

# College Counseling Handbook

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MOUNTAIN VIEW LOS ALTOS  
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

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# College Counseling Handbook

MOUNTAIN VIEW LOS ALTOS HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

The purpose of this handbook is to help students get prepared for what's to come in their Junior and Senior years of high school.

This handbook serves as a guide to exploring topics such as the various types of colleges, their admission processes, standardized testing requirements, the college essay, and the financial aid process. It will also help students keep track of the many details that are part of this process.

As usual, should you have any questions that this manual does not answer, you are strongly encouraged to ask the College and Career Center Coordinator, the College Counselor, or your academic counselor.

## LAHS

### Counseling Department

[lahs.mvla.net/Student-Services/Counseling](https://lahs.mvla.net/Student-Services/Counseling)

### College & Career Center

[sites.google.com/mvla.net/lahsccc](https://sites.google.com/mvla.net/lahsccc)

## MVHS

### Counseling Department

[sites.google.com/mvla.net/mvhs-counseling-department](https://sites.google.com/mvla.net/mvhs-counseling-department)

### College & Career Center

[mvhsccc.net](https://mvhsccc.net)

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# Part I

## Types of Colleges

### **Liberal Arts Colleges**

Liberal Arts Colleges emphasize undergraduate study with a focus on interdisciplinary studies and analytical thinking. Most offer only undergraduate programs, some offer Master's level degrees. Some students assume that liberal arts colleges only teach fine arts, this is incorrect. Liberal arts colleges have the full spectrum of majors: humanities, STEM, etc. Many liberal arts schools offer opportunities for students to engage in research. Typically, liberal arts colleges prioritize high engagement between students and faculty.

### **Universities**

Universities can range in size but tend to be larger than liberal arts colleges. They offer a wide variety of majors housed in smaller colleges (e.g. College of Letters & Sciences, College of Engineering, etc.). Universities offer graduate programs in multiple disciplines, usually through the doctoral level. Professors at larger universities may be highly engaged in research and less accessible to undergraduate students, graduate students may serve as instructors or teaching assistants in undergraduate classes.

### **Single-Sex Colleges**

Women's colleges are single-sex colleges that only admit women; men's colleges are single-sex colleges that only admit men. These colleges vary about their admissions policy for students whose gender identity varies from their sex. There are a handful of women's colleges that accept transgender students. Currently there are 66 men's colleges (4 of which are non-religious institutions) and 41 women's colleges in the United States. Some single-sex colleges may have a partnership with another single-sex college or coed university where students can access resources and/or classes at either institution.

### **Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)**

HBCUs admit students from all racial, social, and economic backgrounds. They are schools which were founded prior to 1964 with a principal mission of educating African Americans.

### **Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI)**

An HSI is a college or university that has an enrollment of at least 25% Hispanic undergraduate students and is committed to assisting first generation, majority low income Hispanic students. There are over 250 HSI campuses in the United States, including several UCs and CSUs.

### **International Schools**

Students may choose to attend all four years of college abroad at a university in another country. Most nations welcome international students, and some places are even seeking to enroll American students, including countries throughout Europe and Asia. Students will often need to be proficient in the native language of that country, though this is not always the case. Studying internationally is a unique experience that will give students a global perspective in their field of study.

Some universities cost much less than American universities, making tuition more affordable. However, travel costs are higher and financial aid may be limited, although some colleges accept the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Note that the only federal or state financial aid that a student can use internationally are loans.

Admission criteria and application procedures vary by country/university, so it is important to research requirements early. It is also important to research whether graduating degrees will transfer back to the United States.

## **Military/Service Academies**

Service academies are educational institutions that prepare students for service in the army, navy, marine corps, air force or coast guard. In the United States there are five service military academies: US Air Force Academy, US Coast Guard Academy, US Merchant Marine Academy, US Military Academy, and the US Naval Academy. There are also some colleges that educate both cadets and civilians (non-military students). All military academies are tuition-free institutions as they require military service upon graduation in exchange for their education.

## **Private Universities**

Private or independent colleges and universities are schools that are not operated by the government. They range in size, from small to very large. Some private colleges are non-profit and others are for-profit, please do thorough research and speak with your college counselor as for-profit colleges can vary widely in quality. Tuition is the same for all students regardless of the state they come from. The cost of attendance at a private university is usually higher than public universities, however many private schools have the resources to meet most of a student's demonstrated need through grants and scholarships.

## **Public Universities and Colleges**

Public universities and colleges are funded by local and state governments and usually offer lower tuition rates for students who are residents of the state where the school is located. Nonresident students will pay "out-of-state" tuition; "in-state" tuition will apply to resident students. In California, the University of California (UC) system, California State University (CSU) system, and California Community College (CCC) system are our three public university/college systems.

## **University of California (UC)**

The UC system is driven by research-oriented practices and thorough academic experiences. The emphasis at the bachelor's level is on theoretical learning and analytical thinking. There are ten UC campuses; however, one campus, UCSF, is a professional school that high school seniors may not apply to. High school students are eligible to apply to the nine undergraduate campuses of the UC System.

## **California State University (CSU)**

The CSU system is also based on research-oriented practices but also has more degrees with a professional focus. Many of the majors offered at the UCs are offered at CSUs, but CSUs have many accelerated programs that train California teachers, nurses and more. There are 23 CSU campuses spread throughout the state of California.

## **Community Colleges**

The California Community College system is the largest system of higher education in the nation. The 113 colleges provide workforce and vocational training, certificate and degree programs, and preparation for transfer to four-year institutions. Recently fifteen colleges were selected to offer bachelor's degrees in specific areas.



# Part II

## Preparing for College

### Four-Year Plan

Each year, your counselor helps you develop your four-year plan for graduation. This plan maps out your course sequences to ensure that you meet post-secondary goals.

### College Entrance Requirements

Students and counselors work together to ensure that students meet all of the necessary requirements to be eligible for 4-year college admission. In California, the UC and CSU systems of higher education refer to these requirements as the “A–G” requirements. These are included in this handbook.

### Naviance

Students use Naviance, our college information system throughout the four years of high school. Naviance assists you with the following:

- Researching and exploring colleges
- Organizing college lists and application deadlines
- Identifying and researching careers
- Taking personality and career inventories
- Researching scholarships
- Building and updating a professional-looking resume
- Registering to attend college representative visits

In Naviance, there are four main tabs that you can navigate:

- **Colleges:** Where students will research colleges and scholarships, also, where you will organize your college applications
- **Careers:** Where students can research careers and take career assessments
- **Self-Discovery:** Information about the student (personality, career assessments)
- **About Me:** Information about the student (resume, surveys)

If you need assistance, please contact your College and Career Counselor.

### MYLA Graduation Requirements versus UC/CSU

On the following page is a helpful graphic that compares the graduation requirements for our high schools versus those required by the UC/CSU systems. Notice that there is significant overlap between the number of semesters/years required for different subjects.

# HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AND COLLEGE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

MVLA Union High School District	University of California	California State University
<b>English</b> <b>40 credits</b>	<b>English</b> <b>4 years</b>	<b>English</b> <b>4 years</b>
<b>Social Studies</b> <b>35 credits</b> World Studies                        10 credits Indv Soc/Global Persp            5 credits U.S. History                         10 credits Civics                                    5 credits Economics                            5 credits	<b>History</b> <b>2 years</b> World Studies                        1 year U.S. History                         1 year	<b>History</b> <b>2 years</b> World Studies                        1 year U.S. History                         1 year
<b>Mathematics</b> <b>20 credits</b> Must include Algebra I or higher	<b>Mathematics</b> <b>3 years</b> Algebra I                                1 year Geometry                               1 year Algebra II                               1 year (4 years recommended)	<b>Mathematics</b> <b>3 years</b> Algebra I                                1 year Geometry                               1 year Algebra II                               1 year (4 years recommended)
<b>Science</b> <b>20 credits</b> Must include 10 credits of a physical science and 10 credits of a life science	<b>Laboratory Science</b> <b>2 years</b> 2 of 3 disciplines: Biology, Chemistry, or Physics (3 years recommended)	<b>Laboratory Science</b> <b>2 years</b> Biology and one other college prep. science course (Chemistry, Physics, AP Envir Sci or Forensics) Acceptance of "g" courses subject to change
<b>World Language/Visual Arts/ Performing Arts/Practical Arts</b> 20 credits in one area or any combination in the 4 areas	<b>World Language</b> <b>2 years</b> Must be in the <u>same</u> language. (3 years recommended)	<b>World Language</b> <b>2 years</b> Must be in the <u>same</u> language.
<b>Physical Education</b> <b>20 credits</b> 1. All Freshmen will be enrolled in 9th grade P.E. for the entire year  2. Refer to course catalog or BP6142.7 for options after 9 <sup>th</sup> grade to complete requirement.	<b>Visual and Performing Arts</b> <b>1 year</b>	<b>Visual and Performing Arts</b> <b>1 year</b>
<b>Health Education</b> <b>5 credits</b>	<b>Electives</b> <b>1 year</b> One unit (two semesters), in addition to those required above, chosen from the following areas: visual and performing arts, social studies, English, advanced mathematics, laboratory science, computer engineering/technology, and language other than English (a third year in the language used for the world language requirement or two years of another language).	<b>Electives</b> <b>1 year</b> One unit (two semesters), in addition to those required above, chosen from the following areas: visual and performing arts, social studies, English, advanced mathematics, laboratory science, computer engineering/technology, and language other than English (a third year in the language used for the world language requirement or two years of another language).
<b>Electives</b> <b>60 credits</b>		
<b>TOTAL</b> <b><u>220 credits</u></b>		

## Standardized Testing

### PSAT & SAT: Resources from the College Board

As part of the college application process, the College Board website will become very important to you. When a student takes the PSAT as a sophomore or junior, it's a good idea for a student to create their CollegeBoard account around when they receive their PSAT score. This recommendation is because when a student takes the PSAT for the first time, their test generates an information profile with the CollegeBoard and creating a CollegeBoard account with the same information a student bubbled in on test day ensures that the information profile and CollegeBoard account get linked. This website is how everyone will register for the SAT (an exam for college admissions). Signing up for an account is free. Please visit [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) and click on "Register for the SAT."

One fairly new and wonderful benefit from taking the PSAT is their partnership with the Khan Academy. After having received your PSAT scores, students will be able to link their PSAT scores with Khan Academy. In doing so, the Khan Academy will create a free customized SAT study plan so that you can work on improving your SAT scores. If you need help setting this up, you can stop by the College and Career Center or visit your counselor. Please visit [www.khanacademy.org/sat](http://www.khanacademy.org/sat) to get started preparing.

### Standardized Tests

College admissions policies around standardized testing have changed significantly over the course of the last two years (policies have been shifting for a decade but COVID-19 rapidly accelerated that shift).

For the Class of 2023, the predominant majority of colleges are test-optional. Please reference the section below, "Test-optional, Test- Flexible, etc" for more information.

The most common college admission tests are the SAT and ACT. The Counseling Department recommends students take the exams for the first time during spring of your junior year. Is there one exam that is better than the other? The best way to figure this out is to take both the PSAT and PreACT, and choose the test best suited for you.

### SAT

The SAT consists of an evidence-based reading and writing section, and a math section. The total SAT exam score is calculated by adding the two sections of the exam (scores range from 400-1600). Students can register online on the College Board website. The test is administered at various sites off campus several times during the year and must be taken by December of senior year or earlier depending on the college and application deadline.

Visit: [satsuite.collegeboard.org/sat](http://satsuite.collegeboard.org/sat)

### ACT

The ACT has the sections English, mathematics, reading, science and writing (optional). An ACT score is called a composite score as it's calculated by averaging the scores from the four different sections of the exam (scores range from 1-36). The test is administered several times throughout the year and should be taken no later than December of senior year. The writing portion is optional and is utilized by very few colleges. Before signing up for the ACT, students will register for this exam by visiting [www.act.org](http://www.act.org).

All domestic colleges accept either the ACT or SAT.

