



AMBASSADOR
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

COLLEGE PLANNING HANDBOOK

Ambassador Christian High School

Counseling Department

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Torrance, CA 90501

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www.ambassadorhigh.org

CEEB School Code: 054687

Dear Students and Parents:

As you know, the counselor does many things at Ambassador Christian School. One of our many jobs is to help you in the college search process. While the decisions made in college admissions offices are beyond our control, we can offer strategic guidance and can help our seniors put forth applications of which they feel truly proud. As you begin this process, please read this College Counseling Handbook carefully. It can serve as an important resource for the next year and a half. The more familiar you are with its contents and the more research you do about a wide variety of colleges, the more productive our conversations will be in the future. Starting next September, at the beginning of senior year, you will receive weekly email updates which will further outline specific procedures to help you meet important deadlines and make the process as easy as possible. As you begin to think about college, you may have questions. For now, read the Handbook. Research a variety of colleges. Enjoy the beginning of this journey.

Sincerely,

Ms. Hicks-Croak

About Ambassador Christian School

Mission Statement

We provide a rigorous education from a Biblical worldview through excellence in Student Leadership, Academics, Athletics, and the Arts.

Statement of Policy

The policies and procedures contained in the handbook are designed to maximize the educational experience of the student, provide guidelines for acceptable conduct, and establish academic standards and procedures. The policies and procedures contained in the handbook are subject to periodic modification by Ambassador Christian School.

Educational Purpose

Ambassador's purpose is to qualify its students for personal success to be among the most excellent influencers that shape the moral values of our culture for the glory of God.

As a nurturing Christian school, ACS seeks to admit students of parents who will support the school's mission and educational philosophy. ACS instructs students under the delegated authority of their parents in harmony with their various local congregations.

Ambassador is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and a member of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). As an ACSI member, ACS subscribes to ACSI's Christian Philosophy of Education. "The mission of ACSI is to enable Christian educators and schools worldwide to effectively prepare students for life."

Parents are responsible for the complete education of their children. The school, founded on Christian values, supports the home and churches of students in providing an education that is grounded in the Judeo-Christian values of the Bible as reflected in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

ESLR: Expected Student Learning Results

Focusing on what students should be able to accomplish upon graduation from ACS, the faculty and administration developed the ESLRs. Faculty members analyzed ESLRs from other schools with similar mission statements to write potential ACS learning results.

Our faculty worked to come up with an acronym to represent the ESLRs in a memorable way. The faculty reviewed draft ESLRs, and it was decided that the acronym T.E.A.C.H. would be used to represent our school because teaching the next generation is our mission.

ACS Expected School Wide Learning Results

Mark 12:29- 31 Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Think Critically

Effectively Communicate

Achieve Academic Excellence

Commit to be Godly Leaders

Honor God in our Community Through Service Locally and Globally

Think Critically

Demonstrate an ability to think critically, solve problems effectively, and draw conclusions from research, personal analysis, and investigation.

Romans 12:1-2 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will.

Effectively Communicate

Develop interpersonal skills needed to work cooperatively and effectively with others, including those of diverse cultures. Students will skillfully apply technology to successfully articulate their thoughts through the lens of a Christian worldview.

1 Peter 3:15-16 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

Achieve Academic Excellence

Demonstrate competence in academic disciplines that will enable them to pursue the university and career goals to which they aspire.

Daniel 1:4 Youth skillful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding, learning, and competent to stand in the king's palace and to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans.

Commit to Be Godly Leaders

Develop leadership skills through a personal understanding of what it means to have faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior with the Bible as the basis of authoritative truth.

1 Timothy 4:12 Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.

Honor God in our Community Through Service Locally and Globally

Develop an increasing awareness of and compassion for others, leading to community and global service.

2 Corinthians 5:20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

School Counseling Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide all students with a comprehensive school counseling program that encourages the development of the whole person academically, emotionally, socially, spiritually, and vocationally. In addition, Ambassador High School provides a rigorous education from a Biblical worldview through excellence in Student Leadership, Academics, Athletics, and the Arts.

The school counseling department will encourage all students to become successful lifelong learners and problem solvers. Ambassador Christian school is to deliver a multi-layered, comprehensive, and accountable school counseling program. In collaboration with school staff, families, and the community – we will ensure equity and access while promoting academic success. We will assist all students in acquiring the skills, knowledge, and attitudes needed to become lifelong learners, responsible citizens, and productive members of society; in partnership with teachers, administrators, parents/guardians, and a caring community, the school counselor support all students to become lifelong learners and leaders committed to serving God and society with a profound sense of social justice founded in love. The Counselor is available to assist with academic guidance, college and career planning, and wellness counseling and referral. In addition, I will provide individual meetings, family conferences, student/parent workshops, and more.

School Counseling Vision Statement

Ambassador Christian School counseling program envisions a future where all our students are productive and compassionate members of society, using their talents, abilities, and gifts to make lasting and positive impacts. Ambassador High School believes a developmental and sequential guidance program is essential to the overall education process. We believe that academic, career, and personal/social objectives are attainable by all students when a comprehensive curriculum.

Ambassador Christian School Counseling Department believes:

- Each student has dignity and worth.
- Each student is an individual and learns at their own pace.
- As a result, each student can achieve academic, career, and social/emotional success.

- Each student deserves to be a member of a school community that is culturally compassionate and that celebrates their unique qualities.
- Each student should be accounted for and feel valued.
- Each student can learn to become self-advocates and resilient in facing life's challenges.
- Students thrive when their individuality is recognized and encouraged in the school setting.
- Each student has access to the school counselor who advocates for their academic, career, and social/emotional needs.
- Each student has the right to participate in a school counseling program that is accountable and implemented with fidelity and consistency.
- The school counselor will use data to design, implement, evaluate, and continuously improve the comprehensive school counseling program.
- The school counselor will abide by American School Counselor Association's Ethical Standards for School Counselors to make informed decisions based on the highest moral principles.

Program Goals

The school counseling program will align the National counseling standards and the State learning standards to the three domains of school counseling: academic, personal/social, and career. Program goals are focused on these three domains:

Academic: Includes acquiring skills, attitudes, and knowledge that contribute to effective learning in school, employing strategies to achieve success in school, and understanding the relationship of academics to the world of work and to life at home and in the community. Academic goals support the premise that all students should meet or exceed the local and state requirements.

Social/Emotional: Includes providing the foundation for personal and social growth through experience, expressions, and management of emotions as students progress through school and into adulthood. It involves both intra-and interpersonal skill development. This contributes to academic and career success by helping students understand and respect themselves and others, acquire effective interpersonal skills, and become contributing members of society.

Career: Includes providing the foundation for acquiring, attitudes and knowledge that enable students to make a successful transition from school to work. The comprehensive plan ensures that students develop an understanding of skills, abilities, strengths, and interests, as well as career awareness and exploration.

GRADUATION AND UC & CSU A-G ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

AMBASSADOR CHRISTIAN SCHOOL GRADUATION AND UC & CSU A-G ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

<i>UC & CSU a-g ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS SUBJECT</i>	ACS GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS	UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA/CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
a. History and Social Studies	3 YEARS: 1 Year World History 1 year U.S. History 1 semester U.S. Government 1-semester Economics	2 YEARS 1 year U.S. History or 1 semester U.S. Government and 1 year World History
b. English	4 YEARS	4 YEARS
c. Mathematics	3 YEARS Algebra 1 + Geometry + Algebra 2	3 YEARS: (4 recommended) Algebra 1 + Geometry + Algebra 2
d. Laboratory Science	2 YEARS 1 year of biology and 1 year of Chemistry or Physical Science	2 YEARS (3 recommended) UC: 2 Courses from: Biology, Chemistry, Physics CSU: 1 Biological Science, 1 Physical Science. (One course from the “d” subject area, and the 2 nd course may be from the “d” or “g” area)
e. Language Other Than English (LOTE)	2 YEARS of the same foreign language	2 YEARS (3 Recommended) of the same foreign language
f. Visual and Performing Arts	1 YEAR	1 YEAR course in the same subject
g. Electives or Additional Requirements	35 Elective Credits 1 year PE/Health 4 years of religious studies	1 YEAR of college Prep Electives from the ACS UC/CSU a-g approved list

Colleges recognize a C or higher as a passing grade. UC DO NOT recognize grade improvement on a C or higher grade. A grade of D will earn credits toward high school graduation but WILL NOT meet the requirements for college admission. The UC’s and CSU’s “weight” only specific underlined courses on Ambassador’s school’s UC Accredited Course List. Visit <https://doorways.ucop.edu/list/site> where “weighted” classes are starred. For more detailed information on admission to UC: www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions. For more detailed information on admission to CSU: www.csumentor.edu/planning/high_school

For further information, please visit the following online resources:

- A-G Course Lists (search by high school) – <https://doorways.ucop.edu/list/>
- California Colleges – <http://www.californiacolleges.edu/>
- University of California A-G Guide – <http://www.ucop.edu/a-gGuide/>

Colorado Christian University and Ambassador

Colorado Christian University and Ambassador

Colorado Christian University, a Christian university partners with AHS and will issue the credit for their courses. The Dual Credit class is recorded on both the AHS transcript and the college/university transcript, with a letter grade assigned. Therefore, a student can receive college credit while attending high school. Biola University also offers Spanish courses at Ambassador and provides Dual Credit.

The Early College courses offered at Ambassador High School will transfer to California State Universities (CSU), University of California campuses (UC), and most private universities. Parents are welcome to visit www.assist.org to check transfer credit for specific universities not listed above. In addition, ACS can provide additional information on the transfer policies of particular schools where AHS alumni attend.

Policies can change year to year, so students are encouraged to consult with the institution of their choice regarding the transferability of credits earned.

Please remember that campuses and majors may have additional requirements that students must fulfill, especially if you are applying as a transfer student; it is important to research your major on the campus website.

<https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/admission-requirements/freshman-requirements/>
<https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/admission-requirements/transfer-requirements/preparing-to-transfer/>

During the school year, students have Dual college credits from CCU available to them. These courses include:

AA Course List					
Ambassador High School			Course Equivalencies		
High School Course	CCU Course Code	CCU Credits	CCU Course Equivalency	HS Grade	Instructor
BIBLE & HUMANITIES					
Old Testament Survey	BIB 111	3	Old Testament	9 th	Academy
New Testament Survey	BIB 114	3	New Testament	10 th	Academy
C.S. Lewis in Film & Liter	HUM 229A	3	C.S. Lewis in Film & Liter	10 th -12 th	Academy
BIOLOGY					

AP Biology	BIO 101/111	4	Biological Life/Lab	11 th	
COMMUNICATION					
Speech	COM 103	3	Public Speaking	10 th	Academy
ECONOMICS					
AP Microeconomics	ECO-222	3	Principles of Economics: Micro	12 th	Academy
ENGLISH					
AP English Language	ENG 102	3	English Composition	11 th	Silva
AP English Literature	ENG 201	3	Introduction to Literature	12 th	Silva
HISTORY					
AP World History	HIS 185	3	Western Civilization	10 th	Barker
AP U.S. History	HIS 205	3	American History	11 th	Barker
MATH					
Pre-Calculus	MAT 115	3	Pre-Calculus	11 th	Giampaoli
AP Calculus AB	MAT 141	3	Calculus 1	12 th	Giampaoli
AP Seminar	MAT 250	3	Introduction to Research/Stats	12 th	
PHILOSOPHY					
Philosophy	PHL 202	3	Philosophical Inquiry	11 th	Silva
World Views	PHL 205	3	World Views	11 th	Silva
PHYSICAL SCIENCE					
AP Physics	PHY 201/212	5	General Physics/Lab	11 th -12 th	Giampaoli
POLITICAL SCIENCE					
AP Government and Pol.	POL 207	3	Introduction to American Polit	12 th	Barker
PSYCHOLOGY					
Psychology 1	PSY 101	3	General Psychology	10 th	Academy
SPANISH					

Spanish 100	SPA 100	3	Elementary Spanish 1	9 th	Biola U
Spanish 102	SP 102	3	Elementary Span 1B	9 th	Biola U
Spanish 205	SP 205	5	Elementary Spanish 2	9 th	Biola U
COMPUTER SCIENCE					
AP Computer Science	CIS 130	3	Foundations of Programing	10 th	Giampaoli
	Total Units				

Early College Program with AA from Colorado Christian University-IGETC- 60 college units

*Some universities don't accept Dual Credit so please check your university transfer policy.

9th Grade -9 units

Biola Spanish 100-3 units

Biola Spanish 102-3 units

CCU Oral Communications-3 units

10th Grade-12 units

Biola Spanish 205- 3 units

CCU Psychology 1- 3 units

CCU History 185-3 units

AP Computer Science -3 units (must score a 3 on exam)

11th Grade 24 units

CCU Biology AP-3 units

CCU Intro to Philosophy--3 units

CCU Philosophy Worldviews-3 units

CCU AP English Language-3 units

CCU US History 205/206-6 Units

CCU Pre-Calculus – 3 units

CCU C.S. Lewis - 3 units \

12th Grade-18 units

CCU AP Calculus -3 units

CCU AP English Literature-3 units

CCU AP Calculus AB- DC 3 units

AP Government- DC 3 units (must score a 3 on exam)

Old and New Testament from CCU 6 units (must take online)

60 units is needed for the degree

Total is 60 units for the AA degree.

General Education Core (36 credit hours)

Arts and Humanities (9 credit hours)

Take 3 classes from the following list of CCU courses or satisfy the requirement with equivalent college-level transfer credit in the Arts and Humanities field. Courses must come from at least two unique discipline prefixes.

CCU Course Name	ACS Equivalent Course Name	Program*	Credits	Term Taken	Grade	GE Credits Earned
APL 100A - Introduction to Apologetics		ODE	3			
ART 112A - Art Appreciation (with prior permission)		ODE	3			
ENG 201 - Introduction to Literature	AP English Literature & Composition	DC	3			
HUM 229A - C.S. Lewis in Film & Literature		ODE	3			
PHL 202 - Introduction to Philosophy	CCU Philosophical Inquiry	DC	3			
PHL 205A - World Views	CCU Worldviews	DC	3			

Biblical Studies (6 credit hours)

Take 2 classes from the following list of CCU courses.

CCU Course Name	ACS Equivalent Course Name	Program*	Credits	Term Taken	Grade	GE Credits Earned
BIB 102A - New Testament Introduction		ODE	3			
BIB 111 - Old Testament		ODE	3			
THE 200A - Introduction to Systematic Theology		ODE	3			

Communications (6 credit hours)

Take 2 classes from the following list of CCU courses or satisfy the requirement with equivalent college-level transfer credit in the Communication field. One course must be an English composition class.

Written Communication (3 credit hours)						
CCU Course Name	ACS Equivalent Course Name	Program*	Credits	Term Taken	Grade	GE Credits Earned
ENG 102 - English Composition	AP English Language & Composition	DC	3			
Oral Communication (3 credit hours)						
CCU Course Name	ACS Equivalent Course Name	Program*	Credits	Term Taken	Grade	GE Credits Earned
COM 110A - Oral Communication		ODE	3			
Mathematics (3 credit hours)						
Take 1 class from the following list of CCU courses or satisfy the requirement with equivalent college-level transfer credit in the mathematics field.						
CCU Course Name	ACS Equivalent Course Name	Program*	Credits	Term Taken	Grade	GE Credits Earned
MAT 115 - Pre-Calculus	Pre-Calculus	DC	3			
MAT 141 - Calculus I	AP Calculus AB	DC	4			
MAT 241 - Calculus II	AP Calculus BC	DC	4			
Science (3 credit hours)						
Take a minimum of 3 credit hours from the following list of CCU courses or satisfy the requirement with equivalent college-level transfer credit in the Science field. Credit hours earned from a lab course must be accompanied by the corresponding science lecture course.						
CCU Course Name	ACS Equivalent Course Name	Program*	Credits	Term Taken	Grade	GE Credits Earned
BIO 101 - Biological Life AND	AP Biology	DC	3			
BIO 111 - Biological Life Lab		DC	1			
BIO 203A - Foundations in Human Anatomy and Physiology I AND		ODE	3			
BIO 213A - Foundations in Human Anatomy and Physiology I Lab		ODE	1			
BIO 204A - Foundations in Human Anatomy and Physiology II AND		ODE	3			
BIO 214A - Foundations in Human Anatomy and Physiology II Lab		ODE	1			
PHY 210 - General Physics I AND	AP Physics 1	DC	4			

PHY 212 - General Physics I Lab		DC	1			
PHY 310 - General Physics II AND	AP Physics 2	DC	4			
PHY 312 - General Physics II Lab		DC	1			

Social Science (9 credit hours)

Take 3 classes from the following list of CCU courses or satisfy the requirement with equivalent college-level transfer credit in the Social Science field. Courses must come from at least two unique discipline prefixes. At least one course. In addition, it must be history (HIS).

CCU Course Name	ACS Equivalent Course Name	Program*	Credits	Term Taken	Grade	GE Credits Earned
ECO 220A - Introduction to Economics (with prior permission)		ODE	3			
HIS 185 - Western Civilization	AP World History	DC	3			
HIS 205 - Early American History	AP US History - 1st Semester	DC	3			
HIS 206 - Making of Modern America	AP US History - 2nd Semester	DC	3			
HIS 211A - History of Christianity		ODE	3			
POL 202A - American Political Process (with prior permission)		ODE	3			
PSY 102A - General Psychology		ODE	3			
					Total GE Core Credits Earned:	

Elective Requirements (24 credit hours)

Take 24 semester hours of CCU or college-level transfer credit, not used to satisfy general education requirements. This includes the Biola Spanish courses, APs, and other Community College coursework.

Course Code & Course Name	School		Credits	Term Taken	Grade	Elec. Credits Earned
						7

Transcripts

Transcripts

Your transcript and diploma are the key to opening the doors to opportunities. Getting into college, earning a scholarship, gaining employment – even just receiving a discount on your car insurance. Transcripts are the closest thing a student has to a permanent record. They detail your academic history, including your grades, the courses you have completed, and whether or not you graduated. They're key to transferring credits from one university to another and are the best way to verify your prior academic performance. Yet many students struggle to get their transcripts and don't know how to ensure that their previous work follows them from one institution to another.

How to Get a Copy of Your Transcript

Unofficial Transcript

You can view an unofficial copy of your transcript by logging into your student account and printing out your history. This transcript is free. It can be helpful as you begin the application process, particularly if the school to which you apply wants a list of recent courses or needs to know your GPA before it receives your transcript. Your unofficial transcript may also help you assess whether you meet certain prerequisites for the classes you hope to take or the program in which you want to enroll.

Most universities won't accept unofficial transcript. There are numerous reasons for this, including that an unofficial transcript may be incomplete. It's also possible to forge an unofficial transcript. So, at some point during the application and admission process, you'll need to supply an official document. Each school's rules for this vary slightly. Some only require an official transcript upon admission, while others want the transcript to be sent when you apply.

Official Transcript

Current Students: official transcripts may be ordered online through Parchment. An additional fee may be charged depending on the method of delivery. Click on the button below to begin the ordering process.

Ambassador Transcript

You can order final transcripts to be sent anytime online through Parchment for our school. The best part is that most colleges and universities get the electronic copy the same day. Here is link on our website under the STUDENT tab. If you have any questions let me know.

Click the ORDER RECORDS logo to order.

https://www.ambassadorcs.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=384532&type=d&pREC_ID=1131310

Current students should consult with their counselors regarding whether an official transcript is required during the college application process. Many initial and mid-year transcripts can be sent by your counselor electronically. However, all college-bound seniors must request a final, official transcript to be sent to the college of their choice.

Order a CCU Transcript or Diploma

A CCU transcript is a comprehensive record of a student's academic progress at Colorado Christian University and the University's certified statement of the student's academic record, including coursework, grades, and degrees earned. A replacement diploma may also be ordered for students who have lost their original diploma or for students who want an additional copy. All official transcript and diploma orders are submitted through CCU's easy, online ordering system. Fax and e-mail orders are not accepted.

ORDER TRANSCRIPT OR DIPLOMA

Students can choose the following shipping methods for transcript orders:

[Electronic PDF transcripts](#) delivered the moment we receive and process your order

(recommended) Paper transcripts delivered via [U.S. Postal Service](#)

Other shipping options for overnight and international delivery are available for an additional shipping fee View transcript cost on our [transcript pricing](#) page.

Unofficial Transcripts

Currently enrolled students can access their unofficial transcript in their Student Planning account in [Self-Service](#). Unofficial transcripts are not available for former students or alumni. Former students who no longer have access to Self-Service will need to place an order for an official transcript.

Letters of Completion and Diplomas

Students may order a letter of completion if all degree requirements are completed but the student has not yet graduated. Letters of completion will not be delivered for students who have a conferred degree or who have a financial obligation owed to the University.

Replacement diplomas and diploma covers may be purchased by students who have graduated from the University.

Please see our [transcript pricing](#) page for more information.

Official LACCD Transcripts

In 2017, LACCD transitioned from nine college specific transcripts to a single district transcript for all nine colleges. If you attended one or more LACCD Colleges since 1974 and beyond, all courses will appear on one transcript. Please place the transcript order at the last LACCD College you attended. If you completed courses at other LACCD colleges. The LACCD transcript will reflect both credit and noncredit courses completed at any of the nine LACCD Colleges.

The LACCD consists of the following nine California Community Colleges:

- Los Angeles City College (LACC)
- East Los Angeles College (ELAC)
- Los Angeles Harbor College (LAHC)
- Los Angeles Mission College (LAMC)
- Los Angeles Pierce College (LAPC)

- Los Angeles Southwest College (LASC)
- Los Angeles Trade Technical College (LATTC)
- Los Angeles Valley College (LAVC)
- West Los Angeles College (WLAC)

Student academic records are classified as confidential and may be released only with the student's written authorization and signature, in accordance with the Public Information Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

Request a transcript online (Preferred Method)

Official transcripts can be requested through [Parchment Credentials](#). Transcripts requested through [Parchment Credentials](#) can be sent via paper mail or electronically through Parchment or eTranscript California. **To ensure accuracy of records, please include the student's LACCD student ID number or at least the last four digits of their social security number.**

To request a transcript online, you must pay the transcript fee using a credit or debit card. As of December 1, 2020, LACCD will use Parchment transcript ordering service. The Parchment transcript ordering service charges a \$2.75 convenience fee to process an online order. Transcript processing time is 10 business days.

