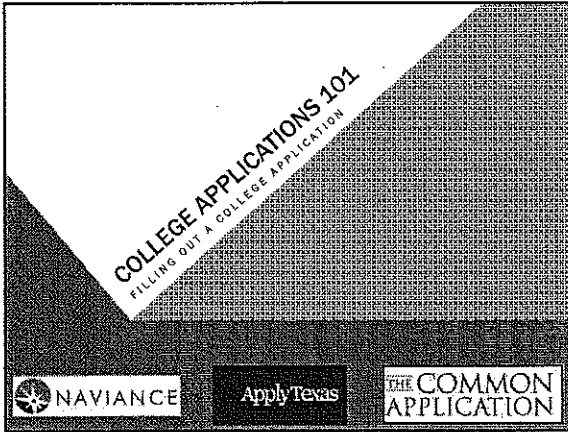
**Students use acronyms when describing extracurricular activities**

*Give the full name & a brief description of the organization.*

**Students mark the wrong college code on the SAT/ACT/AP Exams**

**Students fail to submit Mid-Year Reports to counselor**

*Texas state universities do not have or require mid-year reports. Follow your school's procedures for submitting mid-year reports to counselors.*



### 6) SELECT "FALL 2014" FOR SEMESTER OF ENTRY

Open-Response Non-Admitted  
select a semester

Semester of Entry:

The following semesters are your first choice for application for 4 Year University:

Semester	Deadline	Message
Summer 1 2013	05/30/2013	If you wish to apply for Summer 1 2013 admission, you will need to office at 903-886-5000 for further instructions.

Check the [application information page](#) provided by Texas A&M University-Commerce.

Address: P.O. Box 3013, Commerce, TX 75429  
 Help Website: (903) 886-5000  
 Website: Texas A&M University-Commerce

### 7) SELECT TWO MAJORS THAT YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PURSUING

Selecting Majors or Dual-Track Applications  
select major

Please provide your interests:

First choice major:

Second choice major:

NOTE: You cannot select the same major twice. Please select a different major for your second major. If you can't decide on your second major, select "Undecided Major."

### 8) IN ORDER TO COMPLETE ANY ADMISSIONS APPLICATION, YOU WILL NEED TO COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS. SELECT "CONTINUE TO MY APPLICATION" TO BEGIN

Items to complete

Admissions application

- Page 1: biographical information
- Page 2: biographical information (continued)
- Page 3: educational background
- Page 4: educational information
- Page 5: test scores
- Page 6: residency information
- Page 7: extracurricular and volunteer activities
- Page 8: employment information
- Page 9: custom questions for this institution

Continue to my application

### 9) MAKE SURE TO ENTER YOUR SSN (IF APPLICABLE) AND YOUR DATE OF BIRTH

Biographical Information

1) If you have a SSN, make sure to enter it correctly  
 2) If you do not remember your SSN, leave this box blank.  
 3) If you do not have a SSN, you may leave it blank.

NOTE: if you are NOT a U.S. Citizen and you have applied for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and received a working permit, that number is NOT your SSN. Please leave this area blank.

NOTE: Make sure to enter your birth date correctly.

### 10) ENTER YOUR FULL NAME

3. Full, legal name: - required  
 Enter your full, legal last, first, and middle names. Do not use nicknames or abbreviations because this information will be legal name on all documents sent to this institution to which you are applying.

Last/Family Name:   
 First Name:   
 Middle Name:   
 Suffix:

4. Other names or aliases:  
 If you attend school under a different name or have a standardized student number even using a different name, do

5. Your gender:  
 Male  Female

### 11) ENTER YOUR PLACE OF BIRTH AND ETHNICITY

5. Place of Birth: - required  
 Enter the city, state, and country where you were born.

City:   
 State/Province:   
 Country:

6. Ethnicity and Race:  
 Are you Hispanic or Latino (a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin) or

Yes  No

Please select the racial category or categories with which you most closely identify. Check as many as apply.

American Indian or Alaska Native  
 Asian  
 Black or African American  
 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander  
 White



### 12) ENTER YOUR U.S. CITIZEN STATUS

10. Are you a U.S. Citizen? - required  Yes  No

11. Are you a U.S. Citizen? - required  Yes  No

NOTE: If you are NOT a U.S. Citizen and received a working permit through DACA, this number is NOT your Permanent Resident number.

It is essential that your answer to this question is "YES." If you have NOT lived in Texas for 36 consecutive months, please talk to your College Counselor.

### 13) ANSWER U.S. MILITARY INFO (IF APPLICABLE)

9. Status is a current U.S. military servicemember, veteran, or dependent:  
A U.S. military servicemember is a person who is serving in any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, including the

veteran (former U.S. military servicemember)  
 current U.S. military servicemember  
 spouse or dependent of a veteran or current U.S. military servicemember  
 spouse or dependent of a veteran or current U.S. military servicemember resulting from military service (service-connected injury/illness)  
 spouse or dependent of a deceased U.S. servicemember

### 14) INSERT INFORMATION FOR PERMANENT ADDRESS QUESTION ONLY

10. Apply Texas standardized permanent and physical addresses for U.S. addresses. What is address standard?

Permanent address - required

Street Address  - address  
 Street Address line 2   
 City   
 State/Possession  TX - For U.S.  
 Postal/Zip Code   
 Country  Select a country if not U.S. - Please see

11. Physical address (current street address where you reside, if different from above):  
If your physical address is the same as your permanent address, leave this question blank.