### SAT vs. ACT

	<b>SAT</b>	<b>ACT</b>
Structure	Math, Reading, Writing & Language	Math, Reading, Science, English, Essay (optional)
Length	3 hrs	2 hrs, 55 min w/o essay 3 hrs, 40 min w/essay
Reading	5 reading passages	4 reading passages



	<b>SAT</b>	<b>ACT</b>
Science	None	I science section, tests critical thinking skills
Math	Covers: Arithmetic, Algebra I & II, Geometry, Trigonometry, & Data Analysis	Covers: Arithmetic, Algebra I & II, Geometry & Trigonometry
Tools	Some questions don't allow you to use a calculator.	You can use a calculator on all math questions.
Essays	None	Optional, tests how you evaluate and analyze issues
Scoring	Scored on a scale of 400-1600	Scored on a scale of 1-36

### **Test-Optional, Test-Flexible and Test-Blind or Test-Free Colleges and Universities**

Test-optional admissions means that a student can send or not send an SAT or ACT test score to apply to a college. It also means that a student without a test score will not be disadvantaged in the admissions process without one – that's a true test-optional admissions policy. Test-optional also means that a student needs to be discerning about sending a test score, as students should only send test scores that will make them competitive in the admissions process. Test-blind or test-free means that standardized testing is not used to evaluate applicants in admissions. Both the UC and CSU system do not utilize the SAT or ACT in the admissions process. The University of California (UC) states: (UC) "will not consider SAT or ACT test scores when making admissions decisions or awarding scholarships. If you choose to submit test scores as part of your application, they may be used as an alternative method of fulfilling minimum requirements for eligibility or for course placement after you enroll."

Whether a college requires testing or is test-blind, all of these policies can be overwhelming. The majority are currently test-optional (e.g. Bowdoin: student can choose whether or not to submit test scores), a few are test-flexible (e.g. University of Michigan: can send scores from a list of approved tests), several requiring testing (e.g. Georgetown and MIT), and several are test-blind (e.g. CalTech and Hampshire College do not consider test scores at all). Visit [fairtest.org](http://fairtest.org) for a more thorough list of college policies. If you or your student are not in the Class of 2023, please check-in closer to the end of your junior year for the latest standardized test details.

### **How Do Colleges Evaluate Your Test Scores?**

According to Princeton Review's website: Some schools consider all test scores from all dates; some consider your highest overall score from a single test date; and some consider a composite of your highest section scores from all test dates. And at a growing number of schools, test scores are completely optional (as described in the previous paragraph). If a college has a test-optional policy, the student should carefully consider whether to apply with scores or not. This decision can be informed by researching the admitted 50% scores of the freshman class. Applying with a non-competitive test score does put students at a disadvantage, and they would be better off applying without a test score. It is important to understand how each college on your list evaluates your test scores. Visit the college's website and explore the Admissions section. You can also ask your college counselor or the college admission representative when he/she visits your high school.

### **What does superscoring mean?**

The Princeton Review website explains superscoring as follows: Many schools (and the Common Application) will ask you to list the section from different test dates – such as your best ACT English, best Math, best Reading, and best Science scores – and then calculate a "super composite" or superscore based on these scores. Therefore, if you worry that some scores will rise as others fall when you take the ACT again, the "super composite" will reflect your best results. Both the SAT and ACT may be superscored, but the admissions policies for colleges vary as to which colleges allow the submission of superscores. For example, Colorado College allows the submission of an SAT superscore, but not an ACT superscore. Some colleges superscore across all your test dates, and some superscore across the test dates you choose to submit. (For example, you may take the test three times but decide to only submit two of those scores.)

## Fee Waivers

Students who qualify for free or reduced lunch, will be able to take these exams at no cost. Fee waivers, which are available at the College and Career Center, will cover the cost of each exam. Over the course of high school, CollegeBoard grants a student two SAT fee waivers, and ACT grants two ACT waivers.

## Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

TOEFL is a college admission/placement test to evaluate English proficiency of students whose native language is not English. It does not replace the SAT or ACT. Check the admissions page of each college on your application list to see if you are required to take the TOEFL. If you are required to take the exam, it is best to take it in either the spring of junior year or fall of senior year.

## Extracurricular Activities

According to the NACAC Guide to the College Admission Process: Although your academic credentials are the primary factors in determining admission, your record of involvement in activities can be a significant supporting credential. Mere membership is not the important factor; it is, rather, the level of involvement and accomplishment that is significant. It is better to be involved in one activity and to be a significant contributor to that activity than to be involved superficially in several organizations.

Admission counselors often state that, "Depth is more important than breadth," when evaluating extracurricular activities. We advise students to choose an activity or activities that they truly enjoy and wish to explore.

# Part III

## California Public System of Higher Education



<b># of colleges</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>10</b> (UCSF is graduate/professional only)
<b>Requirements</b>	application	application A–G requirements minimum GPA: 2.5	application 4 essays, activities and awards A–G requirements minimum GPA: 3.0
<b>Apply</b>	starting in April	Oct 1 – Nov 30	Oct 1 – Nov 30

## University of California Admissions Overview

One major public university system in California is the University of California. They are known as the UCs and they consist of 10 campuses in California. They are all open to first-time freshmen, except UC San Francisco.

For complete information regarding how applications are reviewed, please visit:  
[admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/freshman/how-applications-reviewed](https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/freshman/how-applications-reviewed)

Here is a map (courtesy of [www.universityofcalifornia.edu](http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu)) to show where these campuses are located:



## The A–G Requirements

In order to be eligible to apply to any of the schools within the CA public university systems (CSU and UC), students must complete the requirements below in order to be considered for admission. These are known as the A–G requirements.

<b>History/Social Science</b>	<b>2 years required</b>
<b>English</b>	<b>4 years required</b>
<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>3 years required, 4 years recommended</b>
<b>Science</b>	<b>2 years required, 3 years recommended</b>
<b>Language other than English</b>	<b>2 years required, 3 years recommended</b>
<b>Visual &amp; Performing Arts</b>	<b>1 year required</b>
<b>College-preparatory Elective</b>	<b>1 year required</b>

Remember that you must pass all of these classes with a 'C-' or higher. A 'D' or lower will need to be repeated for a higher grade to meet the requirements of A-G. To be competitive, especially for UCs and CSUs where the admit rates are lower, students are encouraged to go beyond the minimum requirements. Pass (P) or Credit (CR) grades earned in spring, summer and fall 2020, as well as spring and summer 2021, will meet A–G requirements for any student who was enrolled in high school during the 2019-20 and 2020-21 academic years. This includes students currently enrolled in 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades.

The application to each campus costs \$70.00 (as of August 2022) to submit. However, there are questions within your application that help determine if you are eligible for a fee waiver. Please make sure you answer them correctly. When approved for a fee waiver, you are allowed to submit a total of 4 UC applications for free.

You will need to answer 4 of the 8 Personal Insight questions as part of the application. Each response is limited to 350 words.

On the next page you will find the list of the personal insight questions and tips directly from the University of California:

# PERSONAL INSIGHT QUESTIONS: GUIDE FOR FRESHMAN APPLICANTS

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## Getting started

This worksheet is designed to help freshman applicants start the writing process for the personal insight questions in the undergraduate admissions application. Additional hints and suggestions can be found on UC's admissions website at [ucal.us/personalquestions](https://ucal.us/personalquestions).

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## What are the personal insight questions?

These questions are about getting to know you better — your life experience, interests, ambitions and inspirations. Think of it as your interview with the admissions office. Be open. Be reflective. Find your individual voice and express it.

While this section of the application is just one part we consider when making our admission decision, it helps provide context for the rest of your application.

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## The basics

- You will have 8 questions to choose from. You must respond to any 4 of the 8 questions.
- Each response is limited to a maximum of 350 words.
- Which questions you choose to answer is entirely up to you: But you should select questions that are most relevant to your experience and that best reflect your individual circumstances.
- All questions are equal: All questions are given equal consideration in the application review process, which means there is no advantage or disadvantage to choosing certain questions over others.

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## Freshman questions & brainstorm exercise

The following exercises are suggestions to help you get started. Remember, you don't have to answer all eight questions – you only need to answer four. So if some questions aren't the right fit for you, that's OK. The important thing is expressing who are you, what matters to you and what you want to share with UC.

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### 1. Describe an example of your leadership experience in which you have positively influenced others, helped resolve disputes, or contributed to group efforts over time.

How do you define "leader"? List three words that you think describe what a leader is:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Do any of these words apply to you? How? Is there a time in your life when you displayed any of these traits?

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### 2. Every person has a creative side, and it can be expressed in many ways: problem solving, original and innovative thinking, and artistically, to name a few. Describe how you express your creative side.

Can you think of a time your viewpoint was unique compared to others? What was the issue or problem from your perspective? Now think of the same situation from the perspective of another person who was there with you. How was your approach different from that other person's?

Was there ever a problem where your imagination and intuition guided you to the solution?

Do you have a passion for music, theater, visual art, dance, etc.? What have you gained from it that has affected other parts of your life?

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### 3. What would you say is your greatest talent or skill? How have you developed and demonstrated that talent over time?

List three of your talents or skills:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Were these talents or skills the same a few years ago? What changed? What improved?

Which one of the three talents or skills you listed is the most meaningful or important to you and why? Does the talent come naturally or have you worked hard to develop this skill or talent?

## PERSONAL INSIGHT QUESTIONS: GUIDE FOR FRESHMAN APPLICANTS

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### 4. Describe how you have taken advantage of a significant educational opportunity or worked to overcome an educational barrier you have faced.

Feel free to speak about either an opportunity or a barrier. It's OK if you've experienced one and not the other.

#### EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES:

List any programs or additional classes that have better prepared you for college:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How did you find out about these programs or classes? How did you take what you learned and apply it to your schoolwork or other aspects of your life?

#### EDUCATIONAL BARRIERS:

Have you faced any barriers or challenges related to school and/or your schoolwork? How did you overcome or strive to overcome them? List three personal characteristics or skills you had to call on to overcome this challenge:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### 5. Describe the most significant challenge you have faced and the steps you have taken to overcome this challenge. How has this challenge affected your academic achievement?

Have you had a difficult experience in your life? How did you get through it? What did you learn going through this experience? If you're currently working your way through a challenge, what are you doing now and does that affect different aspects of your life? For example, ask yourself, "How has my life changed at home, at my school, with my friends, or with my family?"

### 6. Think about an academic subject that inspires you. Describe how you have furthered this interest inside and/or outside of the classroom.

Think about all of the classes you've taken at school. Now fill in the blank: I would go to [class name] even if I didn't have to.

It doesn't have to be a class in which you've earned good grades – the important thing is you enjoyed the subject and it impacted you in some way.

(#6 continued)

Maybe there's a course you *haven't* taken at school that you wish you did take or are looking forward to taking in college. How have you pursued your interest in that subject outside of school?

### 7. What have you done to make your school or your community a better place?

Did you contribute to a positive change at your school or in your community? What steps have you taken to accomplish this? Remember, even small changes can have a big impact. Why were you inspired to act? What did you learn from your effort?

### 8. Beyond what has already been shared in your application, what do you believe makes you stand out as a strong candidate for admissions to the University of California?

From your point of view, what do you feel makes you an excellent choice for UC? Don't be afraid to brag a little. Here are a few lists to help you get started.

What do you value in your life? What's important to you? List three of them here:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What are you passionate about?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

When you attend UC, what three things are you most looking forward to?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Does anything overlap? Is there anything from the lists that you want to expand on?

#### Next steps

As you filled out the worksheet, were there any topics that seemed particularly interesting? You might consider answering those questions as part of your application. But the choice is yours! Take your time in selecting which questions to answer and how to answer them. For more information, visit our website at [ucal.us/personalquestions](http://ucal.us/personalquestions).



# California State University Admissions Overview

The California State Universities or CSUs consist of 23 campuses throughout the state. On the following page you will find information regarding the admission requirements for the CSUs.



## REQUIREMENTS

A–G	You must complete all 15 courses*
GPA	Minimum 2.5 or higher; based on 10th and 11th grade
Application Filing Period	October 1 - November 30

\*For the complete A–G Requirements refer to page 11.

- In order to apply, go to [www.calstate.edu/apply](http://www.calstate.edu/apply) and create an account.
- No essay required for the CSU application.
- No letters of recommendation required.
- When approved for a fee waiver, you are allowed to submit a total of 4 CSU applications for free.
- For more information about the CSUs check out: [www.calstate.edu](http://www.calstate.edu)
- CSUs are test-blind or test-free in the admissions process.

## **CSU Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)**

The primary goal of the CSU Educational Opportunity Program is to improve access to low-income, first generation and historically disadvantaged students with potential for academic success by making higher education a possibility.

EOP provides a comprehensive program of support services which include, but are not limited to, recruitment, pre admission counseling, orientation, summer program, diagnostic testing, financial aid follow-up, special admissions, pre introductory instruction, academic advisement, tutoring, learning skill services, and personal, educational and career counseling.