If students have attachments needed to be included with their transcripts, they can be attached to their request through Parchment Credentials.

To order transcript through Parchment website:

1. Visit the Parchment website. (Requestors will need a Parchment account to order records.)
 - If you are ordering your own record, select "Ordering your own credentials or academic records".
 - If you are a third party ordering on behalf of the student, select "Ordering on behalf of someone else".
2. Read the information and carefully follow the instructions for ordering transcripts.

To order transcript through student portal:

1. Log on to the student portal.
2. Click on "Academic Records".
3. Click on "Official Transcript Requests".

4. You will be redirected to the Parchment transcript ordering website.
 - Please refer to the instructions above on how to order through the Parchment website.

Transcript fees (for in person/mailed in requests)

Each student is entitled to two regular processing official transcripts (or Enrollment Verifications) for free. After the first two copies, fees apply.

- Regular processing (7-10 Business Days): \$3 per copy
- Rush processing (within 1 Business Day excluding holidays): \$10 per copy
 - When requesting a Rush processing transcript in person, transcript can be produced at the time of request.

****Please note that Parchment Credentials will NOT account for the two free copies.****

Requesting transcripts by mail

When mailing in a request for official transcripts, students will need to include the following information:

- Full First Name- Last Name
- Other Last Name (if attended under another name)
- Student ID number or Social Security number
- Date of Birth
- Current Address
- Phone Number
- Indicate IGETC - CSU Certification, if applicable
- Where the transcript is being mailed to (Student is responsible for providing the correct address.)
- Number of transcripts being requested
- Signature and date (Request will be returned if signature is missing.)

Send appropriate payment (if not requesting first two free official transcripts), sign the request, and mail it to:

Los Angeles Harbor College
Admissions and Records-Transcript Request
1111 Figueroa Place
Wilmington, CA 90744

We are accepting payment in the form of cash, money order, or check (made out to Los Angeles Harbor College).

Unofficial transcripts

Unofficial transcripts can be viewed and printed for free online through the Student Information System (SIS Portal Login).

Submitting Official Transcripts

Official College Transcripts

Official high school or college transcripts must be sent from institution to institution to be considered official. Electronic transcripts are preferred. You may choose to have your official high school or college transcript mailed directly to the campus address. We cannot accept college transcripts from students.

***Evaluated foreign transcripts must be submitted via original sealed envelope from the evaluation agency if mailed to our Admissions Office. ***

Official transcripts can be submitted to our office via the following methods:

- Via Post mail to the address:

Los Angeles Harbor College
Attn: Admissions & Records Office
1111 Figueroa Place
Wilmington, CA 90744

- Sent through an electronic service to our LAHC transcript email at transcripts@lahc.edu
 - We accept electronic transcripts from the following services:
 - Credential Solutions
 - eTranscript California
 - National Student Clearinghouse
 - Parchment Credentials

Incoming Transcripts/Records:

Incoming transcripts sent from other schools to LACCD campuses should be sent to:

- Los Angeles City College (LACC): admissions@lacity.edu
- East Los Angeles College (ELAC): admissions2@elac.edu
- Los Angeles Harbor College (LAHC): transcripts@lahc.edu
- Los Angeles Mission College (LAMC): admissions@lamission.edu
- Los Angeles Pierce College (LAPC): transcripts@piercecollege.edu
- Los Angeles Southwest College (LASC): lasc-transcripts@lasc.edu
- Los Angeles Trade Technical College (LATTTC): applications@latttc.edu
- Los Angeles Valley College (LAVC): incomingtranscripts@lavc.edu
- West Los Angeles College (WLAC): wlac-transcripts@laccd.edu

Foreign Records:

Please check with your home-campus before selecting to complete the evaluation process.

Have you completed courses in a foreign country that you'd like to have evaluated for transfer credit? If so, your transcript needs to be reviewed by one of these approved agencies:

- [Agencies Approved by the Commission for Foreign Transcript Evaluation](#)

If you are required to submit evidence of high school completion (diploma or GED) for financial aid purposes, you will need to provide a translated notarized copy of your high school document.

- [List of Approved Agencies](#)

College Preparation Timeline

College Preparation Timeline

Freshmen Year

FALL:

- Meet your counselor—Ms. Hicks
- Get involved in extracurricular activities
- Study hard and get good grades
- Reach out to teachers or your counselor at any time for help
- Learn about college admissions from A to G by checking out our college prep glossary.
- Get a jump on college prep by choosing a challenging class schedule with honors and AP classes.
- Show colleges you're a well-rounded student by getting involved in extracurricular activities.

WINTER:

- New semester = new grades and classes
- Explore your interests and ask questions
- Start thinking about the classes you want to take sophomore year
- Explore colleges: What kinds of schools should you be looking for?
- Find volunteer activities that are good for you and good for the world.
- Think about taking SATs while the curriculum is still fresh in your mind.

SPRING:

- Get involved in school and outside of school
- Continue to build your qualifications- Keep track of your extracurricular awards, community service achievements, and anything else you participate in
- Study hard and continue to keep your grades up
- You will meet with Ms. Hicks to discuss your plans for the summer and the upcoming school year

SUMMER:

- Create your resume and fill it with activities and accomplishments from your freshmen year
- Think and start planning your Volunteer or Community Service
- Have Fun

Sophomore Year

Fall (September-November)

- Evaluate your course load and determine how much you know about college planning.
- Register for and take the PSAT (pre-SAT) or PLAN (pre-ACT) tests.
- Increase your commitment to extracurricular activities so that you will stand out on your college applications.
- Create a college calendar to keep track of important dates and deadlines.
- Get familiar with college planning and the admissions process, so you'll know what to expect before college.

Winter (December-February)

- Develop your standardized testing plan and take the tests you're ready for.
- Discover unique tips on how to organize your college prep activities.
- Start your essay prep by often writing now, so you can reap the benefits later.
- Capitalize on college planning resources and learn more about colleges and universities.
- Spring (March-May)
- Consult your counselor to make sure you're prepped for junior year classes.
- Expand your knowledge about prospective schools by attending college fairs and information sessions.
- Plan a solid summer filled with volunteering, internships, and of course, fun.
- Ask your counselor or teachers about AP testing to see if you're ready to take AP classes or sign up for the AP exam.

Summer (June-August)

- Talk with your family about creating a college budget.
- Secure a summer job and build credentials while having fun!
- Enroll in ACT or SAT prep over the summer while you still have free time.
- Visit college campuses to see which types of school's appeal to you.

Junior Year

June to August

- College visits

September

- Check graduation requirements and meet with high school guidance counselor
- Review with counselor post-high school plans and college preparation
- Take the PSAT Prep and test
- Create a calendar for SAT/ ACT/ AP test dates
- Stay involved in extracurricular activities

October

- Resource check: Visit the counseling office and meet the counselors there. Is there a college night for students and families? When will college representatives visit your school? (Put the dates in your calendar.) Examine catalogs and guides.
- Develop a preliminary list of colleges to apply
- Register for AP exams
- Start with you: Make lists of your abilities, social/cultural preferences, and personal qualities. List things you may want to study and do in college

November

- Research colleges
- Attend college fairs
- Request information from colleges of interest
- At school, speak to your counselor about taking the PSAT/NMSQT®, which is given in October. If you plan to ask for testing accommodations (because of a disability), be sure the College Board has approved your eligibility.

December

- Research financial aid and scholarships
- Make a file to manage your college search, testing, and application data. Then, if appropriate (for example, if you're interested in drama, music, art, sports, etc.), start to gather material for a portfolio.
- Estimate your financial aid need. Financial aid can help you afford college. Use the College Board's Getting Financial Aid and the financial aid calculator at bigfuture.org to estimate how much aid you might receive.

January

- Register for the spring SAT/ACT
- Begin a search for financial aid sources. National sources include the College Board's Scholarship Search and electronic sources. Don't overlook local and state aid sources. (Ask a counselor for help or check your public library.)
- Start looking for summer Programs

February

- Meet with a counselor to plan senior classes

- Sign up for summer programs
- With your family, make an appointment with your counselor to discuss ways to improve your college preparation and selection processes.

March

- Prep for SAT/ACT
- Sign up for summer programs
- Contact your counselor before leaving school for the summer if you are considering military academies or ROTC scholarships. For example, if you want a four-year ROTC scholarship, you should begin the application process the summer before your senior year.

April/May

- Take SAT/ACT
- Take AP tests
- Prepare for a summer job or internship
- Develop a list of 15 or 20 colleges of interest to you. You can find many colleges where you'll be happy and get a great education. The college search is about exploring who you are and what you want and then finding colleges that will meet your goals.
- Chart college application deadlines on your calendar
- Brainstorm college application essay topics
- Start to gather documents for financial aid: Be sure to keep a copy of your tax returns handy. You'll use these to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which opens on Oct. 1.
- Visit colleges. When planning your campus visits, make sure to allow time to explore each college. While you're there, talk to as many people as possible. These can include college admission staff, professors, and students. Take campus tours and, at colleges you're serious about, make appointments to have interviews with admission counselors.

Senior Timeline

Seniors will meet with the counselor individually at least once in the fall semester. The counselor will schedule seniors for these meetings throughout the fall and spring. Students are welcome to drop in to see their counselor before school, after school, during lunch or office hours, or by emailing the counselor.

SUMMER/ AUGUST

- Visit colleges. When planning your campus visits, make sure to allow time to explore each college. While you're there, talk to as many people as possible. These can include college admission staff, professors, and students. Take campus tours and, at colleges you're serious about, make appointments to have interviews with admission counselors.
- Begin narrowing your list of colleges (At least 10 schools)
- Register to take the SAT and ACT
- Create ONE Common App account for all colleges that use the Common App
- Create outlines for colleges essays
- UC applications are open for the fall
- Begin to create a master calendar with important college application deadlines
- Check and apply for scholarships

SEPTEMBER

- Meet with College Admissions
- Retake the SAT or ACT, if necessary
- Begin meeting with your counselor
- Begin personally asking teacher(s) for letter(s) of recommendation
- Check and apply for scholarships

OCTOBER

- Finalize your college list
- Prepare to submit for Early Decision or Early Action, if needed
- Ask a teacher/counselor to review essay drafts
- FAFSA opens on October 1
- If you have not had your test scores sent to the college to which you are applying, be sure to do this!
- CSU Application opens for the fall
- Check and apply for scholarships

NOVEMBER

- November 1- 15: For early admission (ED or EA), college may require test scores and applications between these dates. (Please check the college website)
- Complete the UC and CSU applications – they are due NOVEMBER 30
- Check and apply for scholarships

DECEMBER/ JANUARY

- Continue to complete applications
- If you are applying to a WUE college, most deadlines are in December to receive the scholarships
- Remember to check college portals and emails
- Make sure all test scores are sent
- Verify that all applications are complete
- It is recommended to have FAFSA, and CSS Profile completed
- Continue to keep senior grades up! Colleges want your first semester grades
- Some college housing applications begin to open (if you were accepted early)
- Check and apply for scholarships

FEBRUARY

- No Senioritis!!!! Accepting colleges do look at second-semester senior grades
- If you submitted your CSS profile, check your acknowledgment, and send any corrections, if necessary, directly to the colleges that require it
- Apply for scholarships!

MARCH

- Keep active in school. If you are waitlisted, the college will want to know what you have accomplished between the time you applied and learned of its decision
- Be sure to consistently check your email and college portals, as this is how colleges will be in contact with you

APRIL

- Check all college portals for decision notifications
- You should receive acceptance letters and emails by April 1. If you have not yet done so, visit your final college before accepting by May 1
- Contact the colleges if you have any questions about the financial aid packages, they have offered you. Make sure you understand all the terms and conditions
- Make a final decision, accept the aid package, and submit a deposit to the college you select by May 1

MAY

- May 1: College Decision Day! You must inform every college of your acceptance or rejection of their offer of admission or financial aid
- Send your deposit to ONE COLLEGE ONLY
- Waitlisted by a college? If you plan to enroll if accepted, tell the admissions counselor your intent and ask how to strengthen your application
- Hand writes a Thank you note to everyone who wrote you a letter of recommendation or otherwise helped with your college/scholarship application

WHERE TO BEGIN

INTRODUCTION TO THE WORLD OF COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

The process of applying to colleges has changed dramatically since the days most parents were in school. With heightened media attention on rising tuition costs and increased competition at the most selective schools, it is hard to know what to think or where to start. It is not unusual to feel helpless or lost as you begin thinking about college. This process can stir tremendous anxiety and the realization that both students and parents may have very specific and very ambitious hopes that carry slim odds.

It is certainly daunting that there are over 3,000 institutions of higher learning in this country from which you will choose a handful for application and from which you will ultimately choose one for matriculation. Here at Ambassador Christian School, you have a team of nine experienced deans and two knowledgeable coordinators who will help guide you through the process. Read through this handbook and bookmark the link. You will refer to it often, because it provides both a general overview of the process and a number of important details and deadlines. Familiarity with this handbook will, we hope, bring you less stress, more control, and more success.

How do you get in the right frame of mind to enter into this process? As you take the first tentative steps, there are several things to keep in mind to help you stay on track.

For Students

You are the one in the driver's seat. Though you will get input from parents, deans, friends, relatives and admission officers, remember that the person going to the college in the end is you. You are not going through all this to please other people, so make decisions that feel good and make sense to you.

Keep an open mind and be an informed consumer. Don't dismiss a college just because you've never heard of it. Do not jump to conclusions based on any single source of information. Do not be unduly influenced by a person who loves or hates a school, comments and reviews in online forums, or a particularly enthusiastic or charming tour guide.

Do your research. Use all the resources available to gather information and impressions then process the information wisely before making definitive choices.

Do not let the college process affect your self-esteem. The admission process is not an assessment of your self-worth. Admission officers admit and deny applications, not applicants.

Focus on your needs. Remember that this is an individualized process. This is not a competition between you and your friends. What may be appropriate for your friends may not be right for you and vice-versa. Keep a focus on what this process is all about: finding the right match for you.

Visit colleges and pay attention to your gut instincts and feelings. There is no formula for finding the right school. Often it comes down to the right feeling or chemistry. If you are not able to go on an extensive visiting trip, there are several colleges in the L.A. area that can give you a sense of a small liberal arts college, a large public school, a large private school, etc.

Initiate conversations about the process with your parents. The more you share with them on your own terms (when you want and where you want), the more they will feel included in the process and the less they will nag you about the process (when and where you do not want).

Do not get sucked into the rumor mill. It is most often inaccurate. When in doubt, check with us! You are not alone in this process. Keep in touch with your dean. We are here to help guide you.

For Parents

Be realistic about this process. Forcing your child to look at schools that aren't appropriate or that he/she isn't likely to get into will only make your child feel like a disappointment.

Look for the "right fit" – chemistry between your child and a college is critical. Your best friend in this process is thorough research into a variety of schools. Please consider schools about which you may know little at this point with an open mind. Please remember that schools have changed drastically since you were in college.

Let your child take ownership of this process. Find a comfortable place between running the college search process yourself and remaining at an uninformed distance. Keep in mind that colleges generally do not want to hear from parents; they want to hear directly from students. After all, your child will be on his/her own in less than two years.

Check many sources. Go well beyond U.S. News and World Report and other media sources. They offer only a glimpse, so be sure to check the accuracy of your information!

Set limits from the beginning that are important to you (i.e. cost, distance from home, etc.) It isn't fair to spring these limitations on your child after they have their heart set on attending a particular institution.

Help your child to think about wants and needs, personality and identity. What does your child value? How has your child changed during the high school years? What aspects of their high school experience would they like to replicate and in what ways will they seek change?

Communicate. This is a family decision on several levels, and it is okay to agree to disagree in some cases. Please try not to get sucked into the rumor mill. A lot of inaccurate information circulates among well-meaning fellow parents. When in doubt, check with us!

HOW TO START THINKING ABOUT THE PROCESS: KNOW THYSELF

Self-assessment is the critical first step in learning about whether a particular school is going to be right for you. All too often, people start the search process focused on the importance of gaining acceptance to a specific school rather than on the important questions that need to be asked. Until you've spent time thinking about your own needs (academically, socially, and

emotionally), you are not really ready to answer the question of whether a particular school is the right match for you. Once you have answered these questions, you will be better equipped to find the schools that reflect your values, needs, and interests.

Ask yourself why you want to go to college. Are you sure you want to go? Most of you want to go, intend to go directly after high school, and, if really pressed, can even think of some good reasons to go. But before plunging into a year of deadlines, writing essays, and application decisions, you should ask yourself some questions. Your attitude, energy, thoughtfulness and efficiency during this process will make a big difference and knowing what you want and why you want it will give you the enthusiasm and direction to make the whole business of applying to college an adventure rather than an ordeal. It should be an exciting process of self-discovery.

Think about the questions we are discussing in our Junior Class Meetings. What makes colleges different from one another? How do those differences (things like location, size, and academic offerings) affect the college experience? And how might some of those differences make one school a better fit for you than another? An honest and thoughtful self-evaluation can reveal what qualities you should look for in colleges and prepare you for statements you will be asked to make about yourself in essays and interviews during the admissions process. If you are willing to look seriously at yourself, you can find the colleges that are right for you and present yourself effectively to them.

What are colleges looking for?

What are colleges looking for?

Applying to college can be overwhelming, especially if you're trying to get into schools where competition is stiff. There are several common factors that most colleges consider when looking at potential applicants; however, the key to acceptance isn't just doing well. Instead, you want to show admissions officers what makes you stand out from the crowd.

High School GPA and Class Rank

Your GPA in high school shows colleges how successful you were in academics and whether you buckled down and worked hard. Colleges look not only at your overall GPA but also at how well you did in individual classes. If your school has a class rank, that shows how much competition you faced with grades and performance to reach a particular level.

AP and Honors Classes

Being able to show prospective colleges that you challenged yourself academically is important. Admissions officers will look at AP, honors, International Baccalaureate (IB), and other college prep classes you take in high school to see how well you handled the course load. This is a good indicator of how you'll do in college.

Challenging Extracurricular Activities

Colleges also want to see students who stretch themselves beyond the limits of the classroom. The kinds of activities you choose say a lot about your personality and even your morals. Whether or not you stick with your selected undertakings exhibits your ability to commit to important projects in the long term.

Volunteer and Work Experience

Any experience that shows genuine commitment, leadership qualities, and an interest in the community benefits your application. Include the organizations or companies you worked for and what your responsibilities were at each one. If you received any promotions or special recognitions, be sure to mention those as well.

Test Scores

Not all schools rely heavily on SAT and ACT scores as they used to, but it doesn't hurt to take both tests and do as well as you can. Some schools don't look at these tests at all, while others may look at scores from additional tests, including SAT Subject Tests and AP tests. Check with your chosen schools to determine which ones are required for admission.

Quality Recommendation Letters

Be sure to get recommendation letters from people who know you well, have interacted with you in the classroom, or are otherwise able to show why you're a good candidate for the schools you're applying to. A good recommendation letter supports a solid application by affirming all your best qualities as a student.

A Well-Written Essay

Admissions officers want to see essays that go for a personal connection. Rather than using the essay to discuss your accomplishments, focus on showing who you truly are and what makes you

interesting. Stick with the given prompt as you write and remember to include why you want to attend a particular school.

Talents and Passions

More colleges are moving away from accepting students who did the most "stuff" to looking for those who focus their energy on specific areas they're passionate about. Schools want to see what makes you unique and how hard you're willing to work at the things you care about.

Top Ten Strengths and Experiences Colleges look for in a High School Student

1. A high school curriculum that challenges the student. Academically successful students should include several Honors and AP classes.
2. Grades that represent strong effort and upward trend. Grades should show an upward trend over the years. However, slightly lower grades in rigorous programs are preferred to all A's in less challenging coursework.
3. Solid scores on a standardized test (SAT, ACT). These should be consistent with high school performance.
4. Passionate involvement in a few activities, demonstrating leadership and initiative. Depth, not breadth or experience, is most significant.
5. Community service shows evidence of being a "contributor." Activities should demonstrate concern for other people and a global view.
6. Work or out-of-school experiences (including summer activities) that illustrate responsibility, dedication, and development of areas of interest. Work or other meaningful use of free time can demonstrate maturity.
7. A well-written essay that provides insight into the student's unique personality, values, and goals. The application essay should be thoughtful and highly personal. It should demonstrate careful and well-constructed writing.
8. Letters of recommendation from teachers and school counselors that give evidence of integrity, special skills, and positive character traits. Students should request recommendations from teachers who respect their work in an academic discipline.
9. Supplementary recommendations from adults who have had significant direct contact with the student. Letters from coaches and supervisors in long-term work or volunteer activities are valuable; however, recommendations from casual acquaintances or family friends are rarely given much weight, even if they are well known.
10. Anything special makes the student stand out from the rest of the applicants. Include honors, awards, evidence of unusual talent or experience, or anything else that makes the student unique. Overall, colleges are seeking students who will be active contributing members of the student body

Character Counts: What Are Colleges Looking For?

Your character and the personal qualities you can bring to a college are important too. That's why you need to think about your goals, accomplishments, and personal values and figure out how you can best express those in your applications.

The Qualities Colleges Want

"What makes a student unique, and how will you contribute to the life of our campus?" To gauge what students can bring to their campus, they look for these types of qualities:

- Leadership
- A willingness to take risks
- Initiative
- A sense of social responsibility
- A commitment to service
- Special talents or abilities

Your Application Shows Your Qualities

So how do you show colleges what's unique about you? Personal qualities are not easy to measure, but admission officers look at the items listed below for clues to an applicant's character.

Letters of recommendation: Recommendation letters can tell a lot about the kind of person you are. A teacher who knows you well can give insight into not just your academic strengths but also the qualities you display in class, such as leadership or fairness

The College Search

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.