Street Address  - If different  
 Street Address line 2   
 City   
 State/Possession  TX - For U.S.  
 Postal/Zip Code   
 Country  Select a country if not U.S. - Please see

### 15) ENTER YOUR PHONE NUMBER AND EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

12. Phone Numbers:  
Number (Area Code, Prefix, and Number) (Please include area code)

Preferred Phone   
 Preferred Phone Type  - required  
 Alternate Phone   
 Alternate Phone Type

13. Emergency Contact - required

Title   
 First Name   
 Last Name   
 Phone Number  - country (if)  
 Street Address   
 Street Address line 2   
 City   
 State  TX - For U.S.  
 Country  Select a country if not U.S.  
 Postal/Zip Code   
 E-mail Address   
 E-mail (alternate)  - if not U.S.

### 16) INSERT PROFESSIONAL EMAIL AND FAMILY BACKGROUND THEN CLICK "SAVE CHANGES"

14. Student e-mail address - required  
The e-mail address provided may be used to communicate important information to you regarding

E-mail address  firstname.lastname@domain.com  
 E-mail alternate  firstname.lastname@domain.com

15. Family Educational Background:  
Please indicate the highest level of your parents' or legal guardians' educational background:

Father's education level   
 Mother's education level

Optional: Your social security number is not required by a specific legal authority; however, it is important for purposes of transcripts and tax forms. If you plan to apply for financial aid or work while enrolled, you are strongly encouraged to list

Make sure you use a professional email address. Make sure you will check this email address regularly.

save changes

### 17) DOUBLE CHECK YOUR PERMANENT ADDRESS AND CLICK BOX TO STATE THAT YOUR ADDRESS IS CORRECT.

10. Apply Texas standardized permanent and physical addresses for U.S. addresses. What is address standard? (confirm in next step)

Your permanent address has changed to comply with Texas law. Please mark it back as correct unless you have recently moved frequently.

I understand that my permanent address has been standardized and is correct - required

Permanent address - required

Street Address  - address only - do not need to re  
 Street Address line 2   
 City   
 State/Possession  TX - For U.S. addresses only  
 Postal/Zip Code   
 Country  Select a country if not U.S. - Please see

Finally be sure to include your ad

### 18) ENTER BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

biographical information (continued)

1. In addition to English, what languages do you speak fluently?

Language 1:  Years spoken:

Language 2:  Years spoken:

2. Family Income: Please indicate, for the most recent tax year, your family's gross income, include both earned and unearned income.

Family Income:

3. Household Size - REQUIRED How many people, including yourself, live in your household?

Number in household:

If you speak another language other than English, select language and the number of years you have spoken this language.

If you do not know your family's income, leave it blank and make sure to revise it later.

### 19) ENTER YOUR FAMILY OBLIGATIONS

4. Do you have family obligations that keep you from participating in extracurricular activities?

Yes  No

4. Do you have family obligations that keep you from participating in extracurricular activities?

Yes  No

If you have family obligations, do you:

a. have to work to support family income?  Yes  No  
Please describe:

b. provide primary care for family member(s)?  Yes  No  
Please describe:

c. have other family obligations that prevent participation?  Yes  No  
Please describe:

If you work or provide primary care for your family, make sure to use the following format in your response.

### 20) ENTER INFORMATION ABOUT DUAL CREDIT (IF APPLICABLE)

educational background

1. Are you a:

Freshman with  college credit by high school graduation:

number credit hours, if applicable

### 21) INSERT YOUR SCHOOL INFORMATION

This will speed the processing of your application by searching for and selecting your high school via the school's activity list within your state.

To locate the school search screen, click the school search button, then enter the name of your high school, or the "Schools on Texas" option at the bottom of the search page.

For U.S. high schools, please be sure to specify both the city and state.

For international high schools, please leave the state field blank and enter the country in the city field.

Search for Your High School:

High School Name:  High School Code:  High School City or Country:  High School State:  Expected Graduation Date:

Are you home-schooled? - REQUIRED:  Yes  No

Do you plan to graduate with an IB (International Baccalaureate) diploma? - REQUIRED:  Yes  No

To determine Texas Grant eligibility, will you graduate from a Texas high school with the Recognition or Distinguished Achievement Program?  Yes  No

Make sure to answer "Yes" to graduation plan.

### 22) LEAVE THIS AREA BLANK

1. If you did not graduate from high school, do you have a GED?  Yes  No  Not Applicable

2. Please list all current or previous colleges or universities that have attended or are attending, including college-level courses for all institutions will be considered an institutional suspension and may lead to formal withdrawal.

Have an official transcript sent to each university to which you apply. Please send an official transcript to each school you visit.

Current or Most Recent College Attended

Search for College 1:

Name of Institution:  College Code:

College Location:

College City or Country:

College State:

Status of Attendance:

Attached starting date:

Attended to:

Hours earned:

How much money in the last 60 days and how many of your credit hours do you have a debt on?

Degree Earned or Expected (if applicable):

Please indicate if you have received a degree or credit for the degree listed in email:

for awards:

for credit:

Type of Degree:

Even if you have taken dual credit classes, you don't want to prolong your college application process waiting for your college transcript. Leave this area blank. This is only applicable for ApplyTexas applications.

### 23) SELECT "NO" FOR COLLEGE ACADEMIC SUSPENSION AND THEN SELECT "SAVE CHANGES"

5. Are you currently on academic suspension from the last college or university attended?  Yes  No

### 24) ENTER EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

educational information

1. If you **INTEND** to pursue a preprofessional program, please specify which one.  
 pre-professional program:  + 4 of 99

2. Will you seek teacher certification - REQUIRED  
 Yes  No  
 If yes, indicate which level:

The government has funding programs for students who plan to pursue a teacher certification. If you are interested in pursuing a teacher certification, make sure to select "Yes" and the level you would consider teaching.