Applicants must complete the EOP portion of the Cal State Apply application at [www.calstate.edu/apply](http://www.calstate.edu/apply). In addition to submitting an application EOP, EOP applicants must complete the EOP portion of the application, including:

- Two names and email addresses for the letters of recommendation
- Autobiographical portion of the EOP sections

### **EOP Recommendations**

To apply to EOP, you must submit two recommendations. You should contact the individuals who you will use as recommenders before submitting the EOP application to get the correct spelling of their names and accurate email addresses. Talking to your recommenders in advance will help determine if they have the time and are willing to complete the recommendation form. The recommenders will be answering questions about your academic skills, characteristics, motivation, achievements, and barriers to success.

### **EOP Biographical Questions**

The biographical questions listed below are included in the EOP application. We recommend that you prepare your responses in advance and ask a teacher, College Adviser and/or College Center Coordinator/Co-ordinator to help with proofreading. Having completed responses in advance will save time when completing the EOP application.

Answers to these questions will help EOP determine your eligibility to the program. Please be sure to respond as precisely and honestly as possible and expand on each answer. Use complete sentences and avoid responses such as “yes” or “no.” Responses to each question have a 2500-character limit.

1. Briefly describe your family’s economic background. Include information about your financial challenges.
2. Why would you like to attend college? Discuss your career and personal goals. Are there any particular circumstances, school experiences, or persons that influenced your preparation or motivation to attend college (e.g. cultural/financial background, family, teachers, schools you attended)? Please explain.
3. Briefly discuss your academic background. Did you utilize any additional support at your high school, such as tutoring? Do your grades in high school and/or college reflect your academic ability or potential?
4. List any volunteer, extracurricular activities, or work experience in which you are or have been involved in the past two years.
5. Is there any additional information you would like EOP to consider in determining your admission to the program?

To find out more about the eligibility requirements, visit the Questions about EOP page at [www.calstate.edu/attend/student-services/eop](http://www.calstate.edu/attend/student-services/eop)

# California Community College

## Is Community College Right for You?

Attending a community college can be very advantageous for many students. There are 113 in the State of California from which to choose. Some even have dormitories.

There are many great community college options right in our backyard:

Foothill College, Los Altos Hills	<a href="http://foothill.edu">foothill.edu</a>
DeAnza College, Cupertino	<a href="http://www.deanza.edu">www.deanza.edu</a>
Cañada College, Redwood City	<a href="http://www.canadacollege.edu">www.canadacollege.edu</a>
College of San Mateo, San Mateo	<a href="http://collegeofsanmateo.edu">collegeofsanmateo.edu</a>
Mission College, Santa Clara	<a href="http://missioncollege.edu">missioncollege.edu</a>
West Valley College, Saratoga	<a href="http://www.westvalley.edu">www.westvalley.edu</a>

## What is community college?

Community college is the most common type of two-year college. These colleges offer many types of educational programs, including those that lead to associate degrees and certificates. Certificates and some types of associate degrees focus on career readiness. Other types of associate degrees are good preparation for study at a four-year college where graduates can earn a bachelor's degree. The California Community College System is the largest system of higher education in the nation, with 2.1 million students attending 113 colleges. These colleges provide students with the knowledge and background necessary to compete in today's economy. With a wide range of educational offerings, the colleges provide workforce training, basic courses in English and math, certificate and degree programs and preparation for transfer to four-year institutions. Today, 15 community colleges in California offer bachelor's degrees. Students enroll in community college in the spring of their senior year, and the SAT/ACT is not part of the application process.

It is a good choice for you if:

- You wish for an excellent value in education. The California Community College System offers quality education at a low cost.
- You plan to earn a bachelor's degree by spending your freshman and sophomore years at a community college and then transferring to a four-year college or university at the junior level.
- You wish to attend college for 1-2 years to learn career skills and receive the training necessary to enter the job market.
- You're not sure of the field of study that you wish to pursue and want to explore several subject areas.
- You wish to begin your college career while remaining in your home community.
- You wish to receive a bachelor's degree in one of the following high-need fields listed below:

## California Community Colleges now offering Bachelor's Degrees:

1. Airframe Manufacturing Technology, Antelope Valley College
2. Industrial Automation, Bakersfield College
3. Mortuary Science, Cypress College
4. Equine and Ranch Management, Feather River College
5. Dental Hygiene, Foothill College and West Los Angeles College
6. Biomanufacturing, Mira Costa College and Solano College
7. Respiratory Care, Modesto Junior College and Skyline College
8. Automotive Technology, Rio Hondo College
9. Health Information Management, San Diego Mesa College
10. Occupational Studies, Santa Ana College

11. Interaction Design, Santa Monica College
12. Health Information Management, Shasta College

### **How can I transfer to a UC or CSU?**

California has intentionally aligned its Community College system with both the UC and CSU systems, so that a student may begin their educational career at a community college and transfer to a 4-year college and obtain their bachelors within two years at that UC or CSU. Part of the charter for the UC system is that for every two first-time freshmen admitted, they must admit one transfer student. Students interested in transferring should research the program's Transfer Admission Guarantee (TAG) and associate degree for transfer (ADT) – specific transfer programs for the UC and CSU system, respectively. Students do not need to participate in these programs to transfer to a UC or CSU, as there are many different pathways to transferring. What is recommended is meeting with a community college academic adviser frequently as the advice for a student attempting to transfer into UC San Diego's biochemistry major would vary vastly from a student transferring in Cal Poly SLO's anthropology major.

### **Can I get financial aid?**

Yes. At our local community colleges, applying for financial aid can often make it FREE to attend. For eligible California residents, the California Promise Grant will usually waive enrollment fees at most California Community Colleges. Some community colleges, such as DeAnza and Foothill, will also cover the cost of books. Application steps vary for the Promise program, please investigate the details at the community college you're interested in attending.

### **Admission Requirements:**

California community colleges are required to admit any California resident possessing a high school diploma or equivalent. Additionally, California community colleges may admit any nonresident possessing a high school diploma or equivalent or anyone (resident or nonresident) over the age of 18 without a high school diploma or equivalent who, in the judgment of the board, is capable of profiting from the instruction offered.

Community colleges may admit minors who do not hold high school diplomas, or equivalent, to its credit courses as special part-time or special full-time students. Most community colleges have established requirements for K-12th grade concurrently enrolled students. Complete the MVLA Out of District Course Permission form and ask for permission from your principal. Please visit the website of the college you are interested in attending for instructions on admission and registration.

### **Special Admission Programs at Foothill College, for example:**

Dental Assisting, Dental Hygiene, Paramedic, Pharmacy Technician, Primary Care Assisting, Diagnostic Medical Sonography, Radiologic Technology, Respiratory Therapy Technology, and Veterinary Technology.

### **Community College Matcher:**

The following website contains information for all of the community colleges in California: [www.cccco.edu/students](http://www.cccco.edu/students)

### **How do I apply to Community College?**

The following CCCApply website is your first step in the application process. Again, please visit the website of the college you wish to attend. There you will be given specific instructions regarding admission and registration: [www.cccapply.org/en/apply](http://www.cccapply.org/en/apply)

### **What famous people have attended community college?**

Annette Bening, Actress - San Diego Mesa College, Gwendolyn Brooks, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet, Jessica Chastain, Actress - Sacramento City College, Beverly Cleary, Best-selling children's author - Chaffey College, Eileen Collins, former National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) astronaut, Tom Hanks, Actor - Chabot College, Joyce Luther Kennard, California Supreme Court justice - Pasadena City College, Jeanne Kirkpatrick, former United Nations ambassador, Nolan Ryan, retired Major League Baseball professional athlete, Jim Lehrer, news anchor, Sam Shepard, Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright, James Sinegal, co-founder and chief executive officer of Costco, Maxwell Taylor, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

# Part IV

## Private Colleges and Universities

Private institutions are another option for students to consider. Private colleges and universities can be found both in-state and out-of-state. In order to apply to these schools, students would need to create an account with the Common Application website or via the Coalition. Via the Common App, students may be able to apply to hundreds of private universities throughout the United States. It is important to note that unlike the CSU and UC system, the deadlines vary from school to school within the Common App and Coalition. It is important to note the different dates and deadlines for your schools of interest.

Please visit [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org) and/or [www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org](http://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org) to create an account.

### Admission Options

Colleges require applications to be submitted within a specific timeframe or by a set deadline. In your college search process you may encounter the following admissions deadline terms. It is the student's responsibility to research and adhere to the deadlines of the colleges they plan to apply to. For each admissions plan, students are expected to submit their application in full to be considered for admission:

#### Regular Decision (RD)

Regular decision is the traditional application deadline. Students who apply RD are considered within the larger pool of applicants. For the UC and CSU campuses, the Regular Decision deadline is November 30. The RD deadline for private and out-of-state public universities will vary from campus to campus but typically falls between early January to mid-February. Colleges notify students of an admissions decision by April 1.

#### Early Action (EA)

The Early Action deadline comes before the Regular Decision deadline. Most Early Action deadlines are in November; some out-of-state public universities have an October EA deadline. Students who submit their application during the Early Action period will receive an earlier admission decision, typically by December 15. Students who apply EA may be admitted, denied, or deferred (re-considered among the Regular Decision applicant pool). Early Action is non-binding, meaning that students admitted through EA have until May 1 to accept or decline their admission offer and may apply to other schools under EA terms.

#### Restrictive/Single Choice Early Action (REA/SCEA)

Some highly selective private universities only allow students to submit one Early Action application. Students applying REA or SCEA are expected to refrain from applying to other private universities during the early application period or applying to any binding programs. Students should check the specific requirements and expectations of the university's REA or SCEA admissions process. An acceptance through REA or SCEA is typically non-binding and students have until May 1 to submit their decision.

#### Early Decision (ED)

Early Decision is a binding admissions agreement; therefore, if you decide to apply Early Decision to a university, it should be your first choice school. Students apply early, typically in November, and receive an earlier notification of their admission decision around mid-December. Similar to Early Action, students may be admitted, denied, or deferred. The student, parent and counselor sign documents agreeing that the student is applying ED to only one school and, if admitted, will withdraw all other applications and not accept any other offers of admission. Reneging

on your agreement after being offered ED admission could result in other colleges refusing to admit you. Insufficient financial aid is the only legitimate reason to back out of an Early Decision agreement. Students should research a school's financial aid policies and use its net price calculator to determine if the school will be affordable and/or if the school will be able to meet a significant amount of your financial need.

### **Early Decision II (ED 2/ED II)**

ED II is the same binding policy as ED I, just with a later deadline, typically the first week of January. Students receive a decision in February.

### **Priority Deadline**

Students who submit their complete application by the priority deadline (earlier than the regular decision deadline) have a higher chance of being considered for scholarships. Students may also have a better chance of being admitted to competitive majors and/or honors programs.

### **Rolling Admissions**

Some universities do not have a definitive deadline, but instead process applications as they receive them. Students receive an admission decision within a few weeks of submitting the application. This process can sometimes be called "first come, first served" and students who apply later in the application filing period may not be accepted if the university has filled its incoming freshman class.

### **Should I Apply during the Early Action or Early Decision period?**

Applying early may decrease stress in the winter if you receive a favorable admissions decision; however, it may create additional stress due to the accelerated college application timeline. Students who apply early will be expected to have a complete application by the EA or ED deadline. A student who does not have a consistent academic record or believes they will be able to show improvement in their senior year fall grades should not apply EA or ED.

## **Admission Decisions**

### **Waitlist**

A student may be placed on a waitlist, if they meet the admission requirements, but the college has already accepted the number of applicants it has room for. Colleges make predictions of how many students will accept the college's offer of admission and the waitlist serves as a way to reach their goal number of incoming freshmen. The college will ask if you would like to remain on the waitlist. You should still accept an admission offer at one of the schools to which you have been admitted in order to save yourself a place. If you are waitlisted, you should check with your college counselor to determine how to best advocate for your admission.

### **Candidates' Reply Date/College Signing Day**

May 1 is the national college decision day. Students should take the month of April to review their admission offers and decide which campus is the best fit. You are expected to decline offers of admission from the universities you do not plan on attending. Officially declining an offer of admission helps the university to properly plan their freshman class and offer a spot to other students who are interested in attending. When accepting an offer of admission, most universities will expect you to submit a nonrefundable deposit. It is unethical to accept admission to more than one university – after all, you cannot attend multiple colleges in the fall. Replying after this date, may result in a loss of your spot at the college.



## **Application Components**

Many colleges and universities will require additional documents that supplement your application form. Colleges may request all or some of the following materials before your application will be considered complete. You should review the admissions page of each school on your list to determine what is required.

### **Application Form**

Most colleges allow students to submit the application online using a digital form. The application may be accessed from the school's website or it may be a campus which accepts a general application through a system such as the **Common Application (Common App)** or the **Coalition for College**.