California Public System of Higher Education

# of colleges	166	23	10 (UCSF is graduate/professional only)
Requirements	application	application A–G requirements minimum GPA: 2.5 application	application 4 essays, activities and awards A–G requirements minimum GPA: 3.0
Apply	starting in April	Oct 1 – Nov 30	Oct 1 – Nov 30

College Application Requirements

	Community College	California State University (CSU)	University of California (UC)	Private Colleges and Universities
	cccapply.org	www2.calstate.edu/apply	apply.universityofcalifornia.edu/	www.commonapp.org OR university website
High School Academics (minimum requirements)	High School Graduation	“A- G” a. History (2) years b. English (4) years c. Math (3, incl. Agl 2) years d. Science (2) years e. World Language (2) years f. Visual/ Performing Art (1) year g. Elective (1) year Minimum 2.0 GPA (10-11)	“A- G” a. History (2) years b. English (4) years c. Math (3, incl. Agl 2) years d. Science (2) years e. World Language (2) years f. Visual/ Performing Art (1) year g. Elective (1) year Minimum 3.0 GPA (10-11)	College Prep Classes History (2-3 years) English (4 years) Math (4 years) Science (3-4 years) World Language (3-4 years) Other depends on the school 9-12 th GPA considered *Classes depend on the college
Standardized Tests * requirements depend on campus/ major	Not Required	SAT or ACT SAT Subject Tests are not required and will not be considered	SAT w/ Essay or ACT w/ Writing SAT Subject Tests & AP Tests are not required but considered	SAT w/ Essay or ACT w/ Writing SAT Tests & AP Tests not required but considered
Extracurriculars	Not Required	Not Required	Important	important
Personal Statement	Not Required	Not considered	Choose 4 of the 8 Personal Insight prompts to write short essays (each 350 words max)	Choose 1 of 7 essay prompts (650 words max) Supplemental Essays
Letters of Recommendation	Not Required	Not considered	Not considered	Varies by School: 2 High School Teachers 1 School Counselor (# Required/Optional/Other)
Application Deadline	Varies	Opens: Oct 1. Submit: Oct 1 - November 30	Opens: A.ug 1 Submit: Nov 1 - November 30	Varies: Early Action/Decision: Oct - Dec Regular Decision: Dec - Feb Rolling Admissions

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

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.

Questions & guidance

Remember, the personal insight questions are just that — personal. Which means you should use our guidance for each question just as a suggestion in case you need help. The important thing is expressing who you are, what matters to you and what you want to share with UC.

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.

Things to consider: A leadership role can mean more than just a title. It can mean being a mentor to others, acting as the person in charge of a specific task, or taking the lead role in organizing an event or project. Think about what you accomplished and what you learned from the experience. What were your responsibilities?

Did you lead a team? How did your experience change your perspective on leading others? Did you help to resolve an important dispute at your school, church, in your community or an organization? And your leadership role doesn't necessarily have to be limited to school activities. For example, do you help out or take care of your family?

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.

Things to consider: What does creativity mean to you? Do you have a creative skill that is important to you? What have you been able to do with that skill? If you used creativity to solve a problem, what was your solution? What are the steps you took to solve the problem?

How does your creativity influence your decisions inside or outside the classroom? Does your creativity relate to your major or a future career?

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

Things to consider: If there's a talent or skill that you're proud of, this is the time to share it. You don't necessarily have to be recognized or have received awards for your talent (although if you did and you want to talk about it, feel free to do so). Why is this talent or skill meaningful to

you? Does the talent come naturally or have you worked hard to develop this skill or talent? Does your talent or skill allow you opportunities in or outside the classroom? If so, what are they and how do they fit into your schedule?

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

Things to consider: An educational opportunity can be anything that has added value to your educational experience and better prepared you for college. For example, participation in an honors or academic enrichment program, or enrollment in an academy that's geared toward an occupation or a major, or taking advanced courses that interest you — just to name a few. If you choose to write about educational barriers you've faced, how did you overcome or strive to overcome them? What personal characteristics or skills did you call on to overcome this challenge? How did overcoming this barrier help shape who you are today?

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?

Things to consider: A challenge could be personal, or something you have faced in your community or school. Why was the challenge significant to you? This is a good opportunity to talk about any obstacles you've faced and what you've learned from the experience. Did you have support from someone else or did you handle it alone? 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.

Things to consider: Many students have a passion for one specific academic subject area, something that they just can't get enough of. If that applies to you, what have you done to further that interest? Discuss how your interest in the subject developed and describe any experience you have had inside and outside the classroom — such as volunteer work, internships, employment, summer programs, participation in student organizations and/or clubs — and what you have gained from your involvement. Has your interest in the subject influenced you in choosing a major and/or future career? Have you been able to pursue coursework at a higher level in this subject (honors, AP, IB, college or university work)? Are you inspired to pursue this subject further at UC, and how might you do that?

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

Things to consider: Think of community as a term that can encompass a group, team or a place — like your high school, hometown or home. You can define community as you see fit, just make sure you talk about your role in that community. Was there a problem that you wanted to fix in your community? Why were you inspired to act? What did you learn from your effort? How did your actions benefit others, the wider community or both? Did you work alone or with

others to initiate change in your community?

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

Things to consider: If there's anything you want us to know about you, but didn't find a question or place in the application to tell us, now's your chance. What have you not shared with us that will highlight a skill, talent, challenge or opportunity that you think will help us know you better? From your point of view, what do you feel makes you an excellent choice for UC? Don't be afraid to brag a little.

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.

- In order to apply, go to 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
- 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. 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.

California Community College

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

El Camino College
Los Angeles City College
East Los Angeles College
Los Angeles Harbor College
Los Angeles Mission College*
Los Angeles Pierce College
Los Angeles Southwest College
Los Angeles Trade-Technical College
Los Angeles Valley College
West Los Angeles College
Santa Monica College

THE COLLEGES OF LOS ANGELES

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 firsttime 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

Community College Matcher:

The following website contains information for all of the community colleges in California:
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

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 and/or 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 nonbinding, 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.

Private Colleges and Universities 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.

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)

California State University

<https://www2.calstate.edu/apply>

Application Opens: October 1

Submit Application: October 1 - November 30

CSU Bakersfield CSU Channel Islands
Chico State CSU Dominguez Hills
Cal State East Bay *Fresno State
* Cal State Fullerton Humboldt State
*Cal State Long Beach *Cal State L.A.
Cal Maritime CSU Monterey Bay
CSU Northridge Cal Poly Pomona
Sacramento State CSU San Bernardino
*San Diego State San Francisco State
*Cal Poly San Luis Obispo *San Jose State
CSU San Marcos Sonoma State
Stanislaus State
* Indicates Impacted Campus

You will submit

- An application
- Official Test Scores (SAT/ACT)
- Application Fee: \$70 each campus

Transcript	Letter of Rec	Essay/ Personal statement	Test Scores
Final Transcript/ When contacted	Not Required	Not Required	Required/Send

EOP (Educational Opportunity Program)

This program provides admission and academic assistance to EOP-eligible undergraduate students. In many cases, the program offers financial assistance to eligible students. Campuses tailor their programs to accommodate the needs of their student population.

For more information: <http://www.calstate.edu/sas/eop/>

Campuses that guarantee admissions to local area students if they meet the eligibility index (use equation)

$$(CSU \text{ GPA} \times 800) + (SAT \text{ Math} + \text{Reading}) = 2950$$

<https://www2.calstate.edu/apply/eligibility-index>

Impacted Campuses Eligibility Scores:

Non-STEM Majors

$$(GPA \times 800) + (\text{Critical Reading and Math}) = 3200$$

STEM Majors

$$(GPA \times 800) + (\text{Critical Reading} + (2 \times \text{Math})) = 3300$$

Most Competitive/Impacted Campuses:

Cal State Long Beach
Cal State Fullerton
Cal State L.A.
San Diego State University

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo

Fresno State University

San Jose State University

Not Impacted: All California Students

CSU Bakersfield

CSU Channel Islands

CSU Dominguez Hills

Humboldt State University

CSU Maritime Academy

San Francisco State University

CSU Stanislaus

Note: Meeting the minimum scores for competitive campuses does not guarantee admissions. Admission is offered to those with the highest overall scores and are affected by choice of major. Popular majors such as Nursing, Engineering, Biology, Criminal Justice, and Psychology are more impacted.

<https://www2.calstate.edu/attend/degreecertificates-credentials/Pages/impacted-degrees.aspx>



University of California

<https://apply.universityofcalifornia.edu/>

Application Opens: August 1

Submit Application: November 1 -

November 30

- UC Berkeley
- UC Davis
- UC Irvine
- UCLA
- UC Merced
- UC Riverside
- UC San Diego
- UC Santa Barbara
- UC Santa Cruz

You will submit

- An application
- Personal Insight Questions
- Official Test Scores (SAT/ACT)
- Application Fee: \$70 each campus

Transcript	Letter of Rec	Essay/ Personal statement	Test Scores
Final Transcript/ When contacted	Not Required	Required	Required/Send

Highly Competitive:

- UCLA
- UC Berkeley
- UC San Diego

Middle Range Competitive:

- UC Santa Barbara
- UC Irvine
- UC Davis

Competitive:

- UC Santa Cruz
- UC Riverside
- UC Merced

How to Apply Online:

<http://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/how-toapply/apply-online/>

How Applications are

Reviewed/14 Factors:

<http://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/freshman/how-applications-reviewed/index.htm>



The Common Application

<https://apply.commonapp.org/>

The Common Application:

500+ College and University Members, you will submit

- **An application**
- **Official High School Transcript**
- **Letters of Recommendation (LOR's)**
- Check whether the mid-year report and transcript
- Potential Short Answers and Essays
- Test Scores
- Application Fee: Varies per school
- Letter of Recommendation Questionnaire (Counselor and Teachers)

Transcript	Letter of Rec.	Essay/Personal Statement	Test Scores
Send via Parchment to "Common App"	Required (Varies by school)	Required (Varies by school)	Self-Report & Send Official to Individual College

To set up your Common Application:

- Create a Common Application account at www.commonapp.org
- Use a personal email address for college communications (not your MD Email)
- Self-Report your:
 - Background information
 - Extra-Curricular Activities
 - Senior Year Classes
 - SAT/ACT Scores (remember to send official scores)
 - Complete the Education Section of the application.
-

Common Application Essay

Directions: Choose 1 of the seven prompts. The word limit is 650 words. (Prompts are Subject to Change)

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their

application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.

2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma-anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

Main AICCU Campuses by Region *

1. Northern California (1)

Simpson University Redding

2. SF Bay Area (19)

California College of the Arts San Francisco
 Calif. Institute of Integral Studies San Francisco
 Dominican University of California San Rafael
 Golden Gate University San Francisco
 Holy Names University Oakland
 Institute of Transpersonal Psychology Santa Clara
 Mills College Oakland
 Notre Dame de Namur University Belmont
 Pacific Union College Angwin
 Palo Alto University Palo Alto
 Saint Mary's College of California Moraga
 Samuel Merritt College Oakland
 San Francisco Art Institute San Francisco
 San Francisco Conservatory of Music San Francisco
 Santa Clara University Santa Clara
 Saybrook University San Francisco
 Stanford University Stanford
 Touro University - California Vallejo
 University of San Francisco San Francisco

3. Central Valley (4)

Fresno Pacific University Fresno
 Humphreys College Stockton
 University of the Pacific Stockton
 William Jessup University Rocklin

4. Central Coast (4)

California Lutheran University Thousand Oaks
 Fielding Graduate University Santa Barbara
 Thomas Aquinas College Santa Paula
 Westmont College Santa Barbara

5. Los Angeles/Kern (30)

American Academy of Dram. Arts L.A. Hollywood
 American Jewish University Bel Air
 Antioch University Los Angeles Los Angeles
 Art Center College of Design Pasadena
 Azusa Pacific University Azusa
 Biola University La Mirada
 California Institute of Technology Pasadena
 California Institute of the Arts Valencia
 Chicago School of Prof. Psychology Los Angeles
 Claremont Graduate University Claremont
 Claremont McKenna College Claremont
 Harvey Mudd College Claremont
 Kean Graduate University Claremont
 Loyola Marymount University Los Angeles
 Marymount College Rancho Palos Verdes
 Master's College, The Santa Clarita
 Mount St. Mary's College Los Angeles
 Occidental College Los Angeles
 Otis College of Art + Design Los Angeles
 Pacific Oaks College Pasadena
 Pepperdine University Malibu
 Pitzer College Claremont
 Pomona College Pomona
 Scripps College Claremont
 So. California Univ. of Health Sciences Whittier
 University of La Verne La Verne
 University of Southern California Los Angeles
 Western University of Health Sciences Pomona
 Whitman College Whittier
 Woodbury University Burbank

6. Orange (7)

Brandman University Irvine
 Chapman University Orange
 Concordia University Irvine
 Hope International University Fullerton
 Laguna College of Art & Design Laguna Beach
 Soka University Aliso Viejo
 Vanguard University of Southern California Costa Mesa

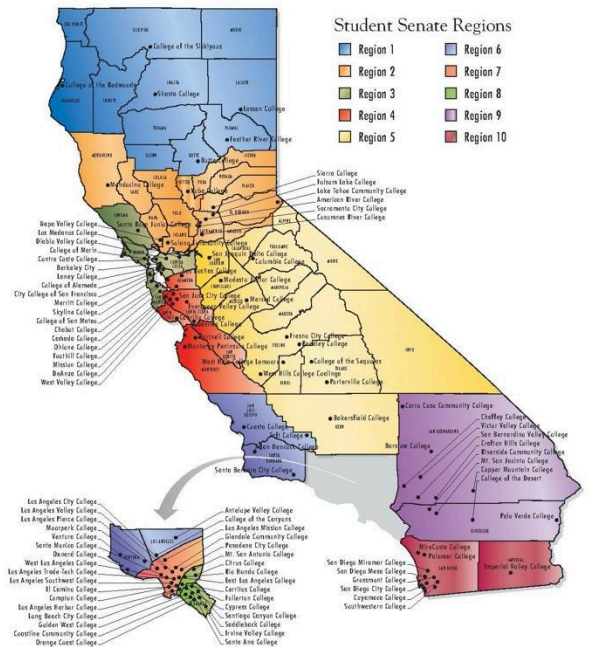
7. Riverside/San Bernardino (4)

California Baptist University Riverside
 La Sierra University Los Angeles
 Loma Linda University Loma Linda
 University of Redlands Redlands

8. San Diego/Imperial (5)

Alliant International University San Diego
 National University La Jolla
 Point Loma Nazarene University San Diego
 San Diego Christian College El Cajon
 University of San Diego San Diego

*See schools websites for satellite locations.



Chancellor's Office
 California Community Colleges
 1102 Q Street Sacramento, California 95814-6511 www.cccco.edu

State of California

RESEARCHING YOUR COLLEGE OPTIONS

Good research means an investment of time and energy. The more thorough research you do, the better equipped you will be to make good decisions for yourself.

Ask questions. Choosing where to apply cannot be reduced to a series of either/or questions, but the usual list of considerations is still a good place to begin: Big or small? Public or private? East, West, Midwest, South, outside the US? Liberal arts or preprofessional? Traditional or non-traditional? Warm weather or cold? Ask as many questions as you can; any factor important to you is worth plugging into the equation.

Do not let only one or two factors govern your choices. What happens if you choose a college for a particular program and find yourself, a year or two later, interested in something completely different? Or what if you go somewhere to play football and break your leg playing frisbee the first week of school? You should be especially careful about letting any one individual, whether it's an alumnus, an admissions officer, a friend, a teacher, or even a parent, influence your choice. Liking (or disliking) someone who went to a college or who works at a college does not guarantee your liking (or disliking) the college.

Look beyond statistics. For example, a college may boast that 80% of its graduates get into medical school, but that doesn't mean that you'll have an 80% chance of getting in if you go to that college. If you don't do the job, you'll end up in the 20%, and, if you do produce, your chances are probably just as good at a college where only 60% are admitted to medical school. It's your performance that counts in the end.

Do not fall prey to the common fallacies about college admissions. One myth is that the more selective a school is, the better the education. The number of applications per spot in the class has very little correlation with the quality of undergraduate education available at the school. Some of the most highly-regarded colleges for their quality of teaching and focus on undergraduates have a higher admit rate because of the self-selective nature of their applicant pool as a result of location, size, or curricular philosophy.

Resources for a Successful College Search

Although applying to college is essentially a one-person operation, utilizing the resources available to you in the Ambassador Christian community and elsewhere can make it easier and less solitary.

College Web Sites: College web sites include virtual tours; helpful statistics; news articles; photos; videos; and lists of majors, courses, and clubs. Good research will include an extensive examination of a college's online materials.

Guidebooks: Printed guidebooks can quickly become out-of-date, but they can be fun to browse through and most contain wellwritten descriptions and helpful indexes that help you search by major or location. We recommend the Fiske Guide to Colleges, the Insider's Guide to the Colleges, and Colleges That Change Lives.

AFTER IDENTIFYING IMPORTANT COLLEGE CRITERIA

Once you have determined the factors that are important to you and learned a bit about different schools and what they offer, you need to meld those two items into a preliminary list of colleges to investigate further. Don't worry; this will be done in consultation with your dean. Keep in mind, there is no ideal college that will fit all of your criteria. At the end of your junior year, you may have a list with as many as thirty colleges. That's O.K. At this early stage of the process, it is good to cast as wide a net as possible and keep your options open.

Continue to research: Visit and revisit web sites to keep up with campus news and admissions announcements, read emails and the many brochures you'll get in the mail, and continue to have conversations with people who have knowledge of the schools on your preliminary list.

If you can, visit college campuses. This is the best way to get a feel for the college. Take tours and attend group information sessions. Talk to current students. Compare this first-hand impression with what you've read. See the section on "Visiting College Campuses" for more on visiting colleges.

Refine the list. Add or delete colleges based on your continued research.

Narrow your options. By the end of your junior year, you should have done enough research to sit down with your dean and begin the discussion of narrowing your options (or, as the case may be, exploring other options as your focus changes—remember, you're still growing and maturing, and what you think you want in the middle of your junior year may change by the fall of your senior year!).

GETTING ORGANIZED

You will soon discover that applying to colleges can be a time-consuming business (and expensive as well—although some colleges have removed application fees from the process, most applications cost \$50 to \$90 with fee waivers available to those who need them). It requires hours of research, hours of talking (to admissions officers, alumni, coaches, friends, teachers, and parents), hours of filling out applications and a great deal of thought. To be done properly and with the least amount of anxiety, it also requires organization.

You may want a big binder or bin in which you can collect paper and print materials. It will also be helpful to create spreadsheets or Google Docs where you can keep notes and information. Develop a good system, physical or digital, for keeping track of the following items:

Notes on the various colleges you are considering.

- A chart of application deadlines.
- A record of tests you have taken, when you took them, and the colleges to which you have sent them.
- A record of your college-related accounts, usernames, passwords.
- A record of interview appointments.
- Drafts or final copies of essays and short answer responses.

No handbook can begin to answer all the questions you will have, but if you begin by reading this handbook carefully and following the recommended procedures, you'll waste less time on the details and have more time for the larger questions facing you throughout the college admission process.

VISITING COLLEGE CAMPUSES

In the hopes that in-person college visiting will be widely-available this spring, we will provide some advice here. One of the most important parts of the college search is the campus visit. We will often talk about finding the right “fit” in your college search. This is your opportunity to interact with people at the college and get a sense of whether this place could be a “fit” for you. Take advantage of your visits by asking a lot of questions and getting a feel for the personality of the institution

WHEN TO VISIT?

There are many opportunities to tour a campus. Ideally, it is best to see a college campus when students are there and classes are in session (perhaps during spring break in the junior year or during the fall in the senior year). However, it is often more difficult to do this because colleges are generally in session when Ambassador Christian School is also in session. Summer is also a good time to visit colleges. Although classes may not be in session, admission offices are open during this busy season of college visiting, offering tours, group information sessions, and at some colleges, interviews. When choosing which schools to see during the summer, try to avoid smaller, rural schools, which are less likely to have activity on campus during that time of year. The admissions office at the college can help you organize your visit. If you visit a campus in the summer, contact Ambassador Christian alums who attend that school to get more information about the tone and feel of the community when school is in session.

PLANNING COLLEGE VISITS

Visit schools with a range of selectivity. If you have been focusing on the fame or the national rankings of schools, you may be pre-conditioned to like some of the schools where the admissions odds are very slim. Visits to the campuses of schools that admit a tiny percentage of their applicants will therefore be much less valuable to you than cultivating your interest in the schools that will be likelier to admit you.

Visit the school's website or call the admission office directly to schedule your visit. Do this several weeks or even months ahead of time to find out when they offer tours and group information sessions. Some schools offer them on a drop-in basis; many schools require that you make an appointment. Most of this information is available online.

Ask if on-campus interviews are offered. If so, ask your dean if you should try to arrange an interview and how to prepare.

Allow plenty of time for your visit. Plan to spend several hours at each college. When planning your visit, find out about directions and driving time. We recommend that you try to see no more than two campuses in one day.

WHILE ON CAMPUS

Attend a group information session. These are usually held at the admission office and are especially helpful if you don't plan an interview. This is usually led by an admission officer.

Take a tour. This is usually led by a current student.

Talk to students. Don't be afraid to approach someone to ask about his/her experience. If it is in the summer, you may want to look for students who have stayed to do research or who work at the college.

Look at school newspapers and bulletin boards. These things will give you an idea about what is happening on campus and what the political and social climates are like.

Check out the student center. Where do students hang out? What do they do?

Visit classes, if possible. Talk to professors in departments of interest to you.

Eat in a campus dining hall, café or food court.

Ask in the admissions office for recommendations about where you can eat on campus as a visitor. Dining spaces will give you a good sense of campus culture...and you can check out the food!

Explore on your own. The tour won't take you everywhere. Get a good feel for the place by wandering off the prescribed path.

COLLEGE VISITATION POLICY DURING THE SENIOR YEAR

You are permitted by Ambassador Christian School to miss three school days (excused absences) for college trips at any time during the senior year. You will be responsible for making up any work you miss. Any additional absences taken for college visits must be approved by your dean and if they are not, they will be considered unexcused, and will result in detention.

So how do they find that match?