### 25) FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS TO INSERT YOUR SENIOR COURSE INFORMATION

Senior Course Information  
 List the courses you have completed or plan to complete in the next two years of high school. Indicate the semester and year you will complete each course.

Course Number	Semester		Year	
	Fall	Spring	2016	2017
English 1	X			
English 2		X		
English 3			X	X
English 4				X
Math 1				X
Math 2				X
Math 3				X
Math 4				X
Science 1				X
Science 2				X
Science 3				X
Science 4				X
History 1				X
History 2				X
History 3				X
History 4				X
Foreign Language 1				X
Foreign Language 2				X
Foreign Language 3				X
Foreign Language 4				X
Art 1				X
Art 2				X
Art 3				X
Art 4				X
Physical Education 1				X
Physical Education 2				X
Physical Education 3				X
Physical Education 4				X
Other				X

### 26) ENTER TEST SCORE INFORMATION SELECT "SAVE CHANGES"

test scores  
admissions tests

Check those you have taken or plan to take. Please bring official test scores.

ACT:  ACT taken  
 SAT:  SAT taken  
 TOEFL:  TOEFL taken  
 IELTS:  IELTS taken

Enter the test date for the test you received the highest score. If you have not taken the exam but will take it in October, make sure to select Oct 2013.

### 27) SELECT "NO" UNDER UNIVERSITY ENROLLMENT AND THEN SELECT "SAVE & CONTINUE TO NEXT QUESTION"

Residency Information

About this section:  
 The college or university to which you are applying will use the information you provide in this section to determine your status for residency purposes. This page will require you to select "NO" under university enrollment. At the very end, there will be a question that asks for any additional information that you would like to provide. That page will be followed by a confirmation page where you will be asked to confirm that everything you entered was correct. It is extremely important that you take care when answering this section to provide accurate information.

During the 12 months prior to the year for which you are applying, did you attend a public college or university in Texas as a full-time student?  
 Yes  No

### 28) SELECT "TX" FOR STATE OF RESIDENCE SELECT "YES" FOR BOTH RESIDENCY QUESTIONS IN REGARD TO THE AMOUNT OF TIME YOU HAVE LIVED IN TEXAS.

Residency Information

Of what state or country are you a resident? - REQUIRED  
 State or country:

Did you live or will you have lived in Texas for 36 consecutive months leading up to high school graduation or completion of the GED? - REQUIRED  
 Yes  No

When you begin the semester for which you are applying, will you have lived in Texas for the previous 12 months? - REQUIRED  
 Yes  No

### 29) CONFIRM INFORMATION IS CORRECT AND SELECT "SAVE PAGE"

Residency Information

Residency Status Complete

You have completed the residency section of this application. The answers you provided are displayed below. If you provided any additional information, please use the "Additional Information" button at the bottom of the page.

Questions: Did you attend a public college or university in Texas during a full-time period during the 12 months you are applying?  
 Answer: No

Question: Of what state or country are you a resident?  
 Answer: TX

Question: Did you live or will you have lived in Texas for 36 consecutive months leading up to high school graduation or completion of the GED?  
 Answer: Yes

Question: When you begin the semester for which you are applying, will you have lived in Texas for the previous 12 months?  
 Answer: Yes

**30) MAKE SURE TO FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS TO FILL OUT EXTRACURRICULAR SECTION**

APPLYTEXAS.COM

30) MAKE SURE TO FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS TO FILL OUT EXTRACURRICULAR SECTION

employment information

Employment, Internships, Summer Activities

Example 1: Student Internship

Example 2: Summer Internship

Example 3: Summer Internship

TIPS: Follow ApplyTexas format, check your grammar, use all spaces provided to insert info.

**31) ENTER YOUR SUMMER ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY AND ANY WORK INFORMATION**

employment information

Employment, Internships, Summer Activities

Your School/College/Job Title	Employer	City	State	Year	Start Date (mm/yyyy)	End Date (mm/yyyy)
Example 1: Student Internship	Example 1: University	City	State	Year	Start Date	End Date
Example 2: Summer Internship	Example 2: Company	City	State	Year	Start Date	End Date
Example 3: Summer Internship	Example 3: Company	City	State	Year	Start Date	End Date

TIPS: Follow ApplyTexas format and check your grammar.

**32) SELECT "NO" AND THEN "SAVE" BUTTON**

32) SELECT "NO" AND THEN "SAVE" BUTTON

Family Military - REQUIRED

Is either of your parents in the military or have they ever been in the military? If the answer is NO, please contact Veterans Affairs at http://military.letsu.com/etax or by phone at (800) 840-8223.

Yes

No

TIPS: Follow ApplyTexas format and check your grammar.

**33) ANSWER INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR FAMILY BEING IN THE MILITARY**

Family Military - REQUIRED

Is either of your parents in the military or have they ever been in the military? If the answer is NO, please contact Veterans Affairs at http://military.letsu.com/etax or by phone at (800) 840-8223.

Yes

No

TIPS: Follow ApplyTexas format and check your grammar.