The application form will usually request the following information:

- Personal and Educational Information
- Honors and Awards
- Extracurricular and Volunteer activities
- Employment, internships, and summer activities
- Essays, personal statement, or short response questions
- Disciplinary information
- Application fee
- Signature/Electronic signature
- Audition or portfolio for some programs

### **Official Transcript**

Your transcript is a record of all of the courses you have taken since your freshman year of high school, including any pre-approved off-campus coursework. Our district's transcript includes your grades, courses in progress, and your GPA. It does not include your standardized test scores (SAT, ACT, AP, etc.). An official transcript is one that is either signed and sealed by the registrar or sent directly from your counselor through electronic submission. Our high schools do not rank.

### **Teacher Recommendation Letter**

The teacher letter of recommendation provides further context about the applicant's academic abilities, strengths, work ethic, and strength of character. The teacher recommendation discusses how you are in a classroom setting: your level of participation, your critical thinking skills, your ability to meet deadlines, your maturity level. Colleges would like to know what their faculty can expect from you as a college student. Most colleges prefer letters from teachers who taught you in the 11th or 12th grade in a core academic subject. As the student, it is your responsibility to ask your teachers to write a letter of recommendation on your behalf. Ask in the spring of your junior year; it is not only courteous but necessary to ensure that your writers have enough time to write a comprehensive letter of recommendation.

### **Secondary School Report/Counselor Recommendation Letter**

The counselor letter of recommendation explains who a student is beyond the classroom. Your counselor will use the information provided in the college application envelope (which includes information from you, your teachers, and parents) as well as personal interactions to write your letter of recommendation. The counselor letter is submitted with a copy of your official transcript, the secondary school report (SSR), and a school profile.

### **Midyear Report**

The Midyear Report is sent early in the spring semester, after fall grades have been posted on the official transcript. This is sent by your academic counselor.

## **Standardized Test Scores**

The most common college admission tests are the SAT and ACT. More and more, admissions offices are allowing students to self-report their test scores by simply inputting their SAT and/or ACT scores into their application. The opposing policy to self-reporting is official score reporting. When a college requires official test scores, a student must login to their College Board or ACT account, request to send a score report, and then pay to send their score to each campus that requires the scores.

All domestic colleges accept either the ACT or SAT.

## **Interview**

An interview may be offered, strongly recommended, or required. This information should be available on the college's admissions page. Interviews are offered so that a college can get to know you better and answer questions you may have about their university. A college interview may be with a college representative or with a local alumnus. Speak with your college counselor or visit the College and Career Center for tips and advice on your college interview.

## **Essay**

Some applications require an essay or personal statement. The essay is an opportunity to reveal your best qualities and to show admission officers who you are. The following pages include helpful tips for creating a personal statement for college admissions.

The following section is a mini-manual on writing a strong personal statement by *Your Steps to College* ([www.yourstepstocollege.com/helpful-pdfs](http://www.yourstepstocollege.com/helpful-pdfs)):

NOTES:

# Writing a Good College Application Essay

## Deciding What To Communicate

### Most Important

- Think about your audience. Ask yourself, “How will this essay motivate them to admit me?”
- Analyze – do not just describe a situation or tell a story. Self-awareness is key.
- Do not write about a common experience unless your take on it is unique.
- Do not just repeat information that is already in your application.
- Make sure the essay is about you no matter what the prompt is.
- Use details to show – do not just tell.
- Proofread EVERY word.

### Examples of things they would like to read about:

These are just suggestions to get you going – feel free to write about something else.

- A lesson you learned (Avoid determination, gratitude, perseverance, and self-confidence – they are very common topics.)
- Something that is distinctive or interesting about you (Ask family or friends.)
- Your fears and how you deal with them (Stay positive.)
- Something you hope to learn in college or in life
- An impact you would like to have on society
- Your values and/or how they have changed
- A discovery you made about yourself
- Where you see yourself in 10 years
- Your hopes and dreams

### If you're stuck, think about what the following might reveal about you:

You don't have to write about them, but they might give you some ideas.

- A situation where you felt inadequate and how you handled it
- An unusual nickname, if you have one, and how you got it
- Something you want to do before you die and why
- Your relationships with your family members
- A situation where you felt uncomfortable
- A small experience that had a big impact
- Your proudest moment (Don't brag.)
- Your most embarrassing moment
- An unusual hobby or pastime
- Things that make you smile
- Things that make you angry
- A dilemma you faced
- A phobia

## Choosing A Topic

- 1. Before you respond to the prompt, think about what you would like to communicate about yourself.**
- 2. Write about something that the admissions officers may not learn from the rest of your application.**  
For example, if you have done a lot of community service, you can tie your essay into that, but don't just write about how much you enjoy helping people – that is obvious.
- 3. If you write about an interesting experience, make sure it shows something appealing about you.** Think about a revealing moment and not just a broad story.
- 4. Do not write about a mission trip or a book that everyone reads.**  
[www.applywithsanity.com/blog-1/2018/12/10/dont-submit-that-mission-trip-essay](http://www.applywithsanity.com/blog-1/2018/12/10/dont-submit-that-mission-trip-essay)
- 5. Consider a creative approach to a standard prompt:**  
Someone who has influenced you – a literary character or a historical figure  
A work of art – a classic car or a beautiful building
- 6. Do not write about a common experience unless you have a unique situation or creative perspective.** Essays on the following topics usually sound the same:
  - Community Service/Mission Trip: gratitude, primitive conditions, joy of giving, materialism
  - Getting a job: responsibility, independence, self-confidence, future career
  - Sports: teamwork, overcoming injury, “practice makes perfect,” demanding coach
  - Someone who overcame illness or adversity: inspiration, determination, giving something back
  - Eye-opening travel: new perspectives, courage, different kinds of people, common bonds
  - “Harry Potter,” “The Great Gatsby,” Miley Cyrus songs
  - Moving/Transferring to a new school: self-reliance, personal growth, intellectual challenge
  - Global warming – unless you have a specific plan to address it

## Hints:

- Consider the essay prompts from all the schools you're applying to and see whether you could write an essay that would work for more than one prompt – make sure it truly addresses both questions.
- You can add humor if it comes naturally, but do not just tell a funny story.
- If one of the options is “A topic of your choice,” feel free to write about something unrelated to the other prompts. You can also submit an essay that you wrote for another school as long as it's the right length and doesn't mention the other school. **Do not do this for a prompt that asks why you want to go to a specific school.**
- Don't reuse an essay you wrote for class unless the assignment was to write an admissions essay
- Don't criticize political views, religious beliefs, or other schools.

## Suggestions For Common Topics

### Your reasons for choosing your major

- Discuss related activities or hobbies to show you have pursued your interests in high school.
- Describe what you like about that department at the school you are writing for.
- Suggest a field you might want to study – they will not hold you to this.
- Do not spend more than two sentences describing your childhood interest in the subject – they are not planning to admit you at age 10.

### Why you want to go to a specific school

- Do not write a generic essay that would apply to all schools.
- Explain how the students, professors, or programs at that school seem different.
- Identify professors you would like to work with and explain why. (The research focuses of the professors in your major may be listed on the school's website.)
- Do not write about anything obvious like Carolina's basketball program or Appalachian State's beautiful location – these are very common topics.

### A current issue you would like to address

- The essay should be about you – do not just describe the issue and its importance.
- Consider an issue that ties into an activity or interest mentioned in your application. For example, if you have attended engineering camps, consider an issue with an engineering solution.
- Do not write about a common issue like global warming or obesity unless you have a specific, innovative plan to address it – make sure to mention your plan in the introduction.

## Writing the Essay

### 1. Write in a style that “sounds” like you. The essay should reflect your personality.

### 2. Introduction – Start with a “hook” to capture your reader's interest. A “hook” can be:

- An unusual or unexpected statement  
(Note: make sure you explain how this strange statement is related to your thesis.)  
*“Cockroaches, unite” was my battle cry.*
- An unrealistic, contradictory, or apparently nonsensical statement:  
*I opened the jar of mayonnaise as carefully as if I were defusing a nuclear warhead.*
- A thought-provoking question  
*Why do teenagers think that all advice that comes from parents is wrong?*
- A confession or admission  
*Sometimes I think that I have xanthophobia: fear of the color yellow.*
- If you start by describing a scene or setting, make sure it is interesting and intriguing.
- Be careful about starting or ending your essay with a quote, statistic, or definition.  
This is common and only stands out if it is done exceptionally well.
- Do not begin with an overused sentence like: *From \_\_\_\_\_ experience, I learned \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ .*
- Do not use more than ¼ of the word limit for the introduction.

**3. Tell the reader something about yourself even if the prompt just asks about an activity or opinion.**

*Good: Teaching autistic kids to swim last summer, I learned to measure success by how hard I work and not how much I achieve.*

*Bad: Last summer I taught autistic kids to swim and helped them succeed.*

**4. Give specific, detailed explanations and examples.**

*Good: If my mother had not forced me to eat all those new foods, I might not be so eager to study in a country where I don't speak the language.*

*Bad: Without my mother, I would not be who I am today.*

**5. Use details to show – do not just tell.**

*Good: Because of the student-faculty forums I suggested, students can now study teenage psychology instead of just memorizing the areas of the brain.*

*Bad: Because of my programs, students have more input in the school and can make the curriculum relevant to themselves.*

**6. Use vivid images instead of generalities.**

*Good: After sleeping on the rocky ground for two weeks, our simple cabin seemed like a palace.*

*Bad: When we finished backpacking, the cabin seemed very comfortable.*

**7. Be concise – a good example does not need to be explained.**

*Good: As my manager glowered at me, I realized I had only seconds to explain why the \$100 dollar bill was in my hand (It is obvious that this made the writer look guilty.)*

*Bad: As my manager looked at me with a frown on his face, I could see that he was angry. Having the valuable \$100 dollar bill in my hand made me look guilty. I knew I had to come up with an explanation that would satisfy him quickly. (This explanation of the example is a waste of words.)*

**8. Avoid clichés – they are shortcuts for real thought.**

*Good: Ellen taught me to build relationships based on shared experiences.*

*Bad: Ellen pulled me out of my shell.*

**Hints:**

- Write an essay within 50 words under or over the word limit. If no length is suggested, aim for 500 words for the main essay and 200-300 words for smaller ones.
- Make sure every sentence in your essay adds to what you are telling the admissions officers about yourself. Do not add extra details just because they occurred to you.
- Don't use the words "I" and "me" too much.



## Finishing It Off

1. **Proofread every word.** Don't offend the admissions officers with grammar or punctuation errors or misspelled words. Spellcheck and Grammar Check can create errors.

2. **Important errors to proofread for:**

Singular/Plural Pronoun Agreement

If **a person** wants to get into a good college, **they** need a high GPA.

Error: "**a person**" is singular, "**they**" is plural

Correction: *A person who wants to go to a good college needs a high GPA.*

Unclear Pronouns

*When I got into my first-choice college, it was very exciting.*

Error: "**it**" does not refer to anything

Correction: *Getting into my first-choice college was very exciting.*

Passive Voice:

**It is** the lure of leaving home **that** makes me want to go to college in California.

Error: The construction using a "to be" verb is awkward.

Correction: *The lure of leaving home makes me want to go to college in California.*

3. **Have someone knowledgeable proofread your paper for clarity, grammar, and content, but do not let that person change your writing style.** Admissions officers can spot sentences written by adults.

*Original: When the elephant charged toward me, I was terrified. My brain was filled with panic and the fear of being trampled.*

*Good Edit: When the elephant charged, I was terrified by the fear of being trampled.*

This is more concise but keeps the original structure and word choice.

*Bad Edit: Seeing the elephant hurtling across the savannah, I was petrified of being trampled.*

This is also more concise but has a different sentence structure, advanced vocabulary, and detail added by the editor – it does not reflect the writer's original work.

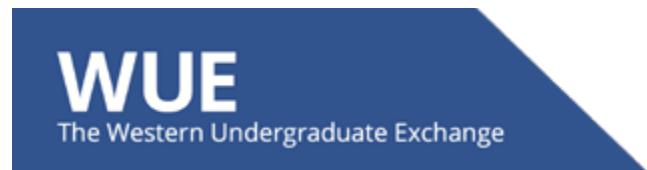
**Note:** If you have a teacher proofread, ask what the essay tells her about you. Teachers sometimes approve well written essays that don't reveal very much about the writer.

4. **When finished, ask yourself:**

- How will this make the admissions officers want to admit me?
- Does this sound like me?
- What image of me does this present?
- Is it interesting?
- Does this add information that is not in the rest of my application?