Run a preliminary search using California College, College Board, and Niche (I will provide the link for all websites). Encourage your student to make a list of "must haves" before focusing on a particular university. Look for schools that match their strengths and include the items on their must have list. Encourage them to go to the College Fair & College Visits. Be realistic and maintain perspective

Building your College List

With so many facets to the college application process, it can be difficult for students and their families to even know where or how to begin. A good starting point—and one of the most important pieces of the application process—is formulating a balanced college list. Junior year is

the ideal time to start, as it will leave you time to do your research, visit campuses, and eliminate schools that may not appeal to you as much as you originally thought.

Your college list is the barometer for the rest of your college prep going forward, so it's important to start refining your priorities, evaluating where your profile falls relative to other applicants and working towards finalizing the list of colleges to which you will apply.

College is a big investment, and to ensure you're getting the most out of the experience and the best ROI, you need to apply to a well-researched and thoughtful list of colleges where you can thrive and graduate in four years. With nearly one-third of students transferring colleges at least once, this is especially important to avoid the time and money lost trying to transfer out of a college that wasn't a great fit, to begin with.

Apply to a Range of Colleges:

- **Reach** – a long shot; your probability of admission is less than a 30% chance
- **Target** – your probability of admission is slightly better than 50%
- **Probable (safety)** – your probability of admission is highly likely, but never guaranteed
- I recommend applying to 6- 10 schools. 3 Reach, 3 Target, 3 Probable

So how do they find that match?

- Run a preliminary search using California College, College Board, and Niche (I will provide the link for all websites)
- Encourage your student to make a list of “must haves” before focusing on a particular university
- Look for schools that match their strengths and include the items on there must have a list
- Encourage them to go to the College Fair & College Visits
- Be realistic and maintain perspective

Research, research, research!

Start with a list of all the colleges that you think are interesting, but you'll need to dig deeper to find out if these schools will truly fulfill your individual needs. Learn everything you can about the schools that have piqued your interest, and even look for other, lesser-known schools that may also meet your personal, academic, and financial needs.

Research courses, majors, minors, professors, activities, and other factors that are important to you on the school's website. Interested in engineering? Learn everything you can about the courses you might take, professors you might study with, and what extracurriculars or clubs are available to engineering students.

Also, follow prospective colleges on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media channels, as that is a great way to stay up to date on campus news, events, and admissions information.

Research and following colleges on social media also help to demonstrate interest, which is important when it comes time to apply. Become an expert in each school you're interested in and

be sure you're able to articulate exactly why each school is a great fit for you and what you can contribute to the campus community – this will also come in handy when you're writing your college essays.

Consider Fit

Harvard might sound like the ultimate college to apply to, but is it really a good fit for you? If you prefer larger research universities on the west coast then, no, it won't be a great match. You must consider more than name brand and "reputation" when refining your college choices. Sure, Middlebury College is an excellent school, but if you're interested in engineering, it's not going to have the academic programs you're looking for, thus making it not a great fit for you.

Colleges on your balanced list should be good academic, social, and financial fits. Choose colleges that meet your needs, both inside and outside of the classroom; that way, you'll have a variety of colleges to choose from where you can be happy and successful.

Visit

One of the best ways to determine if a college is the right fit for you is to visit, ideally when classes are in session. Attend information sessions with admissions officers, tour the campus, explore the surrounding community, and, if possible, spend the night in a freshman dorm to get a real feel for the college life there.

Refining your college list is about identifying what's important to you and the opportunities and programs offered by colleges that meet those priorities. A visit can go a long way to help you make those assessments. Do you like the campus atmosphere? Is it located too far from a city—or perhaps too close to one? Are you comfortable with the dorms? Is class size appropriate for your needs? Sometimes a visit can be a gut-check for a college you're on the fence about.

Develop Your Rankings

Do you have a solid list but are unsure how to compare each school to one another? Develop your own rankings based on your personal preferences and priorities to assess each college on your list. Conventional rankings lists give little insight into how each college fits students' needs, so students shouldn't consider those when making decisions about where to apply.

Instead, create a chart that lists the factors you consider most important, i.e., location, academics, size, etc. and after researching and visiting each college, place a "+" in the box if you liked that certain aspect of the college, a "-" "if you didn't, or a "0" if you're not sure. Tally up the "+" at the end to get your rating for that school.

College	Academics	Location	Size	Extracurriculars	TOTAL
College X	+	+	0	+	3
College Y	+	+	–	–	2
College Z	–	–	+	0	1

By creating a visual representation, you can see which colleges meet your needs and which don't. This can help you refine your list and remove any schools that on the surface seem great but may not actually be a good fit for you.

Keep It Balanced

It's important to challenge yourself and aim high, but a list heavy on colleges with single-digit admission rates can leave you with few options come enrollment time. Make sure you identify a wide range of “likely,” “target,” and “reach” colleges to consider.

- **“Likely” schools** = student's academic profile is significantly stronger than the middle 50 percent of students who are typically admitted.
- **“Target” schools** = student's academic profile is similar to that middle 50 percent.
- **“Reach” schools** = student's academic profile is not as strong as the middle 50 percent.

All this information can be found on the school's admissions website. If you're not able to easily locate it, call the admissions office.

It's okay to reach for that “dream” college but keep realistic expectations. On the flip side, don't include a “likely” you're not that thrilled about just to have a “backup.”

Again, if all the colleges you choose are great fits, you'll be happy to attend any of them. “Likely” colleges shouldn't be considered “fallbacks” or colleges you'll just attend for one year only to try to transfer into your top-choice college later. All the colleges on your list, whether a far reach or a very likely, should be schools you'd love to attend.

Keep It Manageable

With over 4,000 colleges and universities in the US, the options available to students can sometimes be overwhelming. Couple that with single-digit admission rates at some of the country's top-tier universities, and many students may feel that in order to get into a great school they will need to explore every college available, sometimes applying to upwards of 40 or 50 schools. This is not a smart application strategy, as applying to a high volume of colleges diminishes the quality of each application. Not to mention that without time to thoroughly research dozens of colleges, it's unlikely that every school will be a great fit.

Ideally, your balanced college list should include a total of no more than 10-15 best-fit target, reach, and likely colleges. Any more than that, and the quality of the applications and essays will suffer, thus reducing your chances of admission. It's important to keep your college list manageable to minimize stress and maximize your chances of admission to your top-choice colleges.

Picking a Major

Choosing a college major can be hard. Some students have known what they wanted to be since they were three years old; others aren't sure, even with college right around the corner. Whether you're already in college or you've just started applying, here are some tips to finding the major that's right for you.

What is a major? What's the difference between a major and a minor? **A major is a specific subject area college students specialize in.** Typically, between one-third and one-half of the courses, you'll take in college will be in your major or related to it. Some colleges even let you design your own major! **A minor is a secondary field you can study in while completing your major degree program.** It's a specialization that requires fewer courses than a major. Minors are only required for certain degrees.

When do you declare a major?

Generally, at most four-year colleges you don't have to decide on a major until the end of your sophomore year. This gives you time to try a couple of classes and see what you like before you decide and earn general education credits that count toward your degree. **Keep in mind, certain fields and programs (like most pharmacy programs) require an early commitment so you can take all the required classes and graduate on time.**

Steps to picking a major

1. What do you like?

The first thing to consider when picking a major is what you like to do. By the time you graduate high school, you'll have enough information and experience from your classes to figure out what you might or might not be interested in pursuing. Here are some ways you can dig deeper:

- **List 10 things you love.** Listing what you love doing inside or outside the classroom is a great way to see possible paths you can take. For example, if you enjoy art and drawing but are also interested in technology, consider majoring in graphic design. If you're into business and traveling, investigate majoring in international business.
- **Make a list of strengths and weaknesses.** Figuring out your strengths and weaknesses can help you assess what kind of major to go into. For example, if public speaking isn't your thing, you might want to avoid majors that could lead to careers like being a news anchor or spokesperson. You can also take your weaknesses and build on them in college. On the other hand, if public speaking is something you want to improve, go ahead, and take a speech class. You might love it!

- **Use the Roadmap to Careers.** Connect your interests to majors and careers, and explore video interviews with professionals in different industries to hear how they got where they are today. Then, use your College Board login to map your future—it's free for students who take the PSAT 8/9, PSAT 10, PSAT/NMSQT, or the SAT.

2. What are your career goals?

After digging into what you're interested in and potential career options, it's time to think about your future career goal—and how hard it might be to find employment.

If you have a specific career goal in mind, you might need to pick your major or program in advance, sometimes as early as when your college.

It's also good to know what degree you'll need for the field that interests you. Here's an overview of different college degrees:

- **Associate Degree** The two-year associate of arts (AA) or associate of science (AS). Some students who earn this degree transfer to a four-year bachelor's program; others use it to go straight to work. Community college in addition, community colleges, and some four-year colleges offer associate degrees.
- **Bachelor's Degree** This degree requires completing a four-year college program. Most students earn a Bachelor of Arts (BA) or Bachelor of Science degree (BS). You can also study toward a Bachelor of Fine Arts or Bachelor of Architecture degree.
- **Joint Degree** Students can earn a bachelor's degree plus a graduate or professional degree in less time if they combine them. For example, a student on this track may apply to a graduate program as an undergraduate and begin the graduate program in their fourth year of college.
- **Graduate Degree** Graduate degrees are advanced degrees pursued after earning a bachelor's degree. Examples are a Master of Arts (MA) or Master of Science (MS). Students generally earn a master's degree after two years of study. A doctoral degree (a PhD) requires four or more years of study.

3. Talk to advisers and professionals

The best source of college advice is your school counselor. They've helped lots of students who are making the same decisions you are. In addition, your school counselor can tell you more about college majors and program offerings. Here are five questions you might want to ask a counselor.

1. Are there any college fairs at this school, or nearby?
2. Can you put me in touch with recent grads who are going to the colleges on my wish list?
3. Which elective courses do you recommend?
4. Do you have any information to help me start exploring careers?
5. Do you have any college planning sessions scheduled?

Check out BigFuture for a list of 20 questions to ask your counselor to get the conversation started.

You can also reach out to professionals working in the field you're interested in. They can talk to you about how they got from college to where they are now. Whether they're your parents,

guardians, family members, or people you interact with professionally, set up a time to interview them. Be prepared with a set of questions to ask.

4. Backups

Try to come up with one or two backup majors. This way you've got options if you decide to switch your major.

What if you can't decide on a major?

It's okay to enter college as an undecided major. You don't have to know what you want to major in (or even what you want to do with the rest of your life) during your major search process. College gives you the opportunity to take classes you think you might enjoy or even classes you've never been exposed to before.

Volunteer and find internships. Internships and volunteer work are the best ways to get real hands-on experience in fields a major can lead to. You'll get a great understanding of what day-to-day life in the profession is like. If you can, talk to people in different departments to see if their work interests you.

Events at local colleges/college visits. You can learn a lot from visiting colleges or attending events on campus. Colleges have open houses or accepted student days where department representatives answer questions and offer you, their knowledge. There are also students around you can talk to about their major and class experiences in the major.

Can you change your major?

You can absolutely change your major in college. Studies find that most students change majors at least once and many students switch several times. No matter what year you're in, sometimes the major you declare doesn't end up being the right one. If you decide to change your major, make sure the credits you need align with your expected graduation date. Go to your counselor for guidance on picking a new major and setting up your schedule.

It's a big decision, but you know yourself and your interests better than anyone. Remember, when choosing a major, the most important thing is to make sure you're happy and clear about your priorities for your life and career after college.

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.

10 Free Search Tools to Find Your School

To help you get started, I have collected a few college search engines from around the web. If you're putting together your college list, check out these ten online tools.

1. College Board's BigFuture

[College Board](#) offers one of the best search tools around with BigFuture. You can find colleges by test scores, location, majors, support services and diversity. If you create an account, you can save your favorite colleges and revisit them later. In addition to its college finder, College Board offers tips on [how to apply for financial aid](#) or explore careers.

2. Cappex

[Cappex](#) is another top resource and college search engine. You can search through thousands of schools, plus you can estimate your chances of admission based on your GPA and admission test scores. You can also use the "Fit Score" to gauge whether a college could be a good match for you. The fit meter assigns a percentage to each school based on your preferences, like school size and tuition cost. If you get 90% or higher, the school could be a great fit. Finally, you can estimate your chances of gaining admission to specific schools by inputting your grade and test score information.

3. College Insight

Some college search websites let you save a list of your favorites, but [College Insight](#) takes things a step further. With College Insight, you can build tables with any combination of variables to compare colleges. You can pick out the most relevant data and information to compare schools in a way that makes sense for you.

4. College Confidential

You might know [College Confidential](#) as a discussion forum, but the college search site also offers a comprehensive tool. The filters don't get as specific as some other sites, but they're enough to help you start [building a college list](#). Once you narrow your results, you can learn about each school's acceptance rate, tuition costs and test scores, among other essential facts.

5. Niche

[Niche](#) is another great resource for learning about colleges across the country. After narrowing down your list, you'll see that each college comes with a "report card" and overall grade. Niche gives grades for professors, athletics, dorms, and safety, among other concerns. Plus, it creates its rankings based on data from the U.S. Department of Education (DoED) so that you can browse [colleges by state](#) or major.

6. Unigo

[Unigo](#) mixes up the traditional college search format. Instead of selecting filters, you'll answer questions through a college match quiz. Then, Unigo will match you with colleges based on your responses. You can learn about each school, as well as read unbiased student reviews. Besides its college search engine, Unigo also helps you [find scholarships](#).

7. College Navigator

[College Navigator](#) is a free college search tool offered by the DoED's National Center for Education Statistics. Although the design of the website isn't exactly slick, it's a thorough directory with up-to-date info.

You can filter schools by location, selectivity, sports teams, and other criteria. Plus, you can indicate tuition costs and your state of residency; the tool will even consider tuition. Use College Navigator for a no-frills look at facts and figures.

8. College Simply

[College Simply](#) doesn't have a ton of search filters, but it does collect a huge number of student reviews. You can find schools by test scores, state, ranking or acceptance rate.

Then, learn some basic facts about each college and read through reviews. Although College Simply isn't as thorough as some other college search tools, it's a useful place to start.

9. College Xpress

Over 4.2 million students use [College Xpress](#) to find colleges and browse rankings. In addition to getting matched with schools, you can scan over \$7 billion in scholarship opportunities. After you create an account, you'll be able to sign back in later to revisit your college list or track your scholarship applications.

10. Peterson's

If you're just beginning the college search process, [Peterson's College Search tool](#) could be a good starting point. Its College Discovery Center provides pre-made lists of schools categorized by major or field. You can also use the site's search function to narrow your results by major, location or another keyword. From there, Peterson's delivers the same filtering functionality as its competitors. Finally, Peterson's is something of a one-stop shop, with its additional resources for test preparation and scholarships.

College Fit Factors

Academics Factors:

- Major/Minor Availability
- Admissions Rate/Selectivity
- Student to Faculty Ratio
- School Size
- Graduation Rate
- Freshmen Retention Rate
- Graduate/Professional School Options
- Quality of Department of Study
- Quality of Professors/Faculty
- Study Abroad Programs

Student Life Factors:

- Location
- Size of Campus
- Meal Plans
- Extracurricular Options
- Housing Options
- Public/Private
- Sports Participation
- Safety Statistics
- Religious Affiliation
- Transportation
- Demographics/Diversity
- School Spirit
- Alumni Network
- Disability Services

Financial Factors:

- Cost (Net Price Calculator)
- Financial Aid Qualification
- Working Students
- Application Fees
- Graduating Class Indebtedness

Questions to Ask College Representatives

Student Life

- What do students like most about your school?
- What kinds of students are happiest at your school?
- Where do students hang out on campus? Do students mostly live on or off campus?
- How would you describe the students that go to your college? Where do most of them come from?
- What student clubs are available? Would it be possible for me to create my own student organization? What is that process like?
- What happens on weekends—are there things to do on campus or in town, or do most students go home?
- How would you describe safety on campus? The surrounding area?
- What housing and meal plan options are available?
- What is the trip like to travel home (to Southern California) from campus?
- What's the surrounding area like? Is it easy to get around?
- I would love to ask current students at your school about their experience. Would it be possible for me to connect with a current student?

Academics/Career Preparation

- What makes your college unique?
- How would you describe the academic pressure and workload at your school?
- What opportunities would I have if I majored in _____ at your institution?
- What differentiates your program in _____ from programs offered at other universities?
- My favorite subject in school is _____. How can that translate into a major at your school?
- What support services are available (academic advisors, tutors, counseling, etc.)?
- What's the faculty like? How accessible are they outside of class?
- What academic programs is your college most known for? What are some programs that others might not know about?
- What are some examples of internships held by students majoring in _____ at your school?
- What kinds of career planning opportunities are available at your school?

Cost and Financial Aid

- How much am I going to pay each year to attend your school? Can you tell me about other fees and costs in addition to tuition?
- What financial aid programs does your college offer?
- What kinds of scholarships do you offer?
- What percentage of the annual cost to attend your school can be covered by scholarships?

Top 10 Ways to “Test Drive” a college

1. **Learn about the college before you visit.** Read materials from the college and check out their website. If you are visiting more than one on a particular day, refresh your memory about that school just before you arrive. Be sure to spend at least one-half day at each school.
2. **Evaluate the environment of the campus.** Is the campus too big or too small for you? Do you like the nearby town, or do you feel isolated? Consider how you would get around campus particularly in the rain or snow.
3. **Visit the admissions office and participate in the information session.** Ask questions that help you clarify the academic program at the school and the type of student who is most comfortable and successful there. You may choose to have a formal interview with an admissions staff member. Bring a resume of your grades and activities. Dress nicely, but not out of character.
4. **Take the student led campus tour.** Take advantage of the opportunity to ask questions about campus life from a peer. Recognize, however, that tour guides are not necessarily typical of all students since they formally represent the school.
5. **Check out the dorms.** Find out about the dorm options available, such as all- freshman or coed. Arrange in advance to spend the night in a dorm, if possible. Picture yourself living in a dorm. Are you comfortable with where they are located on campus, such as the proximity to classes or the campus center?
6. **Arrange for campus meeting with department heads in the subjects that interest you, coaches in sports where you excel, and former graduates from your high school.** Bring a resume that highlights your experience in your area of expertise. Ask about opportunities based on your skills and interests. Write down the names of any officials you meet with and send them personal thank you notes when you return home.
7. **Sit in on classes and check out the library.** How is the rapport between students and professors in the classroom? Look through the books in the library in your area of interest. Look for a quiet place to study.
8. **Look into life beyond academics.** Check out the athletic facilities, theater, and student center. Read the notices up in the dorms or on bulletin boards. Can you see yourself joining in?
9. **Have lunch in the student center and watch student interactions.** Talk with students all over campus about their impressions of the school. Look at the students themselves. Do you feel comfortable among the students?
10. **After each visit, write down your impressions of that college.** After a while, the visions of different schools start to blur if don't immediately stop and record your thoughts. Keep a list of pros and cons for comparison.

Other Post Grad Option

Other Post Grad Option

GAP YEAR

A gap year is a year spent taking time off between life stages. An increasingly popular option, it provides time for traveling, volunteering, learning a new language, or experiencing any number of other activities for personal growth. While gap years have been common in other countries for years, they are only now just slowly gaining in popularity in the United States. Typically, students elect to take gap years after they graduate high school and before they enter college. After High school is a wonderful time to take a gap year! And if you plan it just right, you might even still be able to graduate without losing a year! There are no rules when it comes to taking a gap year, so the possibilities are truly endless.

Luckily, there are organizations that specialize in helping students organize their adventures, for example, some companies assist with everything from finding a host family, to setting up the volunteer project, to taking care of meals and travel insurance. Areas of focus students may choose from for their gap year activities include Animals, Archaeology, Business, Conservation, Education, Healthcare, Human Rights, Journalism and Sports. Whether to individually design a program or use the resources of an established organization. Planning for college—Students who apply for college during their senior year of high school can defer enrollment for a year, so they'll already have their place secured and can easily start classes upon completing the gap year.

Suggested Unique Gap Year Programs for Teens

- **Rotary Youth Exchange programs** range from a year abroad studying at a local school and living with a local family to shorter term programs that can be customized to include homestays, internships, volunteer projects, travel, and more.
- **The Traveling School** is just that -- a school that travels. The program is open to girls in high school and each semester takes place in a different part of the world.
- **Projects Abroad's Global Gap Year** program focused on volunteering on various service projects in five countries on three different continents over the course of 27 weeks.
- **The Island School** is also semester-based, an opportunity for students to study in the Bahamas, with a focus on environment and sustainability and the chance to conduct scientific research at the associated Cala Eleuthera Institute.
- **Where There Be Dragons** offer a variety of programs which typically include a mix of travel, service learning, language learning, homestays, and more.

The Military

This can be a good option for young adults who thrive on structure and physical activity. The training involves a lot of practice and repetition. Service in the armed forces can lead to a job or to college-level education. Before joining, it's important to think about how learning and thinking differences could impact training. The military has rules for qualifying if a young person has taken ADHD medication in the past or needs special accommodations.

Work

If more schooling isn't right, going straight to work can be a rewarding path for young people. But in a tough job market, young adults may have trouble getting a job, especially if they have no experience. If that's the case, they might consider volunteering for a while to build skills. School guidance counselors and community centers can help young adults find internships and volunteer work. Family members and friends may know of jobs, too. As a young person learns solid work skills, independence will follow. And they may discover a career path that leads to further training.

LEARN A TRADE/APPRENTICESHIP

Learning a trade through an apprenticeship program allows one to receive training and gain skills on the job while getting paid. Even more appealing for people considering a career in skilled trades -- many of these jobs are in high demand, with expected growth to continue for some time. Furthermore, because more young people choose college over trades, the shortage of skilled workers is growing. Besides the demand for these jobs, skilled tradespeople can easily earn \$40,000 or more annually.

Applying To School

Applying To School

COMPONENTS OF THE APPLICATION

The application that you fill out is one of the means through which your character and personality can emerge, and it is the one part of the process over which you have real control. Doing a careful, thoughtful job on your application can make all the difference.

Depth over breadth. Let your accomplishments speak for themselves, leaving out trivial activities or long-neglected interests. It is better to concentrate on a few quality pursuits than to manufacture quantity.