**34) SELECT "SAVE AND COMPLETE THIS PAGE"**

34) SELECT "SAVE AND COMPLETE THIS PAGE"

custom questions for this institution

Family Military - REQUIRED

Is either of your parents in the military or have they ever been in the military? If the answer is NO, please contact Veterans Affairs at http://military.letsu.com/etax or by phone at (800) 840-8223.

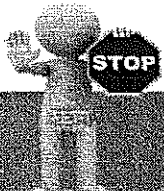
Yes

No

TIPS: Follow ApplyTexas format and check your grammar.

**CONGRATULATIONS! YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE MAIN INFORMATION FOR YOUR COLLEGE APPLICATION.**

**YOUR COLLEGE COUNSELOR WILL NEED TO REVIEW YOUR ANSWERS TO EACH SECTION BEFORE YOU ARE ABLE TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION.**



**common app** *ready*

# COMMON APP READY

Understanding the My Colleges Tab

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## UNDERSTANDING THE MY COLLEGES TAB AGENDA

- The My Colleges Tab
- College-Specific Questions
- The Writing Supplement

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## THE MY COLLEGES TAB

Before beginning your applications, it's a good idea to familiarize yourself with each school's requirements to help you stay organized.

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Click the name of each school in your My Colleges tab to see their requirements.

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### University of Virginia

**Application**  
(2 of 3 Completed)

- Questions
- Recommenders and FERPA
- Review and Submit - Common App

Each school in your My Colleges tab will have three sections under "Application".

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### George Mason University

**Application**  
(1 of 3 Completed)

- Questions
- Recommenders and FERPA
- Review and Submit - Common App

**Writing Supplement**  
(Not 2 Completed)

- Writing Supplement
- Review and Submit - Writing Supplement

Some schools may have a "Writing Supplement" section in addition to the "Application" section.

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# THE APPLICATION SECTION

The Application section is organized into three subsections: Questions, Recommenders & FERPA, and Review and Submit - Common App.

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## SCHOOL-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

Each school can determine what types of questions they want to ask, so every Questions section will look a little different.

However, each school will always ask you to select a start term and admission plan.

### WHY?

Because the start term and admission plan let schools know when you would like to apply. It is also how submission deadlines are set and displayed in the Common App.

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## RECOMMENDERS & FERPA

In this section you will assign your recommenders and complete the FERPA Release Authorization.

Be sure to double check each school's recommendation requirements!

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## REVIEW & SUBMIT

When you have completed the Common App, assigned your recommenders, and answered all college-specific questions you can start the submission process.

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## THE WRITING SUPPLEMENT SECTION

Some, but not all schools, may require a Writing Supplement in addition to their college-specific questions.




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### WRITING REQUIREMENTS ICONS

Three status icons will help you plan out your essay responsibilities.

Use these as a preparation and planning tool so you can stay on track with your applications.

-  **Required:** This icon lets you know that a writing prompt requires an answer before you can submit a form.
-  **Optional:** This icon lets you know that a writing prompt is present but that you do not have to provide an answer to it before you can submit a form.
-  **Additional Details:** This icon lets you know that there may be additional writing prompts that require a response before you can submit a form.

### SUBMITTING THE WRITING SUPPLEMENT

The Writing Supplement is submitted separately from the Application. You can submit the Writing Supplement only **after** you have submitted your application.

#### WHY?

Not every school requires a Writing Supplement, and some schools only require a supplement based on your answers to previous questions.

## LEARN MORE

#### RECOMMENDATION PROCESS

Learn more about inviting and assigning your recommenders.

#### TIPS & BEST PRACTICES

Best practices to keep in mind as you complete your applications.

#### COMPLETING THE FERPA RELEASE AUTHORIZATION

Watch this video to learn more about the FERPA Release Authorization.

The Activities section is one of our team's favorite sections of the application. Activities add persona to an application; they demonstrate an applicant's interests outside of the classroom and allow us a glimpse into that applicant's passions, further demonstrating how that individual may enhance our student community.

- Adelphi University (Garden City, NY)

A student's activities outside of the classroom give us insight as to what they're interested in and how they choose to spend their time. This type of context can mean a world of difference for an applicant to our school. It's helpful to know if a student is a captain of a varsity sport, a volunteer in their community, or if they work part-time to provide for their family. Each of these activities demonstrate valuable characteristics for a college's potential community members.

- Willamette University (Salem, OR)

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Activities

You can report up to ten activities within the Activities section.

Reporting activities can help a college better understand your life outside of the classroom. Your activities may include arts, athletics, clubs, employment, personal commitments, and other pursuits. Do you have any activities that you wish to report? \*

Yes  No

Back Continue

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TIPS & BEST PRACTICES

- You can change the display order by using the up and down arrows on each activity.
- While you can add up to 10 activities, but you should not feel obligated to list 10 activities.
- You can also list family responsibilities and jobs within this section.
- If you wish to delete an activity, move it to the bottom of your activity list. Once it is the last activity listed, you will see the icon to delete it.

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THE WRITING SECTION

The Writing section contains the Common App personal essay, as well as your disciplinary history and any additional information you may want to provide to colleges.

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The Writing section is the student's opportunity to shine. In every other section of the Common Application, there's a specified format, with boxes to check and numbers to enter. The Writing section gives each student the creative freedom to express her/himself in an authentic and insightful manner. It gives us something that we wouldn't glean from the other parts of the application: a depth of personal character. To expect students to come to us as fully formed human beings is antithetical to the mission of higher education. Often, the best writing sections showcase a student's willingness to be challenged to become a more engaged learner and citizen.

- Ursinus College (Collegeville, PA)

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Writing

There are three sections to complete within the Writing section.