## Part V

### Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE)



In addition to the CSU, UC, and Common Application and Coalition schools, another great choice for our students are schools that are part of the Western Undergraduate Exchange or WUE (pronounced Woo-eee) for short. This consortium of colleges and universities includes ones in the western United States that offer discounted tuition for all students within those states who choose to attend there regardless of their home state.

On the next few pages you will find the information on the Western Undergraduate Exchange for your review.

NOTES:



# WUE

The Western Undergraduate Exchange

## ATTEND COLLEGE IN THE WEST FOR LESS

### What is WUE?

The Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) is a tuition-savings program that makes attending out-of-state colleges and universities more affordable for students. Through WUE, you receive a reduced tuition rate, giving you more education options for your money. **Virtually all undergraduate degrees are available.**



**160+**  
INSTITUTIONS



**\$9,700**  
AVERAGE SAVINGS  
PER STUDENT

### How does WUE work?

Participating two- and four-year public colleges and universities across the Western U.S. agree to charge out-of-state students no more than 150 percent of the institution's in-state tuition. Tuition savings may vary depending on the college or major.

**The bottom line: You save big with WUE and almost always pay less than out-of-state tuition.**

### How do I get started?

Check your eligibility by home state/territory, college and major through our online **WUE Savings Finder**. Visit [wuesavingsfinder.wiche.edu](https://wuesavingsfinder.wiche.edu) or use the QR code.




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Meet the college's WUE admissions requirements and deadlines.

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Apply directly to the college(s) of your choice.

 **Contact the college** - it's the best source of information about how you can save money through WUE.

Questions? Visit [wue.wiche.edu](https://wue.wiche.edu).  
Or contact us at [info-sap@wiche.edu](mailto:info-sap@wiche.edu)  
or 303.541.0270.

*WUE is a program of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.*



Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

# WUE

The Western Undergraduate Exchange

## SAVE MONEY AT 160+ INSTITUTIONS

### Participating colleges\* and universities

As of October 18, 2021

Resident students from the following states and territories may apply for the discount at these participating schools. Students from the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands are also eligible to apply.

#### ALASKA

University of Alaska Anchorage  
University of Alaska Fairbanks  
University of Alaska Southeast

#### ARIZONA

Arizona State University/Downtown  
Arizona State University/Polytechnic  
Arizona State University/West  
Arizona Western College \*  
Central Arizona College \*  
Chandler-Gilbert Community College \*  
Cochise College \*  
Coconino Community College \*  
Eastern Arizona College \*  
Estrella Mountain Community College \*  
GateWay Community College \*  
Glendale Community College \*  
Mesa Community College \*  
Mohave Community College \*  
Northern Arizona University  
Northland Pioneer College \*  
Paradise Valley Community College \*  
Phoenix College \*  
Pima Community College \*  
Rio Salado College \*  
Scottsdale Community College \*  
South Mountain Community College \*  
University of Arizona  
University of Arizona Sierra Vista  
Yavapai College \*

#### CALIFORNIA

California State Polytechnic University, Pomona  
California State University, Bakersfield  
California State University, Channel Islands  
California State University, Chico  
California State University, Dominguez Hills  
California State University, East Bay  
California State University, Maritime Academy  
California State University, Northridge  
California State University, Sacramento  
California State University, San Bernardino  
California State University, San Marcos  
California State University, Stanislaus  
Humboldt State University  
Sonoma State University  
University of California, Merced

#### COLORADO

Adams State University  
Aims Community College \*  
Arapahoe Community College \*  
Colorado Mesa University  
Colorado Mountain College \*  
Colorado Northwestern Community College \*  
Colorado State University  
Colorado State University-Pueblo  
Community College of Aurora \*  
Community College of Denver \*  
Fort Lewis College  
Front Range Community College \*  
Lamar Community College \*  
Metropolitan State University of Denver  
Morgan Community College \*

Northeastern Junior College \*  
Otero College \*  
Pikes Peak Community College \*  
Pueblo Community College \*  
Red Rocks Community College \*  
Trinidad State College \*  
University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus  
University of Colorado, Colorado Springs  
University of Colorado Denver  
University of Northern Colorado  
Western Colorado University

#### COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Northern Marianas College \*

#### GUAM

University of Guam

#### HAWAII

University of Hawaii at Hilo  
University of Hawaii at Manoa  
University of Hawaii Maui College  
University of Hawaii-West O'ahu

#### IDAHO

Boise State University  
College of Southern Idaho \*  
Idaho State University  
Lewis-Clark State College  
North Idaho College \*  
University of Idaho

#### MONTANA

Dawson Community College \*  
Flathead Valley Community College \*  
Great Falls College Montana State University \*  
Helena College University of Montana \*  
Highlands College of Montana Tech \*  
Miles Community College \*  
Montana State University, Billings  
Montana State University, Bozeman  
Montana State University, Northern  
Montana Technological University  
University of Montana  
University of Montana, Western

#### NEVADA

College of Southern Nevada \*  
Great Basin College \*  
Nevada State College  
Truckee Meadows Community College \*  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
University of Nevada, Reno  
Western Nevada College \*

#### NEW MEXICO

Eastern New Mexico University  
Eastern New Mexico University - Roswell \*  
New Mexico Highlands University  
New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology  
New Mexico Junior College \*  
New Mexico Military Institute \*  
New Mexico State University  
New Mexico State University-Alamogordo \*  
Northern New Mexico College  
Santa Fe Community College \*

University of New Mexico  
Western New Mexico University

#### NORTH DAKOTA

Bismarck State College \*  
Dakota College at Bottineau \*  
Dickinson State University  
Lake Region State College \*  
Mayville State University  
Minot State University  
North Dakota State College of Science \*  
North Dakota State University  
University of North Dakota  
Valley City State University  
Williston State College \*

#### OREGON

Eastern Oregon University  
Oregon Institute of Technology  
Oregon State University  
Portland State University  
Southern Oregon University  
Western Oregon University

#### SOUTH DAKOTA

Black Hills State University  
Dakota State University  
Northern State University  
South Dakota School of Mines and Technology  
South Dakota State University  
University of South Dakota

#### UTAH

Dixie State University  
Salt Lake Community College \*  
Snow College \*  
Southern Utah University  
University of Utah  
Utah State University  
Utah State University Eastern \*  
Utah Valley University  
Weber State University

#### WASHINGTON

Central Washington University  
Eastern Washington University  
Evergreen State College  
Spokane Community College \*  
Spokane Falls Community College \*  
Washington State University  
Washington State University Everett  
Washington State University Tri-Cities  
Washington State University Vancouver  
Western Washington University

#### WYOMING

Casper College \*  
Central Wyoming College \*  
Eastern Wyoming College \*  
Gillette College \*  
Laramie County Community College \*  
Northwest College \*  
Sheridan College \*  
University of Wyoming  
Western Wyoming Community College \*

Visit [wue.wiche.edu](http://wue.wiche.edu)

# Part VI

## Building the College List

### Aim to Create a Well-Balanced List!

#### Do Your Research

Students should learn as much as possible about each of the colleges and universities on his or her list.

**You should not apply to a school if you do not plan to enroll if you are admitted.** A complete college list is one that has a mix of reach, target, and likely-to-be-admitted schools. To determine how a college on your list would be categorized (reach, target, or likely/safety) you should view the university's freshman profile and review Scattergrams in Naviance to see how you compare to other students from your high school who have been admitted in previous years. The Freshman Profile/Applicant Profile usually includes the school's admit rate, average GPA or GPA range, and average test scores of last year's admitted class.

Financial fit is also an important consideration when deciding where to apply to college. Remember that there is need-based financial aid and merit-based financial aid. You can predict how much need-based aid you would qualify for by using a few net price calculators. Google the name of your college followed by *net price calculator* and it will usually be one the first search results. If you do not qualify for any need-based aid, then if you don't go hunting for merit-based aid, you are assuming that you are paying the full \$26,000–78,000 out of pocket for four years. Talk with our college counselor if you have more questions about financial aid.

When considering out-of-state public universities, keep in mind that many of these universities prioritize admitting applicants from their own state. The admit rate for out-of-state applicants will likely be significantly lower than the rate for resident applicants.

#### Reach Schools

A college or university is a reach school if your academic credentials fall below the school's range for the average admitted freshman. Highly selective schools are also reach schools. There are some universities that admit very few students into its freshman class each year. Even if your GPA and test scores match or exceed the averages, a highly selective school (i.e. admits 20% or less of its applicants) will be a reach for all students applying. Aim for 2-3 Reach Schools on your College List.

#### Match/Target Schools

A university is a target if your test scores and GPA match those of the most recently admitted freshman class. A target school must admit more than 20% of its applicants to have predictable admissions trends. Keep in mind that public universities, often their flagship campuses like UT Austin, often admit different percentages of out-of-state applicants so their admissions rate at first glance might appear higher than it actually is for CA students. Aim for 4-6 Target Schools on your College List.

#### Likely/Safety Schools

Most colleges would not like to be considered "safety" or "back up schools." Likely schools are colleges that you "like," and that you can be nearly certain that you will gain admission because your test scores and GPA are well above the average of the previous year's admitted class. It is also a good idea to look at schools with an admit rate of 50% or higher. These should also be schools where you would be happy to attend. Aim for 2-3 Likely/Safety Schools on your College List.

## Selectivity

Anxiety has increased over college admissions in the past few years, due to news about colleges being very selective and the increased difficulty of being admitted. These headlines are about a small number of colleges and universities. According to the National Association for College Admissions Counseling (NACAC), the average admit rate for 4-year colleges and universities in the United States was about 66% in 2014. Applying broadly and creating a well-balanced list will increase a student's chances of having multiple options for the fall.

## Summary of Likely/Safety, Target, and Reach

You may have heard your counselor mention that your college list should consist of Reach, Target, and Likely schools. Below you will find guidelines for how to identify if a school is reach, target or likely for you.

### LIKELY/SAFETY:

- Your scores and GPA exceed the mid-50% range of scores and GPA for last year's admitted freshman class AND the college's admit rate was 50% or more.
- Aim for 2-3 colleges in this category

### TARGET:

- Your scores and GPA put you in the mid-50% range of scores and GPA for last year's admitted freshman class AND the admit rate was more than 20%.
- Your scores and GPA exceed the mid-50% range of last year's admitted freshman class AND the admit rate is less than 50%. The higher your stats are compared to last year's freshman class, the lower the admit rate can be to still call a school a Target.
- Aim for 4-6 colleges in this category

### REACH:

- Your scores and GPA are below the mid-50% range of last year's admitted freshman class AND the admit rate is less than 20%.
- Colleges with admit rates of 20% or less can be considered a Reach even for students with outstanding stats.

### Remember:

- Selectivity can vary by programs/majors within a college if it admits by major;
- This does not take into consideration hooks (sports, legacy, etc.), institutional priorities, extracurricular activities, etc.

## College Research Tools

There are a number of great websites available for researching the more than 4,000 colleges and universities in the United States. Here are a few of our favorites:

**Naviance:** [student.naviance.com/auth/fclookup](http://student.naviance.com/auth/fclookup)

Within Naviance, there are many different search features you can use to research colleges. Among our top choices are the college maps feature, which lets you search for different types of colleges and provides a visual of where they are, and the college search feature, which enables you to input a great deal of specific information about yourself to get personalized recommendations you can add to your "Colleges I'm Thinking About" list.

**College Board:** [bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search](http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search)

BigFuture on the College Board's website is another great option. It's visually pleasing and lets you tailor your search according to subcategories such as major, cost, athletics, region, academic credit, and so on. Many students prefer this option.



**Chegg:** [www.chegg.com/schools](http://www.chegg.com/schools)

This is a fun website that offers traditional search features as well as special subcategories including colleges with the best food, colleges with the most school spirit, colleges with the best merit aid, and colleges with the best quality of life. It's a great resource to explore as a secondary tool once you've developed an initial list, as it provides additional context for your schools.

**Cappex:** [www.cappex.com](http://www.cappex.com)

Cappex has a lot of interesting tools in addition to a customary search feature. These include tools that calculate your admission chances at any given school and a best-fit meter to see if a school meets the criteria you feel are important in your prospective colleges.

**College Navigator:** [nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator](http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator)

If you are interested in comprehensive statistical information about colleges and universities in the US, College Navigator is a good resource. It is owned by the US Department of Education, so it can provide incredible details that can easily be exported into spreadsheets for future reference.