Be yourself. You can drive yourself crazy trying to figure out what you think a college wants to hear. There's seldom a right or wrong answer to a question on an application. Admissions committees want sincere responses that will tell them something about you as a person. While it can be important to get some input and some help proofreading from a dean or parent or other trusted adult, extensive help from a writing tutor can be risky. Experienced admissions officers can tell when an essay is heavily processed and doesn't match the student's voice. Authenticity concerns can raise red flags that can lessen your chances of admission. Be sure that your application writing is your own work!

Give yourself plenty of time. Last-minute writing usually looks and sounds like last-minute writing.

APPLYING TO THE PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

California State University System

The twenty-three campuses of the Cal State System admit students primarily on the basis of grades and test scores (SAT or ACT). Neither an essay nor a teacher recommendation is required. You may apply to as many campuses within the system as you wish, submitting a separate application and fee to each campus to which you apply. You must send your test scores to a central processor which then supplies those scores to the campuses to which you applied. Applicants self-report their grades, so transcripts are not provided until you decide to matriculate at a Cal State campus. While you may be eligible for admission to the Cal State system based on grades and test scores, particular campuses or majors may be more selective than others. Read website information carefully to determine if there are other requirements (audition, portfolio, etc.) for your program of interest. The California State University system accepts applications from October 1 through November 30, although in recent years, they have indicated that the earlier you submit your Cal State application, the better chance you have at the more selective campuses.

University of California System

The nine undergraduate campuses of the UC System admit students on the basis of grades, curriculum, and subjective factors. They are currently reexamining what role, if any, standardized test scores will play in their application process and are, at this point, test blind. Applicants are asked to submit four short essays and to list their honors, awards, extracurricular activities, and

employment.

You may apply to as many campuses within the UC system as you wish. You will submit one application online indicating the campus or campuses at which you wish to be considered. As with the Cal States, applicants self-report their grades, and transcripts are required only if you decide to matriculate to a UC campus. While you may be eligible for admission to a UC campus, you are not guaranteed a spot at the campus of your choice. Admission standards for the Berkeley, Los Angeles, San Diego, and Santa Barbara campuses are more rigorous than for the others. The UC application filing period is November 1 through November 30.

Out-of-State Public Institutions

Many public universities out of state accept the Common Application although many others use the Coalition Application or their own application instead. The deadlines for public university applications are often different from the private school deadlines, some requiring applications as early as October and others allowing for later applications due in February. Familiarize yourself with the deadlines, application requirements, and financial aid application deadlines for each school to which you plan to apply.

APPLYING TO PRIVATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Admission to private colleges, particularly the more selective ones, is a complex, subjective, and somewhat unpredictable process. Decisions are generally based on a committee's evaluation—through readings and discussion—of a candidate's application. Admissions officers read the files in a holistic fashion, attempting to get a sense of a candidate's academic and non-academic qualities and potential for contribution to their community. Keep in mind that it is a human process. The “Components of the Application” section describes what usually goes into that application file, with some suggestions and guidelines on how to handle each of the components.

DECISION NOTIFICATION

Institutions notify students at different time periods during the school year, depending on the admission decision process that you choose to apply through.

Rolling Admission: In the case of rolling admission, notification depends on when you submit your application. The turnaround time is typically much shorter the earlier you submit, because there are fewer applications to review earlier in the year. As you approach late November and early December, many of these schools are inundated with applications and may take much longer to respond.

Early Decision and Early Action: In the case of Early Decision, Early Action and Early Decision II applicants, the college or university is quite clear about their notification date. For the first round of Early Decision, a response will usually arrive around December 15th. Some Early Action programs notify in December; many notify in January. Early Decision II candidates will usually hear in mid-February.

Regular Decision: Colleges and universities can start regular notification as early as February, although the most selective schools usually notify in late March or early April. The UCs will start sending decisions around March 1st.

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.

NATIONAL CANDIDATES' REPLY DATE

Students are required to notify the school at which they intend to enroll by May 1st. Failure to do so may mean forfeiting your place at that institution. Similarly, you should notify all the schools where you were admitted but do not plan to enroll that you have selected another institution. It is entirely unethical to tell multiple schools that you intend to enroll and, if discovered, will mean forfeiting your place at all institutions. It is, however, acceptable to maintain your spot on a waitlist and deposit at another institution. If you plan to defer enrollment in order to take a gap year between high school and college, work with your dean to learn the procedures and deadlines for requesting that permission after you have enrolled.

APPLICATION FORMS

Most of the schools to which you will be applying are on the Common Application, which is available online at www.commonapp.org. If you are applying to any of the Common Application colleges, you simply complete the Common Application online, sending the same application to as many colleges as you like (with a separate fee for each). Many schools on the Common Application have supplements, which may involve additional essays or short answer questions.

If a college you are applying to is not on the Common Application (this includes many public universities, as well as private schools like MIT and Georgetown), you should go to the website of that individual college to fill out the application. The Coalition Application is an alternative to the Common Application that some universities have adopted in recent years. The independent applications for the University of California and California State Universities become available online in August.

The UC application must be filed online and can be found at www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/index.html. We will go over the UC application step-by-step at a special class meeting in November of senior year. The first few sections of an application requests identifying information, such as name, address, phone number, and high school.

Although this information is partially used for practical purposes, it is also used during the review process to understand your particular circumstances. Knowing where you live, what high school you go to and whether or not your parents have attended college can give some context to your application.

HIGH SCHOOL DOCUMENTS

There are five items sent from the Deans' Office for every student: an official transcript, letters of recommendation, a school profile, the Secondary School Report form (SSR) and a mid-year report. Information on how and when to request that these items are sent to colleges will be provided in the fall of the senior year. Please note: standardized test scores (SATs, ACTs, SAT Subject Tests) are NOT sent by Ambassador Christian School. These must be sent by the student to each college and university to which they are applying through the College Board or ACT website or self-reported on the application if the colleges to which you are applying permit self-reporting of scores. Applicants self-report AP scores on their applications; official score reports for AP tests are only necessary after enrolling at a college if a student seeks to use AP credit to waive a college course requirement.

Transcript

The transcript is the single most important item in the admissions file. On it are your course grades from ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades. (Your first semester senior year grades are sent as soon as they are available and are extremely important.) Progress reports from the first quarter of the senior year are only sent if requested by a college or university. Schools may ask for this information for early action or early decision applicants. If a school does not request this information, students may still choose to send the progress report if they are particularly happy with their first quarter grades. Students who wish to have summer school courses listed on their Ambassador Christian transcript must have an official transcript sent to us from the institution where they took the course.

Letters of Recommendation

The official school recommendation, written by your dean, represents the collective support of the school community. It is based on reports from teachers, coaches and extracurricular advisors, as well as questionnaires, journal entries and personal contact. Our goal is to present you in the best possible light and help you tell your individual story. Seniors will also have requested recommendation letters from two classroom teachers, which we will send according to a college's or university's recommendation requirements. You will not have access to these letters of recommendation as colleges will lend more credibility to letters to which you have waived your access.

High School Profile

The school profile includes information about Ambassador Christian School's curriculum, grading policies, school accreditation and history, standardized test scores, grade distribution by department, and college matriculation data for the past five years. This document is sent to colleges with the

Secondary School Report

The Secondary School Report form calls for information about the student in the context of Ambassador Christian School. Specifically, colleges and universities ask about the rigor of the student's curriculum as compared to other students at Ambassador Christian School

Mid-Year Report

In February, when first semester grades become available, we automatically send the Mid-Year Report form with your first semester grades.

The college application process can seem intimidating, especially if students don't have parents or siblings who have already been through it and can offer advice. Since there are so many steps, such as writing an essay and obtaining letters of recommendation, experts say a good way for students to get started is to create a to-do list during their junior year of high school.

Though there is often prep work that happens beforehand, students generally begin filling out college applications the summer between their junior and senior year of high school, experts say.

Here's what prospective undergraduates need to know about completing a college application.

What Are the Important College Application Deadlines?

High school seniors have multiple deadlines to choose from when applying to colleges.

First are early decision deadlines, usually in November. Students who apply via early decision, or ED, will hear back from a college sooner than their peers who turn in applications later. ED admissions decisions often come out by December.

However, students should be aware that ED acceptances are binding, meaning an applicant must enroll if admitted. Some schools also have a second early decision deadline, ED II, which is also binding. The difference is in the timelines. ED II deadlines are usually in January. ED II admissions decisions often come out in February. Early action is another type of application deadline that tends to be in November or December. Similar to early decision, students who apply via early action will hear back from schools sooner. The difference is EA acceptances aren't binding. Students can also choose to apply by a school's regular decision deadline, which can be as early as Nov. 30 at certain colleges but is typically Jan. 1. Students who apply regular decision generally hear back from schools in mid-to-late March or early April.

One other admissions policy to be aware of is rolling admissions. Schools with rolling admissions evaluate applications as they receive them and release admissions decisions on an ongoing basis. These schools may have a priority filing date, but they generally don't have a hard

cutoff date for applications. The institutions continue accepting them until all spots in the incoming class are filled.

In deciding when to apply, as well as how many colleges to apply to, students should consider financial aid implications. Experts say if money is a concern, as it is for many families of college-bound students, applicants should choose nonbinding deadlines – EA and regular decision. This will enable families to compare financial aid offers from multiple schools.

For regular decision deadlines, students typically have until May 1 to decide which school they will attend and pay an enrollment deposit.

Which College Application Platform Should I Use?

Students have several options when it comes to college application platforms.

One popular choice is The Common Application, which is accepted by more than 900 colleges, including some located outside the U.S. Students fill out the Common App once and can then submit it to multiple colleges.

However, in addition to the main application, Common App schools often have a supplemental section. The supplement sometimes includes additional essay questions, so students may need to budget time for more writing.

But not all schools accept the Common App, such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Georgetown University in the District of Columbia.

Other application options include the Coalition Application, a newer platform accepted by more than 150 schools, and the Common Black College Application, accepted by more than 60 historically Black colleges and universities.

Additionally, some colleges have school-specific or university system-specific applications. For example, the University of California system has its own application – the only platform used by UC schools – and students can apply to multiple campuses with one application.

Students can visit a college's website to determine which application platforms are accepted. Also, the Common App, Coalition Application and CBCA websites list their partner schools.

What Are the Other Key Components of a College Application?

THE ESSAY

The college essay provides you with an opportunity to convey something about yourself that goes beyond the objective data. The essay should be well-written and carefully-edited, and you must keep it within the prescribed length. Consider your audience. Admissions officers reading two dozen applications on a dreary February night want to read something efficient, engaging, and graceful that will tell them about you as a person. You should write about something that is important to you. Remember that this is a process that involves human beings reading your words, not a computer churning out algorithms. The presentation of yourself through the essay is a key component in shaping an admission officer's impression of you as a candidate.

The Common Application has a main Personal Essay with a 650-word limit, and its topics are fairly broad and open-ended. Indeed, the final prompt allows you to "Share an essay on any topic of your choice." Respond to any of the prompts with a vivid story from your life instead of vague or general musings. Favor showing over telling. Many schools will also ask for supplemental essays specific to their school. Be sure your supplemental essays answer the question while revealing new aspects of yourself that you haven't shown or detailed in other parts of the application. Supplemental essays, when required, are just as important as your main essay, so allot plenty of time to work on them.

In all of your application writing, be true to yourself. Don't think too much about what it is you think the admission officers want to hear. Focus on what you want to convey and how to say it. Let your voice come through. Where people commonly falter is approaching this as an academic exercise. These are personal essays, opportunities to reflect on who you are at this stage in your life, invitations to share some stories based on your unique experiences. Try to avoid much-used topics (unless they are addressed in a unique way). Examples of common college essay topics include: an eye-opening trip outside the US, the championship game, how a service opportunity ended up helping you as much as you helped others. But don't go overboard in your attempts to be original or memorable or profound. Stories will become unique and memorable the more individual detail you can include. Avoid writing anything that might raise questions about your college readiness or that highlights outsized privilege.

Get some feedback on your finished product. Have a teacher, dean, parent, friend, or neighbor read and critique your essay for its form and content. What does your essay communicate about your character and personality? Is the voice natural and unaffected?

It should sound like it was written by you and only you. But keep in mind that each person is coming from a different perspective—your English teacher will see different things than your parents will see. Listen to their advice, but make the decisions that are right for you and stay true to your own voice. Editing tools will not catch all errors. Spellcheck will not necessarily spot incorrect homonyms (there/they're/their), nor will it save you from accidentally sending your Oberlin essay to USC. Consider attending our essay-writing workshops. During the spring of junior year, the deans will present essay-writing sessions during class meetings that will further clarify what is expected in the private college and UC essay. Students should plan to share drafts of their essays with their dean well ahead of application deadlines.

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Most colleges require one or two recommendations from teachers. Ideally, you should ask teachers from eleventh grade who have taught you in an academic subject. These teachers have witnessed your progress over a full year. Ask your dean for advice as you are selecting teachers to write for you. Senior teachers may be used in some cases. The teacher who gave you the highest grade may not be the one who will write you the best recommendation; it is more important that the teacher knows you well. We will ask you to secure at least one teacher recommendation before summer begins; many teachers do their rec-writing in the summer. Once the teachers have written their letters, they will upload them through SCOIR, and the Deans Office will submit them to all the colleges to which you are applying. Some colleges and/or special programs may require or encourage teacher recommendations from specific subject areas. Be aware of those guidelines and discuss them with your dean. Thank your teachers! Recommendation writing is a time-consuming task; honor your teachers' efforts by expressing your warm, genuine appreciation. Also, let them know how things work out later in the year; they are interested in your future.

THE INTERVIEW

College interviews are more informational than evaluative. Arranging or accepting an interview can be an important way to demonstrate that you are interested in a college and are a serious applicant, but your "performance" during an interview will not, in most cases, impact your odds of admission. Interviews, when available, will provide you with an opportunity to learn more about a college. Few colleges require an interview; some recommend one. In some cases, you can arrange an interview during a campus visit or via Zoom before you submit your application. A small subset of admissions representatives conducts interviews during their fall admissions travel. Many schools will wait and offer an interview with a local alumnus/-a after you have submitted an application. Some colleges don't offer interviews at all. It is the student's responsibility to be informed about and follow the specific interview instructions and deadlines for a particular school.

Some tips on interviews:

- Relax and be yourself.
- Go or log on alone. Don't take your parents or your friends with you.
- Dress appropriately for the venue. If you will be on screen from home or are meeting an interviewer at a coffee shop, dress casually but respectfully. If you will be meeting your interviewer at an office, wear something appropriate to an office environment.
- Be on time. Request contact information that would allow you to be in touch if you are delayed or need to reschedule.
- Read any college literature you have before you go so that you can ask thoughtful, well-informed questions. Remember that the interview is your opportunity to find out about the college, not just the college's opportunity to find out about you.
- Take cues from the interviewer; she/he/they will set the tone.
- Don't worry if the interview doesn't cover every wonderful thing about you.
- Avoid answering questions by saying just yes or no. On the other hand, don't go on so long in response to one question that you limit the interviewer's chance to ask you follow up questions or broach new topics.

- Don't judge the college on the basis of the interviewer. If you learn things from the interview that make you feel differently about the college, fine. But don't let your positive or negative feelings about an individual (who isn't even at the college anymore!) become an important factor in your decision.
- Always thank the interviewer in writing for his or her time. In your brief note (emailed or mailed) you may want to mention one of the topics brought up during your session so that you are certain he or she will recall just who this polite interviewee is!

EXTRA LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Extra letters of recommendation seldom have much positive impact on an admissions decision. For the most part, they are a neutral factor; in excess, they can become a negative factor. Letters that might fall into the helpful category are those from coaches, teachers of non-academic subjects, or employers who have something significant and different to say about your character and growth. These letters are only appropriate when they add information that otherwise wouldn't be in the application.

Letters from acquaintances of your parents that basically say "this is a nice kid" may hurt more than they help. Letters from political figures who don't really know you or alumni whose stake in you or the college is limited are equally meaningless. If you must have extra letters, don't go overboard; admissions readers have limited time and a thick admissions file can make a negative impression. Consult your dean before you ask for these letters.

Here are other parts of the college application that prospective students should be ready for.

- **Personal information:** In the first portion of a college application, students will have to provide basic information about themselves, their school, and their family.
- **High school transcript:** Colleges will also ask for an official high school transcript, which is a record of the course's students have taken and the grades they have earned.

Admissions offices typically ask that a transcript be sent directly from the high school rather than from the student. Usually, students submit a transcript request to their high school's counseling office.

- **Standardized test scores:** Many schools require applicants to submit SAT or ACT scores. The testing companies usually send these scores. However, the number of schools requiring standardized test scores has dropped dramatically as the coronavirus pandemic upended these exams, with many testing centers closed across the U.S. in parts of 2020.

Prospective students should know, however, that testing policies vary even when such exams are not required. Key terms to pay attention to include test-blind and test-optional. Test-blind means that scores will not be considered if submitted. By contrast, test-optional colleges do not require ACT or SAT scores but will consider them if submitted as part of an application.

SAT test-takers are allowed four free score reports each time they register for the exam. Students can select which schools they'd like their scores sent to before or up to nine days after the test, according to the College Board, which administers the standardized test. The fee for each additional score report is \$12.

- **Letters of recommendation:** Colleges often ask students to submit two to three letters of recommendation.

Do I Need to Submit a Resume?

Some college applications may be optional for students to upload a resume.

But much of the information generally contained in a resume – such as awards, work experience and extracurricular activities – is asked for in other parts of a college application, often in an activities section.

How Much Do College Application Fees Cost?

There's no set price for college application fees, which experts say typically range from \$50 to \$90 per application, though costs can stretch upward of \$100 in some instances. Prospective students should check college websites to determine these individual fees.

How Can I Get a College Application Fee Waiver?

There are several ways students from low-income families can submit college applications for free.

Students who received SAT or ACT waiver are eligible for college application fee waivers from the testing companies. The College Board sends such waivers automatically to students. Not all schools accept these waivers, but many do.

Similarly, the ACT has a fee waiver request form students and school counselors can fill out and send to colleges. The National Association for College Admission Counseling also offers a fee waiver request form. In addition, eligible students can request a fee waiver within the body of some college applications, including the Common App.

Using a College Visit to Decide Where to Apply

Visiting a college can help prospective students understand the culture and community and how they may or may not fit in. While it's not part of the formal application process, exploring a college can help students determine which schools to apply to.

While virtual tours may offer fewer opportunities to make a personal connection, students should still attempt to do so.

Knowing what the colleges you're applying to are looking for helps you make the best choices for college prep and craft a better application when the time comes. In addition, contacting your top school choices will give you a more specific picture of what they all expect, allowing you to target your applications for each and increase the chances of acceptance.

Applying Early?

This should be considered for students whose application is the best it can possibly be at this time (test scores, transcript, and essays)

EARLY ACTION

- Apply early (usually November)
- HIGHLY qualified candidates who apply early may receive offers of admission early (in the admission cycle) by mid – December
- Early Action is not binding
- Students may apply to as many EA'S as they wish
- You have until May 1st to make your decision

SINGLE CHOICE EARLY ACTION

- Apply early (usually November)
- You can only apply to one private university under Single Choice Early Action
- Single Choice Early Action is not binding
- You have until May 1st to make your decision

EARLY DECISION

- Early Decision **IS BINDING**. If accepted, you must withdraw all other college applications.
- Read all information carefully, these are contracts
- You can apply to **ONLY ONE SCHOOL** under Early Decision
- Apply to other colleges under regular admission plans

Who should Apply Early?

Applying to an Early Action or Early Decision plan is most appropriate for a student who:

- Has researched colleges extensively
- Is absolutely sure that the college is their first choice
- Has found a college that is a strong match academically, socially, and geographically
- Meets or exceeds the admission profile for the college for SAT, ACT Scores and GPA
- Has an academic record that has been consistently solid over time

Applying to an Early Action or Early Decision plan is NOT appropriate for a student who:

- Has not thoroughly researched colleges
- Is applying early just to avoid stress and paperwork
- Is not fully committed to attending the college
- Needs a strong senior fall semester to bring grades up

FACTORS BEYOND THE APPLICATION

One of the most difficult and frustrating things to accept about the world of highly selective admissions is that the schools are not just looking for qualified candidates. At the most selective schools, the vast majority of applicants are “well-qualified.” Many other factors, beyond the control of the individual candidate, can come into play in an institution’s final admission decisions. Perhaps over-enrollment in the previous freshman class means that a school must accept a smaller class this year. A dramatic increase in the number of applications this year means that the school must become even more selective. Each institution has enrollment goals that it tries to meet, whether it’s replacing a timpani player in an orchestra, finding a goalie for the soccer team, or working toward building a racially, religiously, socio-economically, and geographically diverse community.

Demonstrated Interest

All colleges and universities want to maximize both the number of applications they receive and their yield on acceptances. They want the students they ultimately admit to enroll in high percentages. With the Common Application, it is easier than ever for students to apply to schools they know little about and aren't considering very seriously. As such, some schools track what they call 'demonstrated interest.' If you visit campus, arrange an optional interview, meet with a representative who visits Ambassador Christian School, send a thank-you note after a tour or meeting, and/or write a supplemental essay that shows that you know a lot about the school, the admissions office has more reason to believe that you will enroll if admitted than another student who has done none of those things. Note that larger schools can't manage to track demonstrated interest within their super-sized applicant pools and that schools that accept fewer than 10% of their applicants tend to assume their own popularity such that demonstrated interest doesn't play much of a role in their decisions. Many colleges have also decided in recent years that assessing demonstrated interest isn't an equitable practice.

Legacy Status

Most private colleges try to respond to the loyal support of their graduates by giving an edge to the children of alumni in the admissions process. Being the child of an alum will not make much difference for candidates whose numbers are well below the competitive average, but for otherwise competitive candidates, it could provide an extra nudge. Legacies policies are changing in response to national conversations about equitable access.

Artistic Talent

Colleges are interested in special talents. If you have unusual talent in visual or performing art, you should consider submitting an art supplement. Look for special instructions in application materials; these will vary from school to school. Talk with your art, music, dance, or drama teacher about how to create an appropriate submission. Some schools have different (and earlier) deadlines for submission of such material. If you are applying to major in a specific art, music, theater or film program, you may be required to submit additional materials or to audition. In these cases, your portfolio or audition will likely hold more significant weight than if you were simply supplementing your application with these materials. That being said, you will still need to meet the academic standards of the particular institution to which you are applying.