- Personal Essay
- Disciplinary History
- Additional Information

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## TIPS & BEST PRACTICES

- You may submit the Personal Essay to any college, even if it is not required by that college.
- Carefully review each prompt before selecting one.
- Proofread your essay before submitting your application.
- If you are unsure how to answer the Disciplinary History questions, talk to your parents or counselor.
- Use the Additional Information section to share information about yourself that is not captured elsewhere in your application.

## LEARN MORE



### GATHER YOUR MATERIALS

Important information you'll need for your application.



### A QUICK GUIDE TO THE APPLICATION

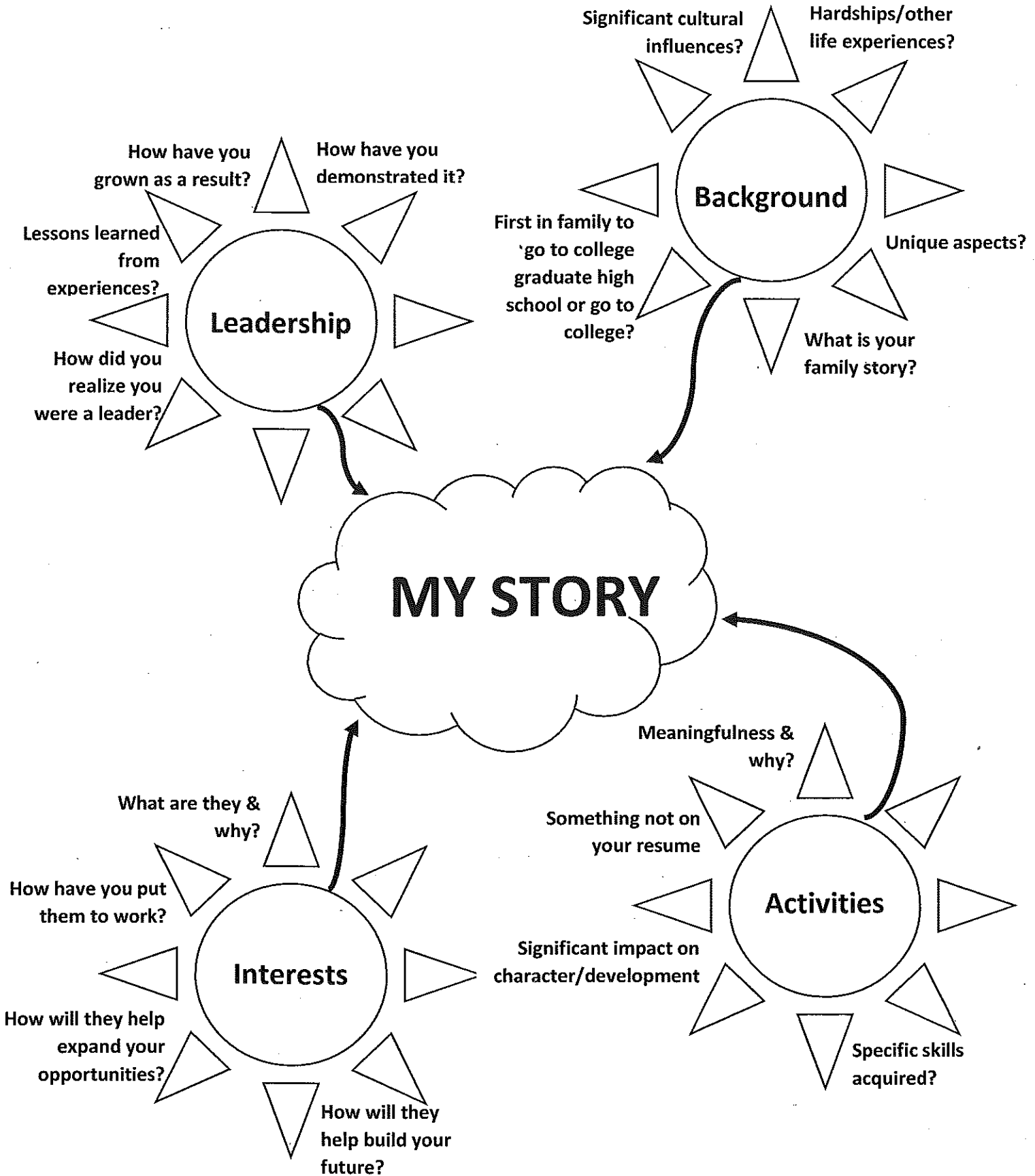
This quick guide will help you organize all the information you need to complete.