**Unigo:** [www.unigo.com](http://www.unigo.com)

While it includes a nice search tool, Unigo's defining feature is its college reviews. Students at nearly every college in the country provide first-hand reviews of things ranging from food to dorm life to political climate. It's another fun secondary research to use in whittling down your list to a manageable number of schools.

**College Results Online:** [www.collegeresults.org](http://www.collegeresults.org)

This is a great site to research specific data points, including four-year graduation rates, first-year retention rates, post-graduation debt, and post-graduation earnings.

**U-CAN:** [www.ucan-network.org](http://www.ucan-network.org)

Maintained by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, U-CAN provides easy access to often hard-to-find statistics, such as student debt, net tuition costs, and undergraduate class size.

**CollegeData:** [www.collegedata.com](http://www.collegedata.com)

This site gives information on the number and percentage of freshmen who receive merit aid at a particular school. You can also find admissions profile data and the selection factors that are most important in the admissions process.

**Niche:** [www.niche.com](http://www.niche.com)

This site is known for its student reviews. It also gives letter grades for different aspects of student life. You'll find lists of the best schools in different categories based on reviews.

**LinkedIn:** [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)

LinkedIn offers an option to search for colleges by name, major, location, and other factors. Universities have their own LinkedIn pages where you can learn about the school, its history, its curriculum, and its students. You can even research alumni of the school to see their professions and learn which companies they work for.

## **College Visits**

Visiting colleges is a great way to get a feel for a campus. Oftentimes, students visit colleges during summer break or even during spring break. Going to visit a college campus when there are students present can give you an insider's look at the school environment. You can walk onto campus and explore on your own or you can register for a student-led campus tour. The College Board provides some great tips and guidelines when planning your college visits and hope that you find their college visit guide helpful and informative.

If you are not able to visit colleges in person, virtual college visits are another great option. [www.youvisit.com](http://www.youvisit.com) and [www.youniversitytv.com](http://www.youniversitytv.com) are good sites for virtual tours. You can search directly on the college's website.

# 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?

# Part VII

## Special Programs

Many colleges offer special programs geared toward supporting students in varying ways. Below are only a few examples of these programs:

### **Visual and Performing Arts (VPA) Schools and Programs**

If you are applying to a specialty institution or special program within a university, you may be required to send in additional materials (such as a portfolio), attend an audition, or upload video or audio files for a pre-screen. Read the audition or portfolio requirements carefully. If you submit an application through Common App, you can use Slide Room to submit art supplements. If you apply via The Coalition you can upload multimedia within the application system. Oftentimes, application deadlines for VPA schools and programs will be earlier – usually in November.

### **Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC)**

ROTC is a scholarship, leadership, and military career training program on college campuses that trains students (cadets) to serve in one of the branches of the US military: Air Force, Army, or Navy/Marine Corps. Each branch has its own ROTC program. Cadets take additional courses on leadership, military science, and physical fitness. Students admitted into an ROTC program receive a full scholarship and a stipend for four years of attendance. ROTC cadets commit to service for a set number of years, which begins after earning his or her undergraduate degree. Visit the specific branch's ROTC website to view application requirements, service commitment, and other information.

### **Honors Programs and Colleges**

Some campuses offer honors programs or colleges that provide students with a wide range of opportunities. An honors program can be a learning community, an academic program within the larger university, or some combination of the two. Students in an honors program can typically expect increased rigor, smaller class sizes, and greater access to resources and faculty. Additional benefits of being part of an honors program may include a merit scholarship or special housing. An honors program may have increased graduation requirements such as a research project or senior thesis. Depending on the college/university, students can apply to the honors program their senior year of high school, during their freshman year of college, or may automatically be considered for an honors program after submitting the college application.

### **3-2 Programs**

Some liberal arts colleges create the opportunity to combine 3 years of liberal studies and 2 years of engineering in order to earn two degrees: a Bachelor of Arts in one subject, plus a bachelor's degree in the engineering discipline the student chooses. Many liberal arts schools with a 3-2 program have partnerships with a separate institution (e.g. Colby College has 3-2 program partnerships with Columbia University and Dartmouth College).

### **Accelerated Professional Degree Programs**

Some colleges offer joint degree programs which accelerate the time in which it would typically take to earn both a bachelors and professional degree (MD – medicine, JD – law, DDS – dental, etc). For medical programs, students earn a BS or BA and then proceed directly into their med school program. For law programs, students earn their bachelor's and proceed with their law school program. Accelerated medical school programs would be completed in 7-8 years; accelerated law programs would be 6 years. These programs are ideal for students who are confident in their future educational/career goals and who have strong grades and test scores and would like the advantage of saving on the cost of tuition for one year. The application period will vary depending on the institution and program; for some the application is due when applying for admission to the university and for others it can be completed after enrolling in the college/university.

## **Taking a Year Off/Gap Year**

Taking a year off before starting college has become more familiar since Malia Obama chose to take a “gap year” before enrolling at Harvard. According to the NACAC Guide to the College Admission Process: If you’re a bit unsure whether you’re ready for college at all, consider taking a year off. You can use that time to work, travel, volunteer, or participate in any of the hundreds of education, leadership and career exploration programs for young people. There are gap year program fairs that are similar to college fairs: they’re available online currently, but are slowly returning in-person, and you and your family can learn about all of the offerings in one place. If this option appeals to you, talk to your counselor and family about gap year options. As attractive as it may seem right now, hanging out in front of the TV gets old fast, and it doesn’t help you with your college or career decisions. You may find yourself teaching English in a foreign country, living in a kibbutz in Israel, studying endangered species in the rainforest, or building houses in an economically disadvantaged area. Your experience may make you more attractive to your first-choice college or change your mind and help identify possible career paths.

## **Student Athletes**

If you want to compete in NCAA Division I or II athletics in your first year of college, you must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center and be certified academically and as a non-professional athlete. The summer of junior year you can contact coaches at schools you are interested in if you plan to play sports in college. The coaches can give you information about sports programs and athletic scholarships. If you want to play Division I or II sports, complete the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse form and submit it after you have completed your sixth semester of high school. Historically, the NCAA had SAT/ACT testing requirements for student athletes, but the COVID-19 waiver has been extended to the class of 2023 – meaning seniors are not required to take the SAT/ACT to be NCAA eligible.

# **Part VIII**

## **NCAA**

### **Student-Athletes**

Prospective student-athletes who hope to play for Division I or 2 schools, must register with the **NCAA Eligibility Center**. In the following pages, you will find helpful information about the NCAA requirements and the registration process:

# ONE OPPORTUNITY. LIMITLESS POSSIBILITIES.

If you want to play NCAA sports at a Division I or II school, you need to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center at [eligibilitycenter.org](https://eligibilitycenter.org). If you plan to compete at a Division III school or currently are not sure in which division you want to compete, create a [free Profile Page account](#).

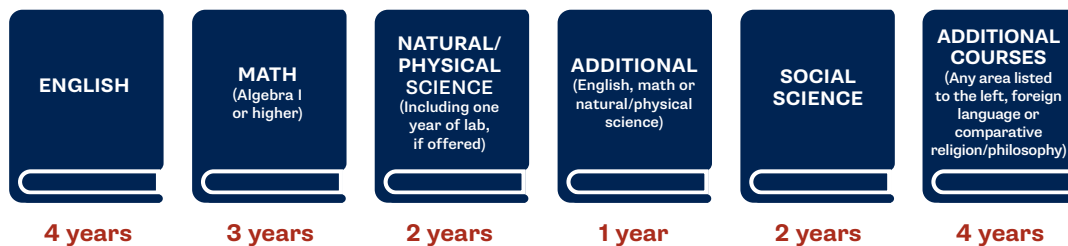
## ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

To play sports at a Division I or II school, you must complete a total of 16 [NCAA-approved core courses](#), earn a corresponding test score\* that matches your core-course GPA and submit proof of graduation to the Eligibility Center.

## CORE-COURSE REQUIREMENTS

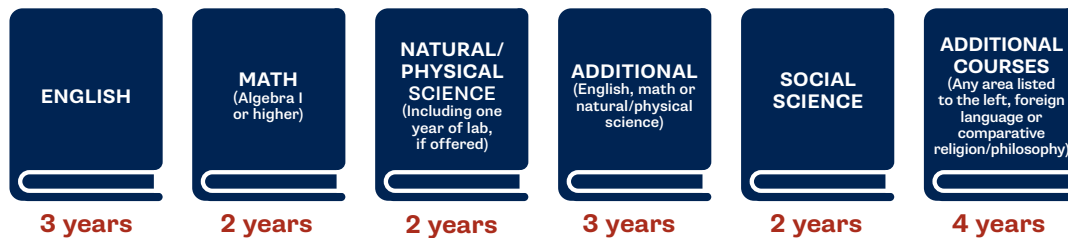
Complete a total of 16 core courses in the following areas:

### Division I



To study and compete at a Division I school, you must complete 10 of your 16 core courses, including seven in English, math or natural/physical science, before the start of your seventh semester.

### Division II



## GRADE-POINT AVERAGE

The NCAA Eligibility Center calculates your [core-course grade-point average](#) based only on the grades you earn in NCAA-approved core courses.

- » Division I requires a minimum 2.3 GPA.
- » Division II requires a minimum 2.2 GPA.

## SLIDING SCALE

Divisions I and II use sliding scales to match test scores and GPAs to determine eligibility. The sliding scale balances your test score with your GPA. If you have a low test score, you need a higher GPA to be eligible. Find more information about sliding scales at [ncaa.org/test-scores](https://ncaa.org/test-scores).

## TEST SCORES

Every time you register for the SAT or ACT, use code 9999 to send your scores directly to the NCAA Eligibility Center from the testing agency. You may take the SAT or ACT an unlimited number of times before you enroll full time in university. If you take either test more than once, the best subscores from each test are used for the academic certification process.

\*More information regarding the impact of COVID-19 and test scores can be found at [on.ncaa.com/COVID19\\_Spring2023](https://on.ncaa.com/COVID19_Spring2023).



# HIGH SCHOOL TIMELINE

GRADE  
**9**

## Freshman Year: Register

- » **Start planning now!** Take NCAA-approved courses and earn the best grades possible.
- » Find your high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses at [eligibilitycenter.org/courselist](https://eligibilitycenter.org/courselist).
- » Register for a free Profile Page account at [eligibilitycenter.org](https://eligibilitycenter.org) for information on NCAA initial-eligibility requirements.

GRADE  
**10**

## Sophomore Year: Plan

- » If you fall behind academically, ask your counselor for help finding approved courses you can take.
- » If you are being actively recruited by an NCAA school and have a Profile Page account, **transition** it to a **Certification account**.
- » Monitor the task list in your Eligibility Center account for next steps.
- » At the end of the school year, ask your counselor from each high school you have attended to upload an official transcript to your Eligibility Center account.

GRADE  
**11**

## Junior Year: Study

- » Check with your counselor to make sure you are on track to complete the required number of NCAA-approved **core courses** and graduate on time with your class.
- » Take the **SAT/ACT** and submit your scores to the Eligibility Center using code 9999.\*
- » Ensure your sports participation information is correct in your Eligibility Center account.
- » At the end of the school year, ask your counselor from each high school you have attended to upload an official transcript to your Eligibility Center account.

GRADE  
**12**

## Senior Year: Graduate

- » Complete your final NCAA-approved **core courses** as you prepare for graduation.
- » Take the **SAT/ACT** again, if necessary, and submit your scores to the Eligibility Center using code 9999.\*
- » Request your final amateurism certification beginning April 1 (fall enrollees) or Oct. 1 (winter/spring enrollees) in your Eligibility Center account at [eligibilitycenter.org](https://eligibilitycenter.org).
- » After you graduate, ask your counselor to upload your final official transcript with proof of graduation to your Eligibility Center account.
- » **Reminder:** Only students on an NCAA Division I or II school's **institutional request list** will receive a certification.

How to plan your high school courses to meet the 16 core-course requirement:

$$4 \times 4 = 16$$

**9<sup>TH</sup>**  
GRADE

(1) English  
(1) Math  
(1) Science  
(1) Social Science  
and/or additional

**4 CORE COURSES**

**10<sup>TH</sup>**  
GRADE

(1) English  
(1) Math  
(1) Science  
(1) Social Science  
and/or additional

**4 CORE COURSES**

**11<sup>TH</sup>**  
GRADE

(1) English  
(1) Math  
(1) Science  
(1) Social Science  
and/or additional

**4 CORE COURSES**

**12<sup>TH</sup>**  
GRADE

(1) English  
(1) Math  
(1) Science  
(1) Social Science  
and/or additional

**4 CORE COURSES**

SEARCH FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: [ncaa.org/studentfaq](https://ncaa.org/studentfaq)

Follow us: [@ncaaec](https://twitter.com/ncaaec) [@playcollegesports](https://www.instagram.com/playcollegesports) [f @ncaaec](https://www.facebook.com/ncaaec)



ELIGIBILITY CENTER

# Part IX

## Financial Aid

Another key component in the college application process is financial aid.