Athletic Ability

Some college coaches are able to select a small number of recruits who may be promised admission based on a prescreening of academic qualifications. Other athletes, especially applying to DIII programs, may receive a note in their file from an interested college coach that will boost their odds of admission. Coaches can also provide information about the likelihood of a walk-on space for an applicant admitted on their academic merits. Remember that if you have contacted college coaches, you are indicating an interest in pursuing your sport in college. It is unethical for you to express athletic interest during the application process and then quit a team once you have been admitted before a first season of competition. If you are being recruited by a college coach, keep your dean informed of how the process is progressing. It is important to discuss with your dean

fallback plans in case a forecasted recruitment falls through or a coach overestimates your odds of admission. If you are interested in playing sports in college, talk with your current coaches and your dean about how to initiate contact with college coaches and how to manage those contacts throughout your application process.

The Essay & Personal Statement

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

Writing a Good College Application Essay

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
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?

Purpose of the essay or personal statement

- Bring life to the person behind the application
- Showcase a student's talents, achievements, experiences, and points of view in ways the rest of the application cannot
- Provide a complete picture and fill in the gaps
- Used in scholarship consideration

General Writing Tips

- Write a solid introduction; this makes the reader want to continue reading
- The bulk of your essay should clearly tell the reader who you are in the case of a short essay (200 words or less) the answer should get to the point in the first sentences, supported by well-chosen examples and a well-focused conclusion
- Use transitions to give your essay a logical flow
- Write a conclusion that impresses upon the reader your qualifications and ties your essay together

Reminders

- Read all instructions carefully
- Answer the prompt
- “Anything” means one strategically chosen topic which highlights or explains what's in the application itself
- Avoid lists of accomplishments but focus on what these activities say about you
- Start early (summer before senior year) and rewrite...write one draft and let it sit for a day
- Have others review your work
- Write in your own authentic voice
- Be careful with humor
- Do NOT manufacture hardship
- Do NOT use big words to make your essay sound more impressive
- Be YOU!

What are some things readers may be looking for?

- Thoughtful reflection: A genuine sense of who you are
- Personal qualities that may include leadership, initiative, openness to growth, persistence, commitment to others, maturity, motivation
- Meaningful participation in activities
- Students willing to go the extra mile to enrich their education
- Think of the essay as your chance to interview. Colleges want to know more about you.

Personal insight questions

Directions

- You will have 8 questions to choose from. You must respond to only 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. However, you should select questions most relevant to your experience and best reflect your circumstances.

Keep in mind

- All questions are equal. All are given equal consideration in the application review process, which means there is no advantage or disadvantage to choosing specific questions over others.
- There is no right or wrong way to answer these questions. It's about getting to know your personality, background, interests, and achievements in your unique voice.
- Use the additional comments field if there are issues you'd like to address that you still need to discuss elsewhere on the application. This should be something other than an essay but rather a place to note unusual circumstances or anything that might be unclear in other parts of the application. If necessary, you may use the additional comments field to report extraordinary circumstances related to COVID-19.

Questions & guidance

Remember, the personal insight questions are just that—personal. This means you should use our guidance for each question just as a suggestion in case you need help. The important thing is expressing who you are, what matters to you, and what you want to share with UC.

Imagine UC was a person. What would you want the UC to know about you if you met them face-to-face? These personal insight questions allow you to tell UCs. You could write about your creative side. Your thoughts on leadership. A challenge you've faced. Whatever questions you answer, make sure you show us your personality—just as you would in real life.

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.**
Things to consider: A leadership role can mean more than just a title. It can mean being a mentor to others, acting as the person in charge of a specific task, or taking the lead role in organizing an event or project. Think about what you accomplished and what you learned from the experience. What were your responsibilities? Did you lead a team? How did your experience change your perspective on leading others? Did you help resolve an important dispute at your school, church, community, or organization? And your

leadership role can extend beyond school activities. For example, do you help out or take care of your family?

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.

Things to consider: What does creativity mean to you? Do you have a creative skill that is important to you? What have you been able to do with that skill? If you used creativity to solve a problem, what was your solution? What are the steps you took to solve the problem? How does your creativity influence your decisions inside or outside the classroom? Does your creativity relate to your major or a future career?

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

Things to consider: If there is a talent or skill that you're proud of, this is the time to share it. You don't necessarily have to be recognized or have received awards for your talent (although if you did and you want to talk about it, feel free to do so). Why is this talent or skill meaningful to you? Does the talent come naturally, or have you worked hard to develop this skill or talent? Does your talent or skill allow you opportunities in or outside the classroom? If so, what are they, and how do they fit into your schedule?

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

Things to consider: An educational opportunity can be anything that has added value to your educational experience and better prepared you for college. For example, participation in an honors or academic enrichment program, enrollment in an academy that's geared toward an occupation or a major, or taking advanced courses that interest you, just to name a few.

If you choose to write about educational barriers you've faced, how did you overcome or strive to overcome them? What personal characteristics or skills did you call on to overcome this challenge? How did overcoming this barrier help shape who you are today?

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?

Things to consider: A challenge could be personal or something you have faced in your community or school. Why was the challenge significant to you? This is a good

opportunity to talk about any obstacles you've faced and what you've learned from the experience. Did you have support from someone else, or did you handle it alone? 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.

Things to consider: Many students have a passion for one specific academic subject area, something that they just can't get enough of. If that applies to you, what have you done to further that interest? Discuss how your interest in the subject developed and describe any experience you have had inside and outside the classroom, such as volunteer work, internships, employment, summer programs, participation in student organizations and/or clubs, and what you have gained from your involvement. Has your interest in the subject influenced you in choosing a major and/or future career? Have you been able to pursue coursework at a higher level in this subject (honors, AP, IB, college or university work)? Are you inspired to pursue this subject further at UC, and how might you do that?

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

Things to consider: Think of community as a term that can encompass a group, team, or a place like your high school, hometown, or home. You can define community as you see fit; just make sure you talk about your role in that community. Was there a problem that you wanted to fix in your community? Why were you inspired to act? What did you learn from your effort? How did your actions benefit others, the wider community, or both? Did you work alone or with others to initiate change in your community?

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

Things to consider: If there's anything you want us to know about you but didn't find a question or place in the application to tell us, now's your chance. What have you not shared with us that will highlight a skill, talent, challenge, or opportunity that will help us know you better? From your point of view, what makes you an excellent choice for UC? Don't be afraid to brag a little.

Additional Comments: Now, let's review the additional comments part in the PIQ sections. This is what it looks like in the UC application. The students have 550 words to use in this section if they would like to explain anything extra. Please remind students that this is not a place to respond to another question to copy and paste their social media, research, websites, or their resume. This is a place to add any new information or details that are not found anywhere else in their application.

In compliance with Prop 209, UC does not use race, ethnicity, and gender in the admissions review. In light of the Supreme Court decision regarding affirmative action, we wish to remind everyone that each PIQ answer will continue to be reviewed in the same manner as before. That is why we continue to ask you to encourage your students to write in their own voice and to set context to their accomplishments. Writing about cultural identity, values, and/or beliefs has always been encouraged in the PIQs.

Beyond the course pattern and GPA, UC also considers a student's academic success in the context of the opportunities available to them. This is referred to as a comprehensive review. Within UC, you may also hear the term "holistic review," which is one method of comprehensive review.

Holistic review refers to the process of reviewing first-year applicants where there is no specific weight on a specific area.

The PIQs are essentially the interview with the UC. It can tie the student's whole application together. Comprehensive Review

- 13 factors that allow the Office of Admissions to evaluate students' achievements in light of opportunities available to them
- Responses should provide readers with information that adds value to their comprehensive review.
- While all UC campuses use the same factors to evaluate applications, they often apply these factors differently.

Value-added responses

- Focus is on the impact on the student and/or the impact they have on others
- Students have the autonomy to choose questions that will allow them to share their experiences and details that matter to them and their journey.
- Opportunity to maximize a student's voice and share what is unique from their perspective.
- Helps admissions readers understand what is important to a student.
- Centers self in the response
- Uses "I" and "my" statements
- Provide specific examples
- These should ALWAYS include specific or tangible examples that focus on the decision, action, and impact of the student.

Missed opportunity responses

- Does not provide much context, or details about the student's experience
- Focuses more on structure than content
- Most of the response is focused on the story or setting the scene when the student should instead focus on how the story has impacted them
- Centers others' narratives rather than their own

Non-academic essay

UC does not need nor want to read an impressionistic writing where the student writes as if we're in the moment with them. Figurative language, metaphors and similes, creative writing. We know this academic writing, but we do not need paragraphs, a hook or quotes. Please answer the prompt as direct and to the point, as if the student was talking to an admission representative.

Hardship for the sake of hardship

Break down the notion of "what we want to hear." Students should speak their truth regardless of what they believe is "overplayed," "overdone," or "stereotyped." We are trained to take their stories at face value, not based on its persuasiveness. If a student simply mentions hardship but has not processed or reflected on it, then it may not be the best content to include.

Themes

A typical pattern we see from students is attempting to weave all of the responses together through an overarching theme. But it takes up the word count and can create unnecessary fluff. Repetition On the topic of repetition, students should keep the content for each response fresh. Sometimes, an experience may have more than one aspect or anecdote that can be used in a response. In these rare cases, it is not deemed repetition.

- For example, a student talking about the mentoring aspects of tutoring (for PIQ #1) and then how the experience of mentoring has led them to develop a passion for teaching (for PIQ #6).

AI & YOUR Writing

The Schools know that students are already using or experimenting with ChatGPT and other AI tools. First, the UCs believe this may be a valuable tool in planning and drafting a response to the PIQs and College Essays. It could be helpful in brainstorming and refining ideas. The tool could be a helpful collaborator and may level the playing field for those students who cannot afford the paid consultants that some students use.

However, the Statement of Application Integrity reads that "all information must be

complete, accurate and reflect their independent thinking and writing.” One danger of submitting an unedited AI response is that this might be flagged for plagiarism. Another concern is that AI tools are unable to provide the things that add the most value to the UC application: a student’s own voice and a student’s own experiences. How much value will UC find in 350 words on leadership, resiliency, or creativity that don’t directly address a student’s experiences? Finally, UC asks students to write in clear, simple, direct prose---as they would in an interview or conversation. This should ease a student’s concern about needing to use some sort of AI tool to help write their response. It may take more time to build a good ChatGPT prompt than to write a clear PIQ response.

UC Personal Insight Questions Tips

1. No time like the present

If you haven’t started already, try to work on your responses soon. You have until Nov. 30 to submit your UC application, but if you rush, you might make mistakes. Use any downtime you have to work on the questions and remember to take short breaks.

2. Remember your audience

Keep in mind that if you apply for admission to more than one UC campus, evaluators from each school will read your responses. Don’t make your answers so specific to each campus that it leaves the others wanting more.

3. Plain text is best.

Even though you will submit your responses through the online application, it’s better to write them in Microsoft Word, Google Docs, or even your notes app, then copy and paste the plain text into the application. It will be easier to make corrections and for other people to review your drafts as you go.

4. Your first draft doesn’t have to be perfect.

Try not to focus on impressing the people who will read your responses. If you have anxiety over what they will think, your originality and unique voice will be lost, and you risk procrastinating in pursuing perfection. Be confident and write responses that you think are the best reflection of you, then take a break (or even sleep on it) and go back and edit them until they’re error-free.

5. Keep the focus on yourself.

Write in the first person. Many students tend to write about their family members and friends, and although they might be huge supporters, this essay is about you, not them. Admissions evaluators want to read about you, so use “I” statements when you write. It makes it more personal.

6. Say it in fewer words.

Your space is limited, so try not to use words you don’t need. Some examples of unnecessary words are “very,” “that,” and “both.” Try to avoid too many “-ing” words. For example, “I was running” is better than “I ran.” “It is important to remember” should just be “Remember.”

7. Keep it professional

Watch your grammar. Don’t use slang or make puns, don’t abbreviate words, and don’t use acronyms. Avoid using shortcuts you would use while texting, and don’t ever use hashtags.

8. Recite sentences in reverse.

When you’re ready to edit, read your sentences out loud to make sure they make sense and flow. One thing editors do is read sentences backward. It sounds bizarre, but it works!

9. Print it out and proofread

Run spellcheck, print it out, and proof what you wrote. You will be surprised at how many things you can catch just by looking at a physical copy.

10. Get a second (and third) opinion.

Have someone proofread what you wrote before you submit it. Getting another pair of eyes to look at it after you’ve been staring at it forever will help catch more errors than you might think.

Good luck!

While this might seem overwhelming, rest assured that the UC personal insight questions are only one factor that Admissions evaluators consider. Your responses can give them more insight into the information you provided on your application.

After you Apply

The day you’ve been dreaming about has finally arrived – you just submitted your college applications! Here’s what to do next. Most of the important work is done. You’ve built a thoughtful list full of colleges you’re excited about attending, you’ve written an awesome college essay, and you stayed organized while completing all the pieces of these applications. Let’s not forget how much work that is – it’s a lot and you did an excellent job of getting it all done. That must feel good! However, once you hit that submit button and wait for admission offices to receive each piece of your application, there are several things you should be doing while waiting for decisions to be released.

1. REGISTERING FOR ONLINE APPLICANT PORTALS

Although it varies by school, you’ll likely get an official “Thanks for applying to [XYZ school]” email anywhere between two and 10 business days after your application has been submitted and downloaded. Most schools will also send information in these emails regarding how to access and register for their online applicant portal. When you receive this information, create an account, and put your login information in a safe place. Having access to the college’s applicant portal will allow you to confirm what an admission office has received and what they’re still waiting to process and add to your file. Also, many colleges release admission decisions via their respective portals, so you’ll need to have an account set up to find out whether you’ve been accepted or not. I advise students to make a habit of periodically checking applicant portals – maybe once a week or so. This not only ensures their application is complete and ready for review leading up to a deadline, but they can also check for any communication from the admission office that may require a response or an action to be taken.

2. COMPLETING SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Yes, while your application is complete and submitted to various colleges, there still may be more work for you to complete before your file will be considered ready for review. This extra work will vary by college. Some colleges may not have any supplemental short essays in their application itself or in the Common Application, but they will appear in your portal once you have access to it. For example, the University of Delaware has done this in recent years for students who submitted applications under their test-optional policy. Other institutions like Bowdoin College for example want students to answer questions via recorded video, and that information isn’t available until after you’ve officially submitted your application. Alternatively, schools like Brown University require your video intro to be submitted by the regular college application deadline. The most common “extra work” I’ve seen in recent years includes the Self-Reported Academic Record, also known as the SRAR. This is essentially an opportunity for

you to self-report your transcript, and generally requires you to include all courses and final grades for each year of high school, as well as your grade 12 courses in progress. How this is used can vary by college, but [the University of Pittsburgh](#) uses the SRAR in place of your official high school transcript during the admission committee review process. Pittsburgh makes this an optional part of your application, but there are other colleges, like Penn State University, that require the SRAR to be complete prior to reviewing your application. Colleges will send an email with directions on how to complete the SRAR, and many times, you'll need access to your online applicant portal to successfully submit it.

3. SUBMITTING NECESSARY FINANCIAL AID FORMS

It's critical to submit your application for admission by the published deadlines or they won't be considered. But there are also deadlines to submit financial aid forms to the colleges on your list. There are two main forms that might need to get filled out and submitted: the [FAFSA](#) and the [CSS Profile](#). The FAFSA is the more universal financial aid form that colleges need. It's required for students who want to be considered for federal student loans, grants, and federal work-study programs, as well as qualifying for state and institutional scholarships. This mostly concerns any need-based aid that a student would be eligible to receive within their financial aid packages. The CSS Profile is an additional form some colleges require. Colleges will use this form to award institutional aid to eligible students. [Here's a list of colleges that require the CSS Profile](#). These forms are similar to the Common App because you only need to complete each one once before sending it to all the colleges on your list. The CSS Profile only needs to be completed prior to freshman year, while the FAFSA must be completed each year you're in college. You'll likely need help from your parents to complete these forms because they each ask financial questions you probably don't know the answers to. Make sure everyone in your family is aware of what needs to be completed and by when, so it's all submitted prior to the stated deadlines on each college's financial aid website.

4. SCHEDULING AN INTERVIEW (IF POSSIBLE)

As part of your research process, you'll find out which colleges on your list require or recommend interviews, and which ones don't offer them. In some cases, students will be able to interview once they've applied for admission. One school that does this is Wake Forest University. The thought of having an interview can be anxiety-provoking, but those nerves will dwindle a bit if you prepare. Some helpful tips I give students is to anticipate common questions getting asked, be yourself, and have your own questions ready to ask.

It's also helpful to do research on that specific school before the interview. If you're scheduling one after applying, though, you've probably already researched the school to make sure it's a good fit for you. To get more details on the above tips and more suggestions on how to have a great college interview, [check out this article](#).

5. DEMONSTRATING INTEREST IN COLLEGES

It's possible that you've already engaged with the colleges on your list in some way prior to applying, but if you haven't done so yet, [now is a great time to start](#). You can engage with a college in different forms, such as an in-person or virtual campus visit, meeting a college rep at your high school or a college fair, following the admissions office on social media, or any other type of in-person or virtual event experience. The schools on your list may offer a variety of opportunities for you to engage with them via specific admission-related events like campus

visits, information sessions, or academic program events. This is important because as part of the evaluation process, some admission offices will consider a student's level of demonstrated interest when making decisions. Demonstrated interest is typically not considered at highly selective colleges and large public universities. However, institutions that don't fall into either of those categories are more likely to be interested in knowing if you hold their campus in high regard. It can be difficult to figure out which schools consider demonstrated interest and which don't.

6. MAINTAINING GOOD GRADES

Another benefit of completing applications is that it allows you to solely focus on being a high school senior again. And that means keeping your grades up and staying involved in your extracurricular activities. Your academic progress throughout senior year will be sent to colleges in the form of a midyear report and your final transcript. You've worked hard for three-plus years prior to applying to college. Make sure you finish your high school career strong by staying engaged. Completing and submitting college applications is a huge accomplishment that should be celebrated accordingly. A lot of work has gone into it, and finally hitting the submit button likely feels like reaching the top of Mount Everest. However, even when you reach the summit, you can't stop paying attention on your way back down the mountain. After officially becoming an applicant, and putting your best foot forward in your application, stay engaged and pay attention to the details. That way, you'll put yourself in the best possible position to receive good news from admission offices.

THE COMPLETE APPLICATION

How colleges pull all these parts together and weigh them varies. For most colleges, the order of importance goes something like this: Your academic record—the rigor of your curriculum, the grades you've earned, and the pattern of grades over four years. Your personal qualities and extracurricular record as revealed in your application and essay (as well as through comments in recommendations and interviews) Letters from the school (teachers and dean) SAT or ACT scores when required or included. Any one of these factors, if unusually strong or unusually weak, can become more important than it might otherwise have been. Intellectual curiosity, motivation, resilience, creativity, originality, warmth, self-awareness, maturity, thoughtfulness, and concern for others are all qualities that can be factored into a committee decision. In the end, however, it is subjective synthesis of all these factors, not a predictable formula that will determine admissions decisions.

WHAT TO DO AFTER GETTING ACCEPTED TO COLLEGE

After you've celebrated with friends and family, there's more work ahead.

1. Carefully review your admissions and financial aid offers. Make sure the information in the admission offer is correct. For example, have you been accepted to the term (fall, spring, or summer), campus, and academic department or program you expected? If you received financial aid, make sure you understand the terms of any loan or scholarship you are accepting and that you understand how much you and your family will be paying out of your own pockets. See these [tips for evaluating a financial aid offer](#) and [negotiating for more financial aid](#).

2. Formally accept your admissions offer. Follow the instructions on your acceptance letter, email, or admissions portal.
3. Decline other offers of admission. Colleges want to know if you won't be attending so they can offer your spot to another student. This can be as easy as clicking a box on the admissions website or emailing the admissions office.
4. Set up your college email account. Once set up, use it for all your college communications.
5. Follow your college on social media. Join the Facebook or other social media groups for your freshman class. Also follow the social media accounts of the admissions office and relevant academic departments and clubs so you don't miss important announcements or events.
6. Ask your high school to send your final transcript to the college. Don't let your grades slip. Deciding that you've worked hard enough for three and a half years and coasting in the second semester of your senior year could get your college acceptance revoked. It's not common, but it does happen.
7. Sign up for freshman orientation. You might have the option of attending orientation virtually or in person, but in either case, you should check to see if you need to sign up to reserve a spot.
8. Register for placement tests, if required. Also, be sure to complete any assignments from your college that you might receive.
9. Look for important documents from your college. Carefully read every email, text, or letter you receive from your college. Share this information with your parents, especially if they will be making payments or deposits on your behalf. Here's some of the information you can expect to receive.
 - Confirmation of your final financial aid award. Indicate which awards you'll accept and return the signed form to the financial aid office.
 - Housing and meal-plan forms. Look for a housing application and contract, and instructions for selecting a roommate and paying your housing deposit. You'll also get instructions for selecting a meal plan.
 - Medical records and coverage. Your college may want to see your immunization record or require a physical exam. It may also offer you medical insurance.
 - Bills for room and board, tuition, and other fees. Colleges normally expect you and your family to pay what you owe by the beginning of each semester or quarter.
10. Find and get in touch with your roommate(s). If you've been assigned a roommate or roommates by your college, connect with them by email, video conference, or in person -- whatever is most comfortable. At some point, you will want to discuss any shared items each of you will bring to the dorm room, such as a refrigerator, a coffee maker, or a microwave. If you're looking for off-campus housing, check with your college's housing office for information about finding roommates and rentals in the area. Or consult an internet roommate finder service, such as RoomieMatch or Diggz.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE NOT ADMITTED ANYWHERE

1. Consider applying to other colleges that are still accepting applications. Colleges with rolling admissions will review applications until their class is filled. For a frequently updated [list of colleges accepting applications for the upcoming fall term](#), visit the National Association for College Admission Counseling.
2. Think about attending a local community college. Many students complete their general education requirements at a community college and later transfer to a four-year university. Here are [seven reasons to consider attending a community college](#).
3. Look into taking a gap year. Some students find it helpful to take a year or semester away from academics. A [gap year](#) can include exploring a career path or interest, working full time, volunteering, or traveling.