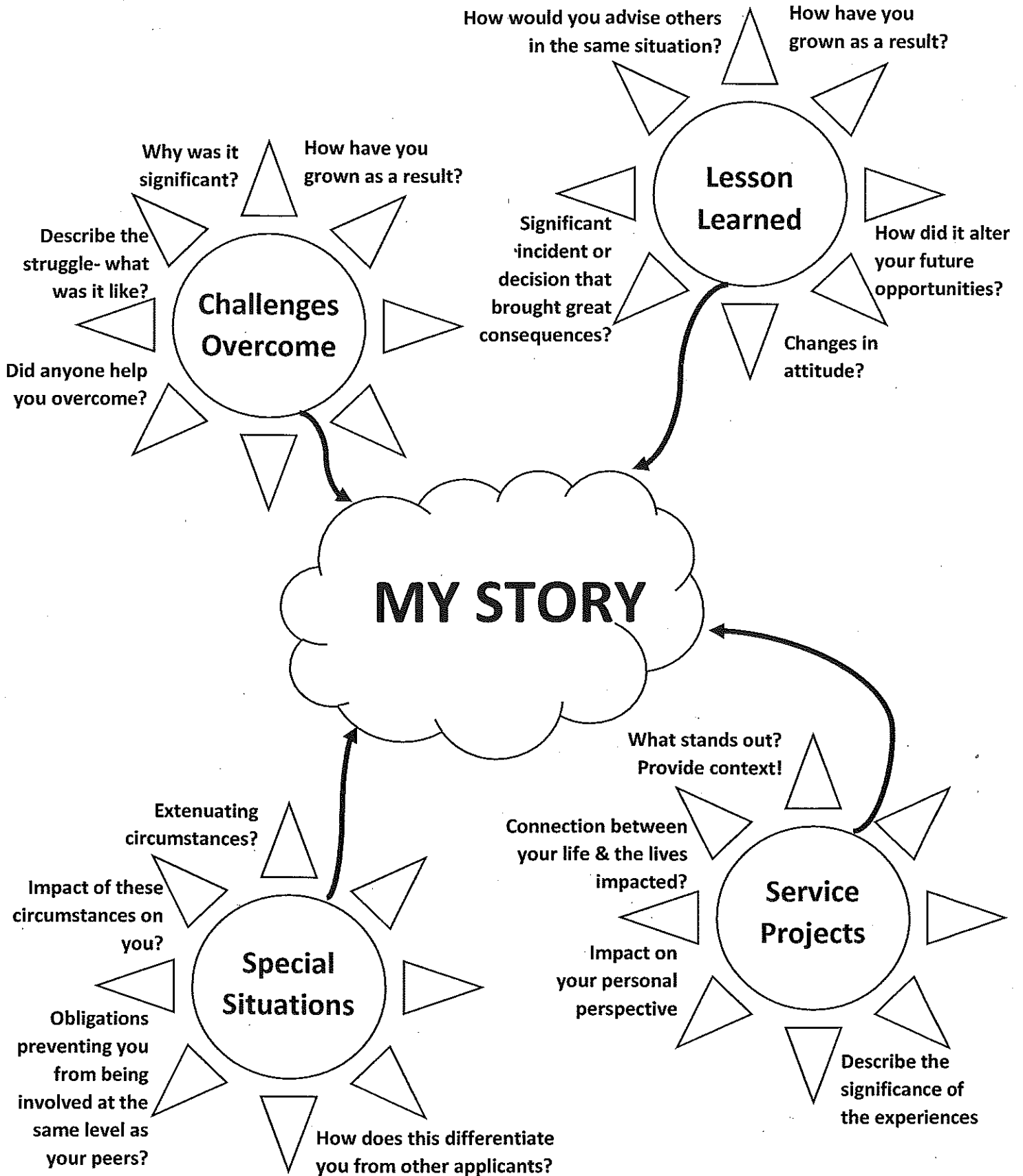
### COMMON APP TOUR

Learn how to navigate the Common App.

**APPENDIX C1: ESSAY WRITING BRAINSTORMING EXERCISE**



APPENDIX C2: ESSAY WRITING BRAINSTORMING EXERCISE



# GET THE MOST OUT OF A CAMPUS VISIT IN **6 STEPS**

## **1** DECIDE WHERE AND HOW

See if your school arranges group trips to colleges or if you could get a group of friends together and visit the campus. A family trip is another option and allows you to involve your family in the process.

## **2** PREPARE FOR YOUR VISIT

Before you set out, get a map of the college campus and pick out places of interest. Call the college's admission office to schedule a guided tour of the campus.

## **3** TAKE YOUR OWN TOUR

Just wandering around the campus on your own or with friends can be the best way to get a feel for what a college is like.

## **4** EXPLORE THE FACILITIES

Find the spots on campus where students gather or ask a student where the best place to eat is to get a feel for the character of the college. Visit the library and check out the gym or theater. Ask an admission officer if you can tour a dorm and a classroom.

## **5** MAKE CONNECTIONS

Talk to current students. Ask the students at the next table or sitting nearby what they like best about the college.

## **6** TAKE NOTES

During your visit, write down some notes about your experience. What did you see that excited you? Are there aspects of the college that you don't like? If so, what are they?

## Questions to Ask During Your Visit:

### ASK TOUR GUIDES/STUDENTS

- What are the best reasons to go to this college?
- What's it like to go from high school to college?
- What do you do in your free time? On the weekends?
- What do you love about this college?
- What do you wish you could change about this college?
- Why did you choose this college?
- What is it like to live here?
- What does the college do to promote student involvement in campus groups, extracurricular activities, or volunteerism?

### ASK PROFESSORS

- What are the best reasons to go to this college?
- Can a student be mentored by professors, graduate students, or upperclassmen?
- How are professors rated by the college? Does the college think mentoring and meetings for project guidance are important?
- How does the college help students have access to professors outside class? Do professors join students for lunch, help with community service groups, or guide student organizations?
- How many students do research or other kinds of projects for a semester or more?

### ASK THE FINANCIAL AID OFFICE

- How much has your total college cost for each student risen in the past year?
- How much do your students usually end up owing when they graduate?
- What is the average income of graduates who had the same major that interests me?
- Will my costs go up when your tuition goes up, or can we use the same tuition rate I started with so I'll know the costs for four years?
- How many students usually graduate in the major that interests me? How long do these students usually take to get their degree? In what ways does the college help students graduate in four years?