Before diving into more specifics about the financial aid process, here are some important terms to know:

### **FAFSA:**

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®), the financial aid form for students who are US citizens and permanent residents: [studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa](https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa)

### **CA DREAM ACT:**

The financial aid form for students who are undocumented, including DACA students: [dream.csac.ca.gov](https://dream.csac.ca.gov)

### **COA:**

Cost of Attendance, the full cost of attending a particular college, which includes tuition/fees, books, housing etc.

### **SAI:**

Student Aid Index. This number is used by financial aid officers to determine financial need. SAI is very similar to its recent predecessor, the EFC or Expected Family Contribution. The SAI formulas use the financial information students provide on their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) or California Dream Act (for specific undocumented students) to calculate the SAI. Financial aid administrators subtract the SAI from students' cost of attendance (COA) to determine their need for the following federal financial assistance offered by the U.S. Department of Education: Federal Pell Grants, Subsidized Stafford Loans through the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG), Federal Perkins Loans, and Federal Work-Study (FWS).

Basic Financial Aid Formula:  $COA - SAI = \text{Need}$

### **Types of Financial Aid:**

- **Scholarships:** Free money. Some are merit based while others are need based. Students apply for these individually; check Naviance for the most up to date information on scholarships available.
  - **Grants:** More free money
    - **Cal Grants:** A, B, C (Need based entitlement grants)
    - **Middle Class Scholarship:** Need based
    - **CHAFEE Grant:** Grant for foster youth
    - **Pell Grant:** Federal government grants
- Learn more: [www.csac.ca.gov](https://www.csac.ca.gov) and [studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/grants](https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/grants)

- **Loans:** Must be paid back. Know the terms of your loan and how much debt you might incur. Certain loans are better than others, talk with your college counselor if you have questions.
- **Work Study:** Money that you can earn by working an on-campus job. This is money that is paid directly to you that may be used for personal expenses.

### **FAFSA**

The FAFSA is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. This application must be filled out in order to determine your eligibility for federal financial aid. Before filling out the FAFSA, please collect the information listed below:

- **Social Security Number:** both yours and your parents'
- **Alien Registration Number:** if you are not a citizen

- Your and your parents' 2021 1040 or income taxes and W-2's
- Bank statements
- Any records of untaxed income: child support, Social Security benefits, welfare benefits
- List of colleges/universities you are interested in attending
- Parent Marital Status: date of marriage or divorce
- Household Size

## **FAFSA Submission**

In order to submit your FAFSA online, you and your parents will need to create an FSA ID, Think of the FSA ID as an electronic signature to sign FAFSA with. When a student and parent each create an FSA ID, it verifies the student's and parent's Social Security Number. If your parent does not have a Social Security Number, speak with your college counselor. The verification of an FSA ID requires unique email addresses for each user.

**Net Price Calculators** are available on university websites. A net price calculator will help a family estimate the financial aid (often need-based aid) that their student would qualify for upon admission. Net price calculators are strongly recommended for a family to understand financial fit when creating a college list.

## **AB 540 Students**

Undocumented students can be charged out-of-state tuition fees, which are more than double the cost for legal residents. However they can become an AB 540 student to receive regular in-state tuition fees, if they meet the following criteria:

- Have completed at least 3 years of a combination of elementary, middle, or high school in California or have earned the equivalent of three years of credit from a California high school
- Have graduated or will graduate from a California high school
- Must sign an affidavit that states you will begin the process to legalize your residency as soon as you are able to do so.

Go to: [www.csac.ca.gov/undocumented-dreamer-students](http://www.csac.ca.gov/undocumented-dreamer-students)

## **AB 540 Students and Financial Aid**

With the passage of AB 131 and AB 540, eligible students may file for benefits including Cal Grants and State University Grants. Instead of the FAFSA, eligible students would use a separate application from the California Student Aid Commission called the Dream Act: [dream.csac.ca.gov](http://dream.csac.ca.gov)

## **CA Dream Act**

The CA Dream Act gives students financial aid from the state of California. Student and parent financial information is shared with the California Student Aid Commission and the financial aid offices at the colleges the student is applying to (not the federal government). To complete the CA Dream Act students will need the following documents/information:

- You and your parents' 2021 1040 or income taxes and W-2's information
- Bank statements
- Any records of untaxed income: child support, Social Security Benefits, welfare benefits
- Month and year you and your parents moved to CA
- List of colleges/universities you are interested in attending
- Parent Marital Status: date of marriage or divorce
- Household Size
- DACA number, if you have one

After students submit the FAFSA or CA Dream Act Application, they are encouraged to establish a **WebGrants 4 Students** account to monitor their state financial aid.



# Part X

## Scholarships

### Scholarship Tips

Please keep in mind the FAFSA and the California Dream Act Application are used to award Cal Grants, State Grants, and Board of Governors Fee Waivers. To supplement your financial aid, please remember to check Naviance for up-to-date scholarships. For additional scholarship information, please visit the following websites:

[www.hsf.net](http://www.hsf.net)

[www.latinocollegedollars.org](http://www.latinocollegedollars.org)

[www.hispanicfund.org](http://www.hispanicfund.org)

[www.scholarships.com](http://www.scholarships.com)

[www.scholarshipsearch.com](http://www.scholarshipsearch.com)

[www.myscholly.com](http://www.myscholly.com)

[www.maldef.org](http://www.maldef.org)

[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

[www.salliemae.com](http://www.salliemae.com)

[www.goingmerry.com](http://www.goingmerry.com)

[www.chegg.com/scholarships](http://www.chegg.com/scholarships)

# Part XI

## Resources

### Websites

#### Naviance

[naviance.com](http://naviance.com)

#### College Research

Big Future

[www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org](http://www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org)

Fiske Guide to College

[www.fiskeguide.com](http://www.fiskeguide.com)

Princeton Review

[www.princetonreview.com](http://www.princetonreview.com)

Peterson's

[www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com)

CollegeNet

[www.collegenet.com](http://www.collegenet.com)

Colleges of Distinction

[www.collegesofdistinction.com](http://www.collegesofdistinction.com)

Western Undergraduate Exchange

[www.wiche.com/wue](http://www.wiche.com/wue)

Search 4 Career Colleges

[www.search4careercolleges.com](http://www.search4careercolleges.com)

U.S. Department of Education College Scorecard

[collegescorecard.ed.gov](http://collegescorecard.ed.gov)

Colleges That Change Lives

[www.ctcl.org](http://www.ctcl.org)

Database of Higher Ed Institutions

[www.findaschool.org](http://www.findaschool.org)

Women's College Coalition

[www.womenscolleges.org](http://www.womenscolleges.org)

## Test Prep & Information

[www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)  
[www.act.org](http://www.act.org)  
[www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org)  
[www.number2.com](http://www.number2.com)  
[www.kaplan.com](http://www.kaplan.com)

## Applications

[www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)  
[www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org](http://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org)  
[www2.calstate.edu/apply](http://www2.calstate.edu/apply)  
[apply.universityofcalifornia.edu](http://apply.universityofcalifornia.edu)  
[www.cccapply.org](http://www.cccapply.org)

## Essay

UC

<https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/how-to-apply/applying-as-a-freshman/personal-insight-questions.html>

The college essay guy

[www.collegeessayguy.com/college-application-hub](http://www.collegeessayguy.com/college-application-hub)  
[www.youtube.com/channel](http://www.youtube.com/channel)

## College Miscellaneous

Info For College-Bound Athletes  
[www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)

College Newspapers & Local Papers  
[www.newslink.org](http://www.newslink.org)

Public University Honors Programs  
[publicuniversityhonors.com](http://publicuniversityhonors.com)

Education Conservancy  
[www.educationconservancy.org](http://www.educationconservancy.org)

Test Optional Universities  
[www.fairtest.org/university/optional](http://www.fairtest.org/university/optional)

## Academic & Adventure Summer Camps

[www.educationunlimited.com](http://www.educationunlimited.com)  
[www.summerfuel.com](http://www.summerfuel.com)  
[www.supercamp.com](http://www.supercamp.com)  
[www.summerdiscovery.com](http://www.summerdiscovery.com)  
[www.adventurecamp.com](http://www.adventurecamp.com)

## Career Exploration

[www.mappingyourfuture.org](http://www.mappingyourfuture.org)  
[www.myfuture.com](http://www.myfuture.com)

[www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org)  
[www.self-directed-search.com](http://www.self-directed-search.com)

## Military

ROTC Information  
[www.bestcolleges.com/resources/rotcprograms](http://www.bestcolleges.com/resources/rotcprograms)

AFROTC  
[www.afrotc.com](http://www.afrotc.com)

NROTC  
[www.nrotc.navy.mil](http://www.nrotc.navy.mil)

Army ROTC  
[www.goarmy.com/rotc.html](http://www.goarmy.com/rotc.html)

Army  
[www.goarmy.com](http://www.goarmy.com)

Air Force  
[www.airforce.com](http://www.airforce.com)

Navy  
[www.navy.com](http://www.navy.com)

Marines  
[www.marines.com](http://www.marines.com)

Coast Guard  
[www.gocoastguard.com](http://www.gocoastguard.com)

## International Colleges and Universities

British Council (Study in the UK)  
[www.britishcouncil.us](http://www.britishcouncil.us)

4International - International School Database  
[www.4icu.org](http://www.4icu.org)

Association of American International Colleges & Universities  
[www.aaicu.org](http://www.aaicu.org)

Education Ireland:  
[www.educationinireland.com](http://www.educationinireland.com)

Top Universities - Study in Europe:  
[www.topuniversities.com/where-to-study/region/europe/guide](http://www.topuniversities.com/where-to-study/region/europe/guide)

Study in Europe.eu: [www.studyineurope.eu](http://www.studyineurope.eu)

The Complete University Guide:  
[www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk](http://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk)

Top Universities - Study in Asia:  
[www.topuniversities.com/where-to-study/  
region/asia/guide](http://www.topuniversities.com/where-to-study/region/asia/guide)

### **Financial Aid Information**

[www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)  
[www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org)  
[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)  
[www.csac.ca.gov](http://www.csac.ca.gov)  
[dream.csac.ca.gov](http://dream.csac.ca.gov)  
[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)  
[www.gocollege.com](http://www.gocollege.com)  
[www.fastaid.com](http://www.fastaid.com)  
[www.scholarships.com](http://www.scholarships.com)

### **California Colleges**

[www.californiacolleges.edu](http://www.californiacolleges.edu)

Independent CA Colleges & Universities  
[www.aiccu.edu](http://www.aiccu.edu)

### **University of California (UC)**

Office of Admissions  
[www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions](http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions)

A-G Guide  
[www.ucop.edu/agguide](http://www.ucop.edu/agguide)

Berkeley  
[www.berkeley.edu](http://www.berkeley.edu)

Davis  
[www.ucdavis.edu](http://www.ucdavis.edu)

Irvine  
[www.uci.edu](http://www.uci.edu)

Los Angeles  
[www.ucla.edu](http://www.ucla.edu)

Merced  
[www.ucmerced.edu](http://www.ucmerced.edu)

Riverside  
[www.ucr.edu](http://www.ucr.edu)

San Diego  
[www.ucsd.edu](http://www.ucsd.edu)

San Francisco (Graduate Programs Only)  
[www.ucsf.edu](http://www.ucsf.edu)

Santa Barbara  
[www.ucsb.edu](http://www.ucsb.edu)

Santa Cruz  
[www.ucsc.edu](http://www.ucsc.edu)

### **California State University (CSU)**

CSU System Information  
[www.calstate.edu](http://www.calstate.edu)

Bakersfield  
[www.csub.edu](http://www.csub.edu)

San Jose  
[www.sjsu.edu](http://www.sjsu.edu)

Chico  
[www.csuchico.edu](http://www.csuchico.edu)

San Luis Obispo  
[www.calpoly.edu](http://www.calpoly.edu)

Dominguez Hills  
[www.csudh.edu](http://www.csudh.edu)

San Marcos  
[www.csusm.edu](http://www.csusm.edu)

East Bay  
[www.csueastbay.edu](http://www.csueastbay.edu)

Sonoma  
[www.sonoma.edu](http://www.sonoma.edu)

Fresno  
[www.csufresno.edu](http://www.csufresno.edu)