WHAT TO DO OVER SUMMER BREAK

Over the summer, you'll have more time to lay the groundwork for your new post-high school life. Here are some tips.

1. Figure out logistics. Whether you are moving away from home, traveling, or staying put in your hometown, your post-high school life will likely be more independent. You may need to set up a new bank account, get [a credit or debit card](#), and create [a budget](#). You should also review transportation options for getting to and from classes and/or work, and how you will arrange healthcare or other support.
2. Look into work-study or other part-time work. If you qualify for work-study, find out when you can begin applying for positions on campus. If you're looking for a non-work-study job, consider looking for one before you move to campus. The best jobs often get snapped up quickly.
3. Give the college permission to talk to your parents or guardians. This helps your family get information about your college bills and lets the college communicate with them if there is an emergency.
4. Watch for updates. Check social media and your college's website regularly for updates about orientation, move-in day, or safety protocols due to the coronavirus.

Applying to college and deciding where to attend isn't easy, and you should celebrate these accomplishments. But don't forget to take care of these important details after you accept your admissions offer or make other plans.

Financial Aid

Financial Aid

FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid can cover a significant portion of college costs for families that qualify, and deans can help families navigate financial aid application processes and affordability questions.

WHAT IS FINANCIAL AID?

Financial aid is help for meeting college costs, both direct educational costs (tuition, fees, and books) and personal living expenses (room and board, personal expenses, and travel).

Broadly, there are two kinds of financial aid available: aid based on need, as determined by the College Scholarship Service, federal guidelines, or institutional policies, and no-need or merit scholarships awarded for academic excellence, athletic prowess, artistic talent, leadership, or other criteria.

NEED-BASED FINANCIAL AID

Individual colleges determine financial aid packages based upon the information provided by you on several forms -- the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the College Scholarship Service (CSS) PROFILE, and the college's own institutional forms. These forms will help the financial aid office determine the estimated family contribution (EFC) to the student's educational costs. The difference between the cost of attending the college and the EFC is the need. The individual college will put together a financial aid package designed to meet that need. At most colleges, a package will include a combination of grants, loans, and work-study employment. Families receiving financial aid from Ambassador Christian School should note that college financial aid packages will differ from high school financial aid packages. Your dean and the Net Price Calculator on college web sites can help you anticipate college costs.

Grants are funds that do not have to be repaid. Grants are usually awarded on the basis of need alone and can come from a variety of sources -- Pell Grants (federal money), state grants (usually available only to students attending college in their home state, such as Cal Grants), and grant money from the college's own financial aid budgets.

Loans must be repaid, generally after you have graduated or left school, and usually have lower interest rates than commercial loans. The amount of these federal student loans are capped to ensure that students are not overburdened with debt when they leave school. There are also federal loans available to parents if their child is enrolled in school at least half-time and makes satisfactory academic progress. Parents may borrow up to the difference between the cost of education and other financial aid awarded. The loan, which is not based on parents' income, has a variable interest rate and repayment begins immediately.

College Work Study Program involves earning tuition dollars or money for other college costs as payment for a job, usually one arranged for you by the college. Students normally work up to ten hours a week in an on-campus job selected by the student. Not every college can meet full need for every student; it is increasingly common for a student to be admitted to a college but denied the full amount of financial aid needed to attend. This practice is called "gapping." Some of the best endowed colleges guarantee that they will meet 100% of demonstrated need.

However, many schools consider financial need while making their admission decisions. Institutions that can afford to offer financial aid to all aid applicants have a “need blind” admission policy. “Need aware” schools acknowledge that their financial aid budgets are not big enough to fund all applicants who apply for needbased aid; the admissions process at “need aware” schools will be slightly more competitive for those applying for financial aid.

HOW DOES FINANCIAL AID WORK?

“Need” is the difference between what it costs to attend a particular college and what you and your family can afford to pay toward those costs. Your financial aid eligibility is usually equal to the amount of your demonstrated need. Since the amount you are able to pay stays the same whether the costs are high or low, you would be eligible for different amounts of aid at different colleges. In fact, you could end up paying the same amount at a high-cost college as you would at a low-cost college. Even if your family is relatively affluent, you might qualify for aid if educational costs are high enough.

APPLYING FOR FINANCIAL AID IN THE 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR

The most crucial part of applying for financial aid is adhering to deadlines for each form. All students and parents applying for aid at any public college or university will have to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) which comes from the Department of Education. The FAFSA can be filed as early as October 1. It will call for figures from the 2021 Tax Return, which parents should have available by the fall of 2022. The form is sent to a central processor who analyzes it and sends the results, called a needs analysis, to the colleges and scholarship programs that have been designated by the applicant. Undocumented students will not be eligible for federal aid but will generally be eligible to receive private funds from the college. College financial aid offices will often guide undocumented students to an application process that mirrors their process for international students applying for financial aid. Applicants should feel comfortable requesting information about financial aid for undocumented students; the colleges to which our students apply will have thoughtful processes in place. All students and parents applying for aid at California colleges or universities, public or private, should apply for California State Scholarships, commonly known as Cal Grants.

Necessary information considered for a Cal Grant is included on the FAFSA. An additional form, the GPA Verification Form. Many families applying to private colleges will have to also file the CSS PROFILE, a customized financial aid form produced by the College Scholarship Service through the College Board. The PROFILE is tailored to reflect the specific requirements of the various colleges to which the student is applying and from which aid is being sought. There is a fee for the preliminary registration form in addition to a charge for each institution listed in a student’s PROFILE. You must check the college’s application materials to see if the PROFILE is required and when it must be submitted. Each college has its own deadline. In addition to these standardized forms, some colleges still require short forms of their own, and some will request a certified copy of the most recent 1040 form. Again, each college has its own deadline. Make sure you know what it is for each college.

Meeting deadlines is crucial; most colleges will not have aid available to families who are late with their paperwork. Shortly after you submit your FAFSA, you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) indicating your expected family contribution. The colleges that you designate will

receive this information as well. They will use this information in combination with the data they collect from the PROFILE and/or their own forms to come up with a financial aid package. If you feel that any package is inappropriate, it is best to contact the financial aid administrator at the colleges directly. They will be interested in any supplemental data you may wish to provide. Letters explaining any unusual or special circumstances affecting the family's financial situation are welcomed by financial aid offices and should be sent directly to financial aid offices of the individual institutions. As part of the college counseling program we will offer a two-part Financial Aid Workshop in the fall of senior year so I can be helpful with the entire financial aid application process.

MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS

Aside from the National Merit program and competitive scholarships sponsored by businesses and community service organizations, merit aid is generally awarded by an institution specifically for use at that institution. Merit aid might also be sponsored by a religious, ethnic, or professional group for students who belong to that religious or ethnic group or aspire to that profession. Some businesses also sponsor scholarships for the children of employees. Students should inquire wherever they apply about merit scholarships. Alumni associations at the University of California campuses, for example, sponsor merit scholarships for which outstanding students can compete. Some excellent private colleges have merit scholarships for outstanding students. Students should inquire at their houses of worship and parents should inquire at their places of employment or in their civic groups about scholarships available from those sources. There are several corporate and independent scholarships available by application. Many of these are listed at www.fastweb.com; this is a free service, sponsored by corporations advertising on the site, which allows students to find scholarships that match their individual profiles. Athletic scholarships are generally only available through Division I programs and only to athletes distinguishing themselves on a national level within their sport(s). ROTC scholarships, only for use at colleges and universities with a ROTC program, cover tuition and books and provide an additional monthly stipend. Students interested in these scholarships should begin investigating them immediately.

OTHER TIPS FOR FINANCIAL AID APPLICANTS

Do not eliminate a college because you think it costs too much. Apply for admission and financial aid, and see what happens. Most colleges can meet the demonstrated need.

Keep copies of everything, including your FAFSA and PROFILE forms.

In April, if the financial aid package offered does not accurately reflect your family's situation, it is possible to request reconsideration. Your dean can help you if you need to file a financial aid appeal. Rely on your dean and on financial aid officers at the colleges to which you are applying rather than costly computer service organizations or scholarship/financial aid "experts" who solicit your business.

Start Planning Early

Plan how to pay for college before you start. Ask school counselors and the college financial aid office about state, college, and nonprofit grants and scholarships you can apply for. Be sure to meet application deadlines. Start saving before you get to college. Consider prepaid tuition and education savings (529) plans.

Fill Out the FAFSA® Form

Before each year of college, apply for federal grants, work-study, and loans with the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) form. Your college uses your FAFSA data to determine your federal aid eligibility. Many states and colleges use FAFSA data to award their own aid. After submission, you'll receive your Student Aid Report.

Review Your Aid Offer

Your aid offer explains the types and amounts of aid a college is offering you, and your expected costs for the year. If you've been accepted to multiple colleges, compare the costs and aid offers. Accept the aid from the school that's best for you and inform them of other sources of aid (such as scholarships) you expect to receive.

Graduate and Start Repayment

As you prepare to graduate, get ready to repay your student loans. Good news! Federal student loan borrowers have a six-month grace period before you begin making payments. Use this time to get organized and choose a repayment plan. If you start falling behind on your payments, contact your loan servicer to discuss repayment options.

GRANTS	Free money from the state, federal government and /or the university, based in financial need. Grants do not have to be paid back.
Scholarships	Free money awarded to students for academic achievement, interests, special talents, financial need, or a combination of different factors.
Work Study	Federal program which funds part-time student employment to help pay for college. The amount awarded to each student is based on their individual need.
Loans	Money that is borrowed by the student or parent, which must be repaid with interest. Money can be borrowed from Federal, State, or Private Loan agencies.

How do I apply for this money?

FAFSA	Dream Act
Who should file a FAFSA? U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen with valid social security (not DACA). Males between the ages of 18 and 5, must register for selective service	Who should file the CA Dream Act Application? Undocumented students with a social security, or only a DACA social security. Student must meet the AB540 criteria. Males between the ages of 18 and 25, must register for selective service
Deadline: To apply for FAFSA or Dream Act you must submit an online application between October 1st and March 2nd of Senior Year (12th grade) in high school. This is the priority deadline for consideration for the CAL Grants and institutional awards.	
VISIT: www.fafsa.ed.gov	VISIT: https://dream.csac.ca.gov
What will I need to apply? INFORMATION NEEDED: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student License # (if applicable)• Student's SSN or Permanent Resident number• Student date of birth• Parent 1 date of birth	B540 Eligibility Criteria <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Attend a California High School for 3 or more years2. Graduate with a High School Diploma or GED Equivalent3. Enroll in an accredited higher education institution in California

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent 1 Social Security number (if applicable) • Parent 2 date of birth • Parent 2 Social Security number (if applicable) • Date of parent marriage, remarried, divorced, or widowed (if applicable) • Parent(s) total cash, savings, checking account value • State Disability received (if applicable) • Child Support amount received or paid (if applicable) <p>DOCUMENTS NEEDED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student W-2 (if student worked) • Parent(s) W-2 • Students most recent tax return • Parent(s) most recent tax return • For the year 2018-2019 did you or your parents receive any of these benefits: Social Security, TANF, Workers Comp, WIC, Food Stamps 	<p>4. Must file an affidavit, stating that the filer will apply for legal residency as soon as possible.</p> <p>5. Must not hold a valid non-immigrant visa (F, J, H, L, A, E etc)</p> <p>Note: Males between the ages of 18 and 25 must register for selective service</p> <p>What will I need to apply? Please see list to the left.</p>
Having trouble completing your application?	
VISIT: https://fafsa.ed.gov/help.htm	Visit: https://dream.csac.ca.gov/application/DreamActHelp.aspx

CSS Profile

What is the CSS Profile?	The CSS Profile is an online application that collects information used by nearly 400 colleges and scholarship programs to award non-federal aid. (For federal aid you must compete the FAFSA, available Oct. 1 at fafsa.ed.gov). Some college may require the CSS profile from both biological/adoptive parents in cases of divorce or separation.
When do I complete the CSS Profile?	You may complete the CSS Profile as early as October 1. You should submit no later than two weeks before the earliest priority filing date specified by your college.
Who must complete the CSS Profile?	Check your colleges' information to determine whether they require the CSS Profile. A list of participating colleges is also found on the CSS Profile homepage.
How do I complete the CSS Profile?	You submit the CSS Profile at cssprofile.org . Once you sign-in, you will find a list of the useful documents, such as federal tax returns and other financial information that you will need to complete the application. Help is provided within the application and additional help is available by chat, phone, or email by clicking "Contact Us" in the application
What does the CSS Profile Cost?	The fee for the initial application is \$25. Additional reports are \$16. Payments may be made via credit or debit card. First-time domestic college applicants may receive CSS profile fee waivers if the student qualified for a SAT fee waiver, or the student is an orphan or ward of the court under the age of 24 or based on parental income and family size.
Visit	Visit www.cssprofile.org

Cal Grants

Cal Grants at a Glance			
Cal Grant A 3.0 high school GPA required	Cal Grant B 2.0 high school GPA	Cal Grant C 2.0 high school GPA	Cal Grant Transfer Entitlement Grant 2.4 Community College GPA required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$12,294 at University of California \$5472 at California State University \$9084 at qualifying private California colleges \$4000 at qualifying non WASC accredited for profit institutions If you attend a California Community College, your grant is held in reserve until transfer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$1670 living allowance for your first year, plus tuition and fee award beyond first year in the same amounts as Cal Grant A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$547 for books, tools, and equipment for a technical or career education. \$2462 for tuition (if not attending a California Community College) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Cal Grant A and Cal Grant B <p>*** Cal Grants are only available for students pursuing a first-time professional degree. Cal Grant offers are subject to state budget requirements. Check www.csac.ca.gov for current award amounts</p>
Ambassador Christian School will submit Cal Grant GPA Verification			

Financial Aid Resources and Scholarship Information

Financial Aid Websites	Scholarship Resource Websites
<p>www.fafsa.ed.gov – the official Financial Aid website where students can complete the application and find additional information.</p> <p>www.pin.ed.gov – Financial Aid PIN website where students and parents can apply for their PIN. The PIN is a four-digit numeral code that serves as the security code to access the application and electronic signature to submit the application online.</p> <p>www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov – Provides an early personalized eligibility estimate for federal student aid and estimated family expected contribution.</p> <p>www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions_paying-foruc/index.html - Financing your UC education</p> <p>https://www.2.calstate.edu/apply.paying-for-college - provides information regarding cost and estimator tool for students and parents</p> <p>www.calgrants.org - California Cal Grants</p> <p>www.lacashforcollege.org – Los Angeles County Cash for College website</p> <p>www.scholarshare.org – California 529 scholarship savings plan</p> <p>https://collegecost.ed.gov/netpricecenter.aspx -allows prospective students to enter information about themselves to find out what students like them paid to attend the institution in previous years.</p> <p>https://www.wiche.edu/wue - With WUE, out of state students pay no more than 150% of in state tuition at participating schools, compared with nonresident rates that can exceed 300% of in state rates</p>	<p>http://www.finaid.org/- the calculator featured in this site is a great tool for finding out exactly how much you will need in scholarships.</p> <p>www.gmsp.org – Gate Millennium Undergraduate Scholars Program</p> <p>www.jackierobinson.org – Jackie Robinson Foundation</p> <p>www.scholarships.com – a free college scholarship search and financial aid resource. It provides links to contests that offer scholarship awards up to \$10,000.</p> <p>www.fastweb.com – This site offers a free scholarship search along with other resources for college students</p> <p>www.uncf.org – United Negro College Fund - provides resources and scholarships for African American students</p> <p>www.apiasf.org – Asian and Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund –provides resources and scholarships for Asian American Students</p> <p>www.hsf.net – Hispanic Scholarship Fund – provides resources and scholarships for Latina/Hispanic students</p> <p>www.bue.edu or www.collegefund.org – Bureau of Indian Education and the American Indian College Fund – Provides resources and scholarships for Native American students.</p> <p>www.chafee.csac.ca.gov – California Student Aid Commission – Chafee Grant for Foster Youth</p> <p>www.Raise.me - With RaiseMe, anyone can earn money for college starting in 9th grade based on their achievements in school and life.</p> <p>Scholarships and Resources for AB-540 students: www.maldef.org www.salef.org www.ab540.com</p>

Financial Aid

FAFSA: fafsa.ed.gov (File October 1 - March 2)

DREAM: caldreamact.org

FSA ID - Student	
FSA ID - Parent	
Username	
Password	

Cal Grant/WebGrants 4 Students: <https://mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov/>

University Scholarships: Check individual colleges

CSS Profile: Check if required by individual private colleges

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.

Scholarships

Scholarship

The best scholarships come "in-house" from the schools to which they apply and must be completed as part of the early action/early decision applications to get the most money. These same scholarships are given based on merit or need base. We also encourage students and parents to apply for financial aid every year even when they know they don't qualify. Many times, aid will be offered in later years while the student continues to be enrolled at a college.

It's never too early to start researching and applying for scholarships. Please check the list below and begin planning and preparing for scholarship program applications and deadlines. Also check google classroom for reminders about scholarships with upcoming deadlines. Also check the weekly newsletter for scholarships with close deadlines.

Below are some resources for students and parents to discover together. Please Scroll all the way to the bottom to see all the scholarships our school advertises. If you have any questions about, please stop by the Counseling office and see Ms. Hicks.

Scholarship Websites...from Western Association for College Admission Counseling

SCHOLARSHIP SEARCH SITES

- [AffordableColleges.com](#)'s mission is to help you earn your degree without taking on thousands of dollars in debt. Our site is a free resource designed to help everyone address the costs of college while pursuing their goals. We can show you the path to a reasonably priced higher education.
- [Asian American and Pacific Islander Americans Scholarships](#)
Scholarships for Asian American Pacific Islands Students.
- [Can Learn](#)
Another Canadian free scholarship search site
- [Cappex](#)-Use this website to find merit money at colleges and universities across the U.S.
- [College Answer](#)
Sponsored by Sallie Mae, they use the Scholarship Experts data base.
- [College Board Scholarship Search](#)
Utilizes a database of more than 2,300 sources of college funding totaling almost \$3 billion in scholarships and aid.
- [College Connection Scholarships](#)
This service provides free scholarship searches and personalized scholarship application letters.
- [College Data](#)
This free scholarship search allows students to save results in a data locker.
- [College Scholarships](#) - This service provides free scholarship searches and personalized scholarship application letters.
- [College Tool Kit](#)
Search for scholarships by geography, heritage, religion, extracurricular, family affiliation, high school, or scholarship name.

- CollegeFunds
Helps you hunt down the most ideal student loan, scholarships, and other financial aid resources available
- eCampus Tours
Uses a database of more than 10,000 scholarship programs that distribute awards worth more than \$36 million.
- Educational Excellence for Hispanics
To help Hispanic students and their families navigate the college process.
- Edvisors Network -These folks allow you to search for scholarships by geography, heritage, religion, extra-curriculars, family affiliation, high school, or scholarship name.
- Fast Web
Large database of free scholarships
- FastAid
The World's largest and oldest private sector scholarship database
- Financial Aid Officer
This free scholarship search engine lists scholarships worth \$1.45 billion.
- Gates Millennium Scholars Program
Billion dollar grant from the pockets of Bill and Melinda Gates supports the higher educational needs of high-achieving minorities
- Go College
This search encompasses 800,000 individual awards worth over \$2.8 billion in scholarships
- International Education Financial Aid
College scholarship and grant information for US and international students wishing to study abroad
- Latino College Dollars
Scholarships for Latino students regardless of immigration status.
Scholarship database of 3,0000 sources worth up to \$3 billion
- Scholarship Experts
One of the best, most comprehensive free online scholarship searches available to students, parents, and educators.
- Scholarships
- Scholarships Canada
Canada's most comprehensive scholarship portal
- Scholarships.com - This site claims a “scholarship database of 3,0000 sources worth up to \$3 billion.”
- School Soup
Scholarship data base lists \$32 billion in scholarships
- Study Abroad Funding
Our comprehensive database of study abroad scholarships, fellowships, and grants can help make your dream of studying abroad a financial possibility and a profound reality. Scholarship searches can be conducted by country or subject.
- The Scholarship Page
Started by a student in 1997

Scholarship Application

Crafting a winning scholarship application requires a strategic approach. Scholarships are awards by organizations with a specific goal in mind. Perhaps they want to encourage study in a certain field or encourage participation in a particular hobby. This means that for each scholarship you apply for you need to present yourself as the perfect applicant for the award by displaying how you meet the criteria. In each application you will end up presenting a different aspect of yourself and your personality.

Students with a chance at athletic scholarships usually are involved with recruiters, so it could be enough to focus on the athletic abilities and get coaches involved with making phone calls and/or writing recommendations. However, for an academic or science award you might need to focus on presenting your winning research project to a scholarship board. This will require some effort to tailor your efforts to the awarding organization.

Whatever the scholarship, the key is to determine what values and qualities the scholarship committee wants. They are looking for specific traits in the scholarship winners. Once you have determined this, construct every facet of your application (essay, recommendations, interview, etc.) to demonstrate how you meet these objectives.

Tell Them What They Want to Hear...

Honestly. Politicians are notorious for telling their constituents what they want to hear, which can be a good or a bad thing! Good politicians do not lie, but they are skilled at putting a positive spin on their speeches and tailoring it to the audience. We urge you to NEVER lie on an application but take care to you present yourself and your work in the best possible way. Appeal to the interests of your audience, which will be the scholarship review board. Ask yourself the following questions about them:

- What is the mission of the organization giving the scholarship?
- Who is reading your application?
- Who is your competition?

Go For the Gusto... Quickly Selection committees' pore through so many applications that you need to grab their attention immediately, or risk getting placed at the bottom of the pile. This can be challenging, because often the space on the form is limited. Therefore, you need to feature your most impressive points first.