<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Where</b>
Wednesday June 7th or June 14th	8:00- 8:20 am	Check-in & Breakfast	Students	Cafeteria
Wednesday June 7th or June 14th	8:30- 9:15 9:20- 10:10	Resume & Personal Statement Writing Brag Sheet- tracking your experiences Helping counselors/teachers learn more about me English paper vs. personal statement Getting started- Brainstorming Grammatics/Syntax What colleges are looking for	Students (Round-robin style)	Auditorium Library
Wednesday June 7th or June 14th	10:15- 10:45	Interpersonal & Written Etiquette Professional Communication Requesting Letters of Recommendation Recruiter Follow-up: A Personal Touch	Students	Classrooms
Wednesday June 7th or June 14th	10:45- 11:15	Interviewing Skills Overview of tips for great interviewing Introduce Thursday Mock-Interviews	Students	Classrooms
Wednesday June 7th or June 14th	11: 30- 12:00	Admissions Rep Panel Application and College Recruitment	Students and Parents	Auditorium
Wednesday June 7th or June 14th	12:00- 12:30 pm	Q & A from Parents/Students	Students and Parents	Auditorium

## 20 Questions to ask college representatives

Whether you meet them at a college fair or on a campus visit, college reps genuinely enjoy talking to high school students and answering questions about their college. The following questions will help start a good dialogue:

1. What makes your college unique?
2. What academic programs is your college most known for?
3. How would you describe the kids that go there? Where do most of them come from?
4. Where do kids hang out on campus?
5. What happens on weekends—are there things to do on campus or in town, or do most kids go home?
6. Are fraternities and sororities a big part of campus life?
7. What are the housing options for freshmen?
8. Do many students live off campus?
9. Is there a sports complex or fitness center?
10. What are the most popular clubs and activities?
11. What's the security like on campus?
12. What's the surrounding area like? Is it easy to get around?
13. What are the most popular majors?
14. How would you describe the academic pressure and workload?
15. What support services are available (academic advisers, tutors, etc.)?
16. Do I need to bring my own computer?
17. What's the faculty like? How accessible are they outside of class?
18. Are there opportunities for internships?
19. Is there job placement help for graduates?
20. Are any big changes in the works that I should know about?

**Source:** *Get it Together for College 2nd ed.* (College Board 2011).

### Handout 3E

## How to get the most out of a college fair

### TIPS FOR STUDENTS FROM THE ASSOCIATED COLLEGES OF THE MIDWEST

#### Going to a college fair

- Take along a pen and a small notebook.
- Take a bag to carry the brochures you pick up.
- Print out some address labels with your name, address, phone number, email address, high school and year of graduation. Spend your time at the college tables asking questions, not filling out contact cards!
- When you arrive, check out the floor plan and find out where the tables for your top-choice colleges are located so you can go directly to them.
- Write your most important questions down in advance so you don't forget them.
- Check on whether any information sessions, such as financial aid, are being offered. Interested? Budget your time accordingly.
- Jot down notes about a college while your memory is fresh, such as right after visiting the table.
- Pick up the business cards of any representatives you talk to, so you can contact them if you have any more questions.

#### After you get home

- Make a point of going through the materials and your notes within one week after the fair. You'll probably remember more about your conversations with college representatives while the memories from the fair are still fresh.
- Follow up with any college that interests you by contacting the admission office to ask further questions, and, if possible, plan a visit to the campus.

*Source: Associated Colleges of the Midwest (www.acm.edu)*

#### Handout 3F

## How to make the most of a college interview

- The interview is primarily for you to learn about the college and to allow the interviewer to learn about you. Use it as a tool to assist your college selection. The interview can have a positive effect on your admission — rarely a negative one. Relax and be yourself!
- Your interview will usually be with an admissions staff member, but it may be with a student, alumnus or a professional interviewer. Keep this person's perspective in mind. Don't write off the college just because you think you had a bad interview. Interviewers have bad days, too.
- The interviewer is eager to get to know you and will try to put you at ease. The interviewer will answer your questions but will be more interested if you have helpful questions that show you've done some research on the college already.
- An important part of preparation is self-assessment. Know your rank, your test scores and your present areas of interest. If you are undecided about your career, feel free to say so (half of college students change their intended major). Think through some areas you would like to explore, competencies you would like to develop and projects or situations that intrigue you.
- Don't go unprepared. Do your homework about the school to get the obvious questions answered. You don't want to be silent when asked, "What would you like to know about our college?" Questions or comments like, "What kinds of internships are there, and how often do students take them?" show more maturity in your thinking than asking about the number of books in the college library.
- Interviewers may ask questions about your interests, extracurricular activities/jobs, books you've read, meaningful experiences, reasons for applying to this college, life at school and similar topics. Be ready to talk about these subjects.
- Be honest. Everyone has strong and weak points. College will help you with some of the latter and promote the former.
- Plan to have your interview alone. Most admissions officers prefer to speak with your parents after talking with you, rather than during the interview.
- Dress neatly and comfortably.
- When you return home, **write a thank-you note** to the person who interviewed you.

**Source:** Adapted from material prepared by Gloria Mueller, Glenbrook High School, Illinois

### Handout 3G



## Assessing your list of colleges

As you develop a list of colleges that interest you, be sure you can answer these questions about them.