Stanislaus  
[www.csustan.edu](http://www.csustan.edu)

Fullerton  
[www.fullerton.edu](http://www.fullerton.edu)

Humboldt  
[www.humboldt.edu](http://www.humboldt.edu)

Long Beach  
[www.csulb.edu](http://www.csulb.edu)

Los Angeles  
[www.calstatela.edu](http://www.calstatela.edu)

Cal Maritime  
[www.csum.edu](http://www.csum.edu)

Monterey Bay  
[www.csumb.edu](http://www.csumb.edu)

Northridge  
[www.csun.edu](http://www.csun.edu)

Cal Poly Pomona  
[www.cpp.edu](http://www.cpp.edu)

Stanislaus  
[www.csus.edu](http://www.csus.edu)

San Bernardino  
[www.csusb.edu](http://www.csusb.edu)

San Diego  
[www.sdsu.edu](http://www.sdsu.edu)

San Francisco  
[www.sfsu.edu](http://www.sfsu.edu)

## Community College Information

American Association of Community Colleges  
[www.aacc.nche.edu](http://www.aacc.nche.edu)

CA Community Colleges Chancellor's Office  
[www.cccco.edu](http://www.cccco.edu)

Statewide Transfer Info for CA  
[www.assist.org](http://www.assist.org)

Associate Degree For Transfer  
[icangotocollege.com/associate-degree-for-transfer](http://icangotocollege.com/associate-degree-for-transfer)

UC Transfer Admission Guarantee  
[universityofcalifornia.edu/admission-requirements/transfer-requirements/uc-transfer-programs/transfer-admission-guarantee-tag.html](http://universityofcalifornia.edu/admission-requirements/transfer-requirements/uc-transfer-programs/transfer-admission-guarantee-tag.html)

## Local Community College Campuses

Foothill College  
[www.foothill.edu](http://www.foothill.edu)

De Anza College  
[www.deanza.edu](http://www.deanza.edu)

Mission College  
[www.missioncollege.org](http://www.missioncollege.org)

West Valley College  
[www.westvalley.edu](http://www.westvalley.edu)

San José City College  
[www.sjcc.edu](http://www.sjcc.edu)

Evergreen Valley College  
[www.evc.edu](http://www.evc.edu)

## Recommended Reading

### Books

Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance  
by Angela Duckworth

Mindset: The New Psychology of Success  
by Carol S. Dweck

Mi Voz, Mi Vida: Latino College Students Tell Their Life Stories  
by Andrew Garrod & Robert Kilkenny

Colleges That Change Lives  
by Loren Pope

College Admission: From Application to Acceptance, Step by Step

By Robin Hamlet & Christine Vandevolve

There Is Life After College

by Jeffrey J. Selingo

Where You Go Is Not Who You'll Be

by Frank Bruni

Colleges That Create Futures

by Princeton Review

How to Raise and Adult: Break Free of the Overparenting Trap and Prepare Your Kid for Success

by Julie Lythcott-Haims

Who Gets In and Why

by Jeffrey J. Selingo

The College Solution: A guide for Everyone Looking for the Right School at the Right Price

by Lynn O'Shaughnessy

### Articles

Turning the Tide: Inspiring Concern for Others and the Common Good Through College Admissions  
[tinyurl.com/TurningTideGSE](http://tinyurl.com/TurningTideGSE)

Turning the Tide II: How Parents and High Schools Can Cultivate Ethical Character and Reduce Distress in the College Admissions Process  
[tinyurl.com/TurningTideGSE2](http://tinyurl.com/TurningTideGSE2)

How to Survive the College Admissions Madness  
[tinyurl.com/SurviveMadness](http://tinyurl.com/SurviveMadness)

14 Reasons Why US News College Rankings are Meaningless  
[tinyurl.com/RankingsMeaningless](http://tinyurl.com/RankingsMeaningless)

How to get the Most out of College  
[tinyurl.com/MostoutofCollege](http://tinyurl.com/MostoutofCollege)

More than 300 college deans explain what they want – and don't want – to see from applicants in the COVID-19 era  
[tinyurl.com/CollegeDeans](http://tinyurl.com/CollegeDeans)

# Part XII

## Worksheets

### Creating a Professional Email Address

As students prepare for the last 2 years of high school, it is important to understand the importance of having a professional email address. While all students have an mvla.net account, many prefer to use a personal email account. Here are some tips as you create or modify your email account:

- Please have an appropriate email address, as this is the email you will list on all of your college related applications. etc. Nicknames or inappropriate words should not be used.
- After having submitted any type of applications, please be sure to check your email! Colleges and universities send you emails regarding your next steps as an applicant, instructions, and required or missing documents. It is very rare that you will actually receive paper mail.
- For students planning to compete in athletics in college, it is a good idea to create an “athletic-recruiting” email address that includes your graduation year. College coaches associate you with your graduation year and position, such as: **SammySpartan2019@Gmail.com**, **EddieEagleGoalie2020@Gmail.com**

To help you keep track of your email, you can use the space provided below to record your email username and password.

### Username and Passwords

ACCOUNT	
USERNAME	
PASSWORD	

ACCOUNT	
USERNAME	
PASSWORD	

ACCOUNT	
USERNAME	
PASSWORD	

# JUNIOR YEAR

## AUGUST

- Make sure you are meeting high school graduation requirements
- Make sure you are meeting “A–G” course eligibility requirements for UC/CSU
- Discuss any course changes with School Counselor
- Update your resume in the Naviance account and add colleges to your “Colleges I’m Thinking About” list

## SEPTEMBER

- Visit College and Career Center website to investigate resources
- Continue with community service and club activities during school year
- Register with NCAA Clearinghouse by end of Junior year if you want to play competitive sports in college (Division I or II); discuss with your coach(es)
- Register for SAT and/or ACT, AP Exams
- Plan a strategy to achieve the SAT and/or ACT scores you want, using study guides, preparation courses, Khan Academy (free online prep)
- All Juniors are automatically registered for the PSAT (LAHS)
- Attend college visits by registering on Naviance
- Attend College Fairs virtually or in-person
- Attend the MVLA District College Fair

## OCTOBER

- Attend your Junior Interview with your School Counselor (OCT - JAN)
- Junior Parent College Night (MVHS)
- Complete all Naviance self-discovery assessments (LAHS)

## NOVEMBER

- Continue keeping a list of colleges, careers, and majors that may interest you
- Think about the type of college learning environment in which you would be successful
- Research college visits, in-person visits are preferable, but virtual ones are more convenient
- Visit local college(s) over Thanksgiving break

## DECEMBER

- Prepare for your finals, finish strong

## JANUARY

- Register for Senior year courses
- Continue to work hard in classroom, keep grades up
- Continue all activities (community service, extracurricular activities, volunteering)
- Check the testing requirements for your colleges on each college website
- Register and prepare for SAT/ACT
- Review PSAT scores with your Math and English teachers (LAHS)
- Attend College Counselor Process Presentation
- Make an appointment to meet with College Counselor
- Research and sign up for summer programs and internships (when possible)
- Read this Handbook!

## FEBRUARY

- Make list of your top 10–15 colleges, investigate them
- Visit colleges during February break
- Get College Sports information sheet from coaches if applicable
- Explore careers/majors in more depth: visit CCC

## MARCH

- Take SAT and/or ACT
- Check your transcript for errors, talk to School Counselor if corrections are needed
- Keep your grades up
- Attend the MVLA Countdown to College Event

## APRIL – MAY

- Visit colleges during Spring break
- Naviance: update Resume, begin Counselor Letter of Recommendation Questionnaire (MVHS)
- Naviance: update college lists, resume, complete all assessments (LAHS)
- Take AP Exams in MAY

## JUNIOR YEAR cont.

- Focus on researching your colleges; focus on fit (academic, social, financial) rather than college rankings
- Ask two teachers for recommendations based on who knows you best, some colleges prefer that teachers be from your Junior year and from core academic subjects
- Take SAT and/or ACT, if you are applying to schools that require testing
- Parent College Night for Junior Parents (not a student event) (LAHS)
- Review SAT/ACT scores with College Advisor, decide about re-testing and whether to take a preparation course or workshop
- Continue to develop Art/Music/Drama portfolio, if applicable
- Talk to coach to obtain video of sports highlights if applicable
- Attend local College Fairs (WACAC, NACAC)

### MAY – AUGUST

- Naviance: Continue to add to resume and revise college lists
- Narrow down your college list to 6 - 10 schools (not including UC and CSU campuses)
- Attend Counselor Letter of Recommendation information session (LAHS)
- Complete Counselor Letter of Recommendation Questionnaire (MVHS)
- Continue to collect information on your top colleges, majors, and career choices
- Take summer classes if interested (community college/4 year college/ Independent Learning schools)
- Volunteer or get work experience
- Check college websites for access to college essay prompts (UCs open app AUG 1)
- Discuss College Finance with parents (will you need scholarships or need-based aid?)
- Take test preparation classes if you are taking tests in SEPT/OCT, if appropriate
- Visit more colleges during the summer
- Decide if you will apply Early Decision/Early Action
- Create the first draft of UC personal insight questions, if applicable

## SENIOR YEAR

### AUGUST

- Complete all Naviance information for School Counselors (resume, survey) (MVHS)
- Attend School Counselor Letter of Recommendation Workshop (LAHS)
- Continue to edit “Colleges I’m thinking about” list in Naviance
- Complete Counselor Letter of Recommendation Packet if not completed
- Register for additional testing
- Check transcripts to make sure any errors are corrected
- Continue to work on college essays (get prompts from college websites/Common Application when available)
- Create College accounts and begin online college application for the colleges you are definitely applying to
- Research if your colleges track demonstrated interest, and if so, interact with those colleges to accrue interest
- UC online application opens AUG 1; create account if appropriate
- Common Application online opens AUG 1; create your account if appropriate
- Attend individual appointment with School Counselor (AUG - OCT)
- Check CCC website and individual college websites for scholarship opportunities throughout the year, deadlines will vary

### SEPTEMBER

- Make an appointment with College Counselor
- Finalize college list
- College Process Presentation for all Seniors
- Visit College and Career Center
- Attend college visits in the CCC
- Schedule further testing (SAT/ACT), if necessary
- Senior parent night (MVHS)
- College Process Presentation for parents (LAHS)

### OCTOBER

- CSU online application opens OCT 1
- UC online submissions opens OCT 1

## SENIOR YEAR cont.

- Create first draft of UC personal insight questions, if applicable
- Complete essays for ED/EA if you are applying early
- Complete applications for EA/ED, rolling admission
- FAFSA, Dream Act and CSS Profile application available OCT 1, check individual colleges for financial aid deadlines
- Register for AP exams

### NOVEMBER

- Continue working on applications and essays for all colleges
- Work on CSS Profile if your college choice requires it, deadlines vary
- Research if your colleges accept self-reporting of SAT/ACT scores or require official score reports
- For colleges that require official test scores (SAT/ACT) send your scores through your CollegeBoard/ACT account
- UC and CSU application deadline is NOV 30
- Work on FAFSA/Dream Act

### DECEMBER

- Continue working on essays/applications for private colleges and out-of-state colleges
- Check your college accounts/portals to make sure your file is complete
- Complete all testing (ACT/SAT) the last date to take test for some colleges
- Early Decision/Early Action decisions released
- Early Decision Admits must withdraw from all other colleges they applied to
- Self-advocate with counselors and teachers for any Regular Decision applications before the start of winter break

### JANUARY

- Regular decision deadline for most Common Application colleges JAN 1
- Continue working on FAFSA/Dream Act if not complete and submitted
- Send thank you notes to teachers and counselors for writing your recommendation

- Keep checking your portal/email for correspondence from College Admission and Financial Aid Offices
- Check for Mid-year requirements for non-Common App colleges

### FEBRUARY – MARCH

- FAFSA/Dream Act Deadline MAR 2
- Most Priority deadlines for CSS Profile are in FEB
- Check for assessment test requirements and dates, if applicable, on college website
- Regular Admissions decisions released throughout MARCH

### APRIL

- National college admission decisions released APR 1
- Send Intent to Register to college of your choice, and send Withdraw Notification to all other colleges you are not attending by MAY 1
- If you are taking a Gap Year you must notify and receive confirmation from your college in writing
- Check for housing or any other deadlines

### MAY

- National College Decision Day: Send deposit by MAY 1 to college you are attending
- Take AP Exams

### JUNE

- Complete Senior Survey (MVHS)
  - Senior Clearance (LAHS)
  - Make sure final transcript is sent to college you are going to attend
  - Attend Senior Awards
  - Graduation
- 
-