### The basics

- Where is the college? Can you locate it on a map? Is it too close to home? Is it too far? Is it too cold or too hot there?
- Have you taken the course work the college requires for admission?
- What size is the college? How many students are undergraduates?
- What is the college's selectivity ratio (what proportion of applicants were admitted last year)?
- Does the college offer majors that interest you?
- Is the college coed or single sex?
- What percentage of students live off campus?
- How many of the students graduate in four years? Five years? Six years?
- How many first-year students return for their sophomore year?
- How much does the program cost? What is the total per-year expense?
- What type of financial aid is available?

### Where would you fit in?

- What are the admission test scores at the colleges that interest you? Where does that place you?
- What were the high school GPAs of most of the freshmen last year?
- Are freshmen guaranteed on-campus housing? If not, where do they live?
- Are there extracurricular activities that interest you?

### Visit the colleges' websites, read the guidebooks and look at their literature

- What are their strong academic programs? (Ask a college representative, students, graduates and teachers.)
- What courses are required for graduation?
- Are the courses you need/want available each semester? At convenient times?
- Are there special programs that interest you (study abroad, internships, etc.)?
- What is the social life like? What percentage of students join fraternities or sororities?
- Do the pictures and the language the college uses to describe itself attract you?
- What is your general impression of the college?

## Assessing your list of colleges (page 2)

- Is the school accredited?
- If professional certification is required for employment in the field that interests you, how many students enrolled in the school's program pass the certification exam?

### Admission process

- When are applications due?
- Does the college accept the Common Application? If so, does it require supplemental forms?
- What does the application contain? Are essays required?
- Is an interview suggested or required? Is an interview available from staff or alumni?
- When may you visit the college? What is its policy regarding campus visits?
- What are the financial aid deadlines? What financial aid forms are required?

### Now answer these questions

- Am I a strong candidate for admission to this college?
- If I am not a strong candidate, what are my chances?
- Do I want to visit this college?
- What additional information do I need?

**Source:** Susan Stagers, Cary Academy, North Carolina

<b>Day</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Where</b>
Thursday June 8th or June 15th	8:00- 8:20 am	Check-in & Breakfast	Students	Cafeteria
Thursday June 8th or June 15th	8:30- 8:50	Website and Marketing Social Media accounts, Web presences	Students	Auditorium
Thursday June 8th or June 15th	9:00- 10:30	Mock Interviews & Feedback with Regional College Recruiters 10- minutes individual interviews Peer Critiques Recruiter Feedback	Students	20 Classrooms
Thursday June 8th or June 15th	10:45- 11:15	Small Group Presentations Topics TBD	Students Parents	5 Student Classrooms (2 choices- 15 mins each)  3 Parent Classrooms (2 choices- 15 mins each)
Thursday June 8th or June 15th	11:30 am- 12:00 pm	Concluding Remarks What's Next, Review to do list for Summer	Students	Auditorium

## Do Your Best with Apps! Get Organized!

The key to reducing application stress and getting apps done on time is organization, as many successful college applicants will testify.

Here are three common ways to get all your application tasks done without hitting the panic button.

### The Folder

Set up a folder for each college you are applying to. Put all paperwork related to your application in the folder, including:

- All correspondence between you and the college (including printouts of e-mail messages and notes from phone conversations with admission officers)
- A copy of your entire application, even if you sent it electronically
- Other documents, such as completed financial aid forms, transcript requests, and letters of recommendation

### The Application Calendar

Fill in a calendar with application deadlines and test dates. Use different colors for different colleges. Put the calendar where you will see it every day, whether that means taping it up in your locker, attaching it to your bathroom mirror, or putting it on your phone. Here's what to put on the calendar:

- Deadlines for all parts of your college applications, such as recommendation letters, and transcripts
- Your own personal deadlines, such as starting your essay
- Test dates, including registration deadlines
- Any scholarship application deadlines

### The Application Chart

Many students find it helpful to display all the tasks needed to complete an application in a chart or spreadsheet. Make a separate chart for each college. Here are just some of the tasks that could appear on such a chart:

XYZ College			
Action to Take	Tasks	Deadline	Completed
Write draft of personal essay.	Outline topics, review with Mom, and write draft on chosen topic.	Aug 1	Aug 1
Revise essay.	Review draft with English teacher. Revise accordingly. Repeat.	Sept 15	Sept 10

Finalize essay.	Ask parent to proof essay. Make corrections and proof again.	Oct 15	Oct 1
Arrange for recommendation letters.	Supply forms, due dates, and stamped envelopes addressed to the admissions department.	One month before due date	Jan 3
Send school report and transcript to college.	Submit to counselor the school report and transcript request forms supplied by high school and college.	One month before due date	Jan 3
Thank recommenders.	Send note of thanks to each recommender.	Jan 10	Jan 5
Send FAFSA results to colleges.	Enter college ID code in the college list section of the FAFSA. Submit FAFSA.	One week after FAFSA opens (Jan 1)	Jan 7
Complete and review application.	Check that all fields are filled in, all parts are complete, and all written responses are error-free.	Three weeks before due date	Jan 12
Submit application.	Check that credit card information is accurate and confirm receipt online.	Two weeks before due date	Jan 15
Confirm application arrived.	E-mail or call admissions office to confirm receipt.	Two weeks after app. is sent	Feb 1

### Tips for Application Success

**Create a Command Center.** Decide where you will keep your folders, calendar, charts, etc. Just make sure it isn't the bottom of your backpack or under your laundry.

**Use your system consistently.** Spend quality time in your command center every week. Review where you are in the application process with each college and assign yourself upcoming high priority tasks.

**Find out your high school's process and timeline for sending transcripts and recommendations.** You don't want to miss deadlines just because you "didn't know" how requests should be submitted and when they are due.