If you have listed four extracurricular activities, assume that some judges won't even read beyond the first two. This doesn't mean that all judges will be this lazy, but there are always some who are. Therefore, it's extremely important for you to prioritize the information that you present, and rank your accomplishments according to the following four criteria:

1. Fit with scholarship organization's goal. The most crucial factor in prioritizing your achievements is how they fit with the goal of the scholarship.
2. Scope. Prioritize your accomplishments by their scope, or how much of an impact they have made. Be sure that you spell out, briefly, details about this impact.
3. Uniqueness. Since your application will be compared to that of perhaps thousands of others, include accomplishments that are uncommon.

4. Recentness. This is the least important criterion, but if you get stuck, put the more recent achievements first.
- 5.

Use Your Smarts

As you are completing your applications, keep in mind that while you may be applying for a public service scholarship you should also include at least a few academic achievements. For example, it does not hurt to list in a leadership scholarship application that you also came in second place at the county science fair – it shows that you are a multi-faceted individual. Also, make sure that you write actively and compellingly about your experiences.

Leadership Is Always Better Than Membership

If you've ever tried to motivate a group of peers to do anything without taking the easy way out (bribery), then you know that it takes courage, intelligence, and creativity to be a leader. Because of this, many scholarships give extra points to reward leadership. Regardless of the subject, scholarship judges want to know that the dollars will be awarded to someone who will not only make a difference in the future but who will also be a leader and motivate others to do so as well. Take charge of some elements in your activities, and don't hesitate to refer to it in your applications!

Extracurricular Activities and Hobbies

Scholarship organizations recognize the importance of a variety of activities, which is why so many scholarship applications include a section for extracurricular activities or hobbies. Award committees want to see evidence that you do more than read textbooks and take exams. Demonstrating a variety of interests – even better if they are a little out of the ordinary! – shows that you can transcend studying, and that you are a well-rounded person. Organizations love this kind of applicant...

Honors and Awards

Many applications will ask for a list of honors and awards, and this is a chance for you to throw modesty to the side and boast a bit! Be honest and don't pad your resume, but also don't overlook your awards. We always suggest that students highlight all their honors and awards in a way that will get the scholarship committee to pay attention to your application.

Tailor Your Application to Fit

Scholarship applications offer limited space in which to cram a lot of information. You will need to do a lot of editing and may even have to omit many of your accomplishments. As you fill out the application you may find that you are trying to squeeze in too many details, or that you have a bit of room and can expand on your most impressive achievements. Don't forget to adjust font sizes and line spacing if necessary and keep it readable. In general, don't go smaller than a 10 point font.

Filling the Application

In general, try not to leave any area of the scholarship application blank. You don't need to fill the entire space but try to list something in every section. Just remember not to stretch the truth, don't lie, and make sure that any "awards" are somewhat relevant. If you've never held any kind of job, then you don't need to list anything under work experience. Remember, however, that if

you painted your grandmother's house one summer and got paid for it, that type of experience could be listed.

Before you add any detail, take a moment to think like a scholarship reviewer. Is the information relevant? Does it seem like a stretch? If you cannot convince yourself that what you are listing is justified, then it will certainly not go over well with the actual judges. Crafting a winning application takes time. Make sure you give yourself plenty of it. However, you also need to balance quality with quantity. Because each scholarship is judged on different criteria, it is not always easy to know whether you will be selected for the scholarship. With time as the limiting factor, apply to as many scholarships as you can find that match up with your talents, goals, and achievements. Even the smallest scholarships look very impressive on a resume and curriculum vitae!

Scholarship Q & A

Q: How can I find out about what scholarships are available?

A: Your best scholarship research sources include: The internet (try some of the many free scholarship search engines, such as the one that can be found at <http://www.financialaid.com/sse/login.cfm>); your local community (contact your local chamber of commerce); and your high school guidance counselor and/or college financial aid officer.

Q: Can I apply for a scholarship if I don't know what college I'm going to attend?

A: Absolutely. You can start applying for scholarships as early as your freshman year in high school. If you win a scholarship before you know which college you'll attend, the scholarship organization usually will either write you a check (with your assurance that you will use the money for college), or simply give you the money when you decide where to attend college.

Q: Should I have to pay a fee to apply for a scholarship?

A: In most cases, no. Since scholarships are meant to support students who need funds to pay for college, they shouldn't require those same students to shell out money. Usually, scholarships that require a fee are scams. Be aware and avoid these types of programs!

Q: If I didn't win a scholarship, can I apply again next year?

A: Usually. Unless you no longer qualify for some reason, you can apply for a scholarship again. However, consider whether your application will be dramatically stronger the next time around. If you will essentially submit the same application, you probably will be better off spending your time applying to a different scholarship competition.

Q: Can I lose my scholarship once it's been awarded?

A: Yes. Most scholarships that are renewable, meaning that you may receive them for more than one year, will have requirements for you to keep the award. These may stipulate that you must continue to attend the same college, maintain a certain GPA, or keep the same major. If you fail to live up to the requirements, they may revoke the scholarship.

Q: Can I apply for scholarships while I'm a college student?

A: Certainly. In fact, one of the biggest mistakes that many students make is NOT applying for scholarships once they graduate from high school! There are literally thousands of scholarships

available for students who are already in college... and even some for graduate students. Look for scholarship opportunities through your college or university.

Q: If I win a scholarship, will my college take away some of my other financial aid?

A: Possibly. Many colleges require you to report the scholarships that you win and then adjust your financial aid package. For example, if you win a \$1,000 scholarship, the college may decrease your financial aid package by \$1,000. However, if your college has this kind of policy, remember to ask them to decrease your loan amount, instead of your grants. It's better to receive more in scholarships, so that you don't have to pay back loan money later! It is still worthwhile because scholarships look great on your resume.

Q: Can I transfer my scholarship if I go to another school?

A: Maybe. Of course, if the scholarship is from a college or an alumni organization, you can only use it at that specific college. However, if the scholarship is from another group, you can probably transfer the scholarship with you, as long as you still meet the eligibility requirements. However, don't make any assumptions. It's important that you contact the awarding organization directly to ask and make any necessary arrangements.

Q: Should I bother applying for scholarships even if I don't have perfect grades?

A: Definitely, just do your research first. There are scholarships for all kinds of things, including achievements, leadership, public service, art, athletics, theatre, and dance. Even the scholarships that are based on academic achievements are often not solely based on grade point averages. Instead, the scholarship boards may be seeking students who best fit their selection criteria, which may include other factors like character, motivation, leadership, ethnicity, religious affiliation, or involvement in specific activities. Find the scholarship/s that fit you best and apply!

Q: Do all scholarships require an essay?

A: No, but most do. Essays are really the best (and often the only) way for scholarship judges to hear directly from you as an application, and to get to know you beyond your grades, test scores and other data that you provide on your application form. There are some types of scholarships that don't require essays, however, especially those for art or music that may require a portfolio, project, or audition.

Q: Can I win a scholarship if my parents make too much money?

A: Yes. There are two types of scholarships: need-based and merit-based. As the name suggests, need-based scholarships are based on your financial need and your parents' income. Merit-based scholarships are based on other factors such as academic or extracurricular achievements and will not usually be affected by family income.

Q: What is a renewable scholarship?

A: Renewable scholarships can be won once and then renewed in the following years. These are the best kind of scholarship, because you can win the money for more than one year! Just make sure that you live up to your end of the scholarship bargain, and you will receive money each year.

Testing

Testing

Keep Test Scores in Perspective

Colleges consider GRADES and COURSE RIGOR more than test scores for admission. Many colleges have become “test optional” - for a list go to: www.fairtest.org. More colleges do a “holistic review” in the admissions process to include more factors than GPA and ACT or SAT score.

TESTING

You are responsible for making sure the appropriate scores are sent to all the schools to which you are applying; requirements and other testing policies vary significantly between institutions, so please be sure to review testing policies at each school.

SAT & ACT

Many colleges and universities are actively reexamining the role that standardized testing plays in their admissions processes. The COVID crisis forced all college admissions processes to become temporarily test-optional, many colleges will remain testoptional permanently, and many excellent colleges were already test-optional pre-pandemic. Unless you have strong reason to believe that you will be unsuccessful with standardized testing or that finding an opportunity to test will be a major hardship, the deans would suggest that students try taking an official SAT or ACT during their junior year or the summer between junior and senior years. Schools do not have a preference as to whether you take the SAT or ACT. If you are proud of your scores, they may be a helpful inclusion with your application. Talk to your dean about your testing plan. Test practice or test preparation with a tutor can be helpful to improve scores, but grades are more important to college admissions than test scores, so it is essential that test prep not overshadow nor interfere with schoolwork. Discounted test preparation tutoring is available for students receiving financial aid from Ambassador Christian School; contact the ACS Financial Aid Office for more information.

THE SAT VS. THE ACT

THE SAT	THE ACT
The SAT is scored on a scale of 400 – 1600. There are two sections scores: Reading and Writing, and Math. The four timed sections of the SAT range from 25 minutes to 65 minutes. The Essay is optional and scored separately. The essay does NOT factor into the total score.	The ACT is scored on a scale of 1 -36. There are four sections: English, Math, Reading and Science. All four sections are averaged to generate the total composite score and each section ranges from 35 to 60 minutes. The Essay is optional and scored separately. The essay does NOT factor into the composite score.
1 Evidence – Based Reading and Writing Test: Writing and Language: 4 passages/ 11 questions each (35 minutes)	1 English Section: 75 questions (45 minutes) 5 passages/ 15 questions each
Reading: 52 questions (65 minutes)	1 Reading Section: 40 questions (35 minutes) 1 Prose passage 1 Social Science passage

1 Literature passage 1 Social Science passage 2 Science passages 1 Great Global Conversation passage	1 Humanities passage 1 Natural Science passage
1 Mathematics Test: No Calculator: 20 questions (25 minutes) Calculator allowed: 38 questions (55 minutes) Contains student-produced response questions Includes formulas to reference Specification and Range of Math: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced Algebra • Interpretation of Data • Geometry and Arithmetic • Trigonometry 	1 Mathematics Section: 60 questions (60 minutes) Calculator allowed No student-produced response questions Does not include formulas to reference Specification and Range of Math: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geometry • Algebra • Arithmetic • Basic Trigonometry
	1 Science Section: 40 Questions (35 minutes)
50 Minute Essay Test (Optional) 3 Sub Scores: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Analysis • Writing 2- 8 points each section	40 Minute Essay Test (Optional) 4 Sub Scores: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideas and Analysis • Development and Support • Organization • Language Use and Conventions 2- 12 points each section (2 -12 Points total)
4 Answer Choices for Multiple Choice Questions:	4 Answer Choices for Multiple Choice Questions
Total length: 3 hours and 50 minutes	Total Length: 3 hours and 35 minutes
www.collegeboard.org	www.actstudent.org

SAT & ACT Extra Tips

- The Counseling Department recommends that you plan out your spring semester according to the Spring SAT and ACT testing calendar of your junior year.
- Most colleges require you to take either the SAT or the ACT. The best place to find out about a colleges testing requirement is on their website.
- The SAT and ACT allow students to choose which scores will be sent to the colleges.
- CSU's and various private colleges take your best verbal and math scores from multiple test dates; this is called the "Super Score".
- When you send your SAT scores to one UC, all UC's will have access to your scores.
- UC's will take your best single SAT score (they do not super score)
- UCs no longer require SAT Subject tests for all applicants but still recommend them and may require them for specific majors.
- ACT Scores can be sent to one CSU and one UCs, and the other campuses will have access to your scores.
- It is possible to retake standardized tests during August, September or October of senior year and still include those test scores with early applications.

PSAT

What is the PSAT and why is it important?

The PSAT/NMSQT is the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. The PSAT is a great primer for the SAT, and even the ACT, but it's more than just a trial run. PSAT scores are used to identify National Merit Scholars and award merit scholarships. More than 3.4 million high school students (mostly juniors and sophomores) take this nationwide, multiple-choice test every year. The PSAT won't count towards your college admissions applications, but it is the qualifying test for the National Merit Scholarship. Some of the highest scoring students may win scholarship money, so while you shouldn't stress out about the PSAT, you certainly shouldn't ignore it either. Use the PSAT as practice for the SAT and ACT and an important guidepost on your college admissions journey.

When is the PSAT?

The PSAT is offered nationally every year in October. Ask your school counselor about when your class is scheduled to take the PSAT. View upcoming PSAT test dates.

What does the PSAT test?

The PSAT has two sections: Math and Evidence-Based Reading and Writing. You'll encounter passage-based questions—sometimes accompanied by tables, graphs, and charts—and math problems drawing upon algebra, geometry, and a little trig.

How is the PSAT scored?

Each section is scored on a scale of 160–760, making a “perfect” score 1520. There are also test scores, cross-test scores, and sub scores. Find out more about PSAT scoring.

Did I get a good PSAT score?

Good question. The highest scores and percentiles earn National Merit Recognition. But PSAT scores are also useful in determining your best prep strategies for the SAT or ACT. For a PSAT score report consultation, call us at 800-2REVIEW.

How do I register for the PSAT?

Check with a counselor at your school or at a school in your community to sign up.

How should I prepare for the PSAT?

The PSAT and SAT tests are almost identical: the PSAT is 15 minutes shorter, does not include an essay, and has a slightly different scoring scale. By prepping for the SAT, you are prepping for both tests! For a limited time, get our PSAT prep (a \$299 value) for free when you enroll in a comprehensive SAT course or tutoring program. Learn more today.

Sending Your Scores

It is your responsibility to arrange for your scores be sent from www.collegeboard.com or www.act.org to any schools on your list that require scores or any school where you would choose to have your scores included with your application.

Scores from standardized tests do NOT appear on your Ambassador Christian School transcript, so the only way that the colleges will receive them is if you send them. Many colleges now allow you to self-report your scores on the Common Application and then wait to verify your scores with an official score report after you have enrolled. Check the admissions page on the college's web site to find out if the school allows self-reporting of scores. The College Board and the ACT allow you to select which sittings of the SAT and ACT you would like reported to which colleges. There will, however, be some colleges (very few these days) that request your entire testing history. Send test scores for Rolling, Early Decision, and/or Early Action applications in October and for Regular Decision applications in December.

Advanced Placement Tests

AP test results do not appear on your Ambassador Christian School transcript. You may simply self-report your AP scores on your application. There is no need to order official AP score reports during the admission process. If you have the opportunity to receive college credit for AP results, you must have the official score report sent directly from The College Board to the college after you have enrolled.

Test Prep Resources

Khan Academy:

- Personalized to you – Khan Academy will create a tailored practice plan for students based on a diagnostic or the SAT or PSAT/NMSQT score.
- Interactive – thousands of practice questions, videos, lessons, and hints plus study and test taking tips and strategies.
- Official – 8 full-length, real practice tests and content created in partnership with College Board.
- Instant – get constant feedback and progress, so you know where you stand.
- Raises confidence and scores – 20 hours of practice on Khan Academy is associated with an average 115-point score increase from the PSAT/NMSQT to the SAT, nearly double the average gain without Khan
- Go to www.khanacademy.org/sat to learn more about the inside scoop on the SAT. Free and exclusively from Khan Academy.

ACT Academy:

- Raise you student to the next level – ACT Academy provides free resources for students that are unique to their learning gaps. Access the best resources from top publishers, all in one place, and accurately aligned to the standards
- All the best resources – ACE academy provides students with the best resources, no matter what subject or publisher. One publisher might cover math really well, while the other is better at teaching science.

- More than videos – it’s important that concepts are presented to students in a variety of ways, not just one type of video. Today students can listen to a song, tomorrow students might be playing a game on the same topic.
- Personalized for you – sit back and let ACT Academy automatically pick the exact resources students need to help them learn what they need to know!
- ACT Academy is the go-to place to get personalized practice. Join for free at www.academy.act.org

Keep Test Scores in Perspective

- Colleges consider GRADES and COURSE RIGOR more than test scores for admission.
- Many colleges have become “test optional” - for a list go to: www.fairtest.org.
- More colleges do a “holistic review” in the admissions process to include more factors than GPA and ACT or SAT score.

Student-Athletes and NCAA

Student-Athletes and NCAA

WANT TO PLAY COLLEGE SPORTS?

The advantages of competing in college sports are both immediate and lifelong. Participating in college sports provides opportunities to learn, compete and succeed. Student-athletes receive top-notch academic support, quality medical care, and regular access to outstanding coaching, facilities, and equipment. Student-athletes graduate at higher rates than their peers in the general student body and feel better prepared for life after college.

College-bound student-athletes preparing to enroll in Division I or Division II schools must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center to ensure they have met amateurism standards and are academically prepared for college coursework.

Are you ready to play college sports? Download these resources to find out.

You need to be certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center to compete at an NCAA Division I or II school. First, create a Certification Account, and we'll guide you through the process.

You must create a Certification Account to make official visits to Divisions I and II schools or sign a National Letter of Intent.

Please click on the following link to visit the NCAA website. There you will find information on steps to prepare for NCAA eligibility. www.ncaa.org

Information and Resources for College-Bound Student-Athletes and Parents

The Student-Athlete's Guide to College Sports

To participate in Division, I or II athletics on a collegiate level, a student must meet the NCAA Clearinghouse requirements for certification. It is the student's responsibility to make themselves aware of these requirements and to meet them. This process begins in freshman year and continues throughout the four years of high school.

For comprehensive rules on prospective Division I & Division II athletes, please visit www.eligibilitycenter.org or www.ncaa.org for more information.

[Create an Account](#)

Create a free Profile Page if you plan to compete at a division III school or are not yet sure where you want to compete.

You'll get an NCAA ID, and we will send you important reminders as you complete high school.

[Create a Profile Page](#)

Division I requirements

- Graduate high school

- Earn a core course GPA of 2.3 or higher
- Complete 16 core courses
 - 4 years of English
 - 3 years of math (Algebra 1 or higher)
 - 2 years of natural/physical science
 - 1 year must be lab science if your school offers it
 - 1 additional year of English, math, or biological/physical science
 - 2 years of social science
 - 4 additional years of English, math, natural/physical science, social science, foreign language, comparative religion, or philosophy
- You must complete 10 core courses by the end of your junior year (before the start of your seventh semester). 7 of the 10 core courses must be English, math, or natural/physical science. The grades in these seven courses will be “locked in,” meaning you will not be allowed to retake them to improve your grades.

What are the core courses in high school?

Most high schools in the U.S. have a list of approved core courses with the NCAA. This list allows the NCAA to quickly evaluate an **athlete’s eligibility** by simply checking that the class is on the approved list and seeing the student-athlete grade in the course. **First, review the page on the NCAA website where you can look up your high school’s NCAA-approved courses.** Then, meet with your counselor and ensure your course plan matches the approved courses.

NCAA core courses worksheet – how do you figure out your core GPA?

If you need to check your core course GPA and make sure you are on track to meet the eligibility requirements, you will need the **core course worksheet**. With this worksheet, you will fill in the classes you have completed (make sure they are on the approved list for your high school) and the grade you received in the class. You can then total up the credits and grades to estimate your core course GPA and know if you are on track.

Scoir

Ambassador Christian School has added a new College system. Scoir is a solution for students, parents, counselors, and colleges focused on finding the right fit through a unified college search and planning network. We have chosen Scoir to help you navigate the college selection and application process because it is simply the best system available for discovering colleges that match your personal as well as academic interests. You are invited to create your own free score family account.

Once you create your account, you can immediately begin using Scoir to search for and start building a list of colleges that interest you. You will be required to use Scoir to request letters of recommendation from faculty and to request the sending of academic transcripts. Your parents/guardians will also have access to Scoir to assist you in your college selection and to gain more insight about the cost of attendance at different colleges. The counseling office will be using Scoir to communicate with you during your college planning process and to electronically deliver your application materials to colleges.

We are excited to be able to provide Scoir to our students and families, and we feel confident that you will find it helpful and easy to use. Before you get started, please take a moment to watch the short video and review the resources below to help you become familiar with how to use Scoir.

With your account, you'll be able to :

- View your students profile, along with colleges they follow
- Collaborate with your student on their college search and conduct your own searches
- Review and compare colleges cost information and estimated net tuition

Scoir is designed to help families make more informed decisions that produce more positive collegiate outcomes. Get started by registering your free account today. We are excited to be able to provide Scoir to our students and families, and we feel confident that you will find it helpful and easy to use. Before you get started, please take a few moments to watch the brief videos and resources below to help you become familiar with how to use Scoir.

[Click Here](#) to Learn More-Parent

[Click Here](#) to Learn More-Students

Handbook Glossary

Glossary

"a-g" Subject Requirements

These are classes in specific subjects. You'll need to take these classes if you want to go to a [CSU](#) or [UC](#). You must get a C- or better in your "a-g" classes in order to meet the requirement. [Learn more about "a-g" classes.](#)

Academic Probation

This is a name for your academic standing if your grades fall below a specific level when you're in college. Each campus has its own rules. If you're put on academic probation, you'll need to raise your GPA. You might be suspended or expelled from your college.

Academic Year

This is the time you spend in school. It's different depending on your school. The academic year for most high schools is from August or September through June. It's usually from August through May for colleges using the semester system. It's usually from September through June for colleges using the quarter system.

Acceptance (also called Admitted)

This is the official news that you've been accepted by a college and can go there.

Accreditation

This is a title that colleges have if they are credible. Colleges are reviewed by one or more independent organizations. They make sure that the colleges are meeting certain standards. The organizations can be regional, national, and subject-specific.

ACT (American College Testing)

The ACT is an admission exam. It'll tell you where you are in your education. It can show how ready you are for college-level work in English, math, reading, and science. Some colleges are using it to place students in their English and math classes for their first year. [Learn more about college admission exams.](#)

Adjusted Gross Income (AGI)

This is your or your parents' total income from all jobs, minus deductions that are applicable. Last year's tax returns can show what this is. Take a look at line 37 on form 1040. Take a look at line 21 on form 1040 A. Take a look at line 4 on form 1040 EZ.

Admit rate: The percentage of applicants who are offered admission.

Admission Tests (also called College Entrance Exams)

These are standardized tests. They can tell you where you are in your education. You'll need to take a standardized test to apply to many colleges.

Admissions Counselor

This is a person who works for a specific college. They can help you go to the college they work for if you're a good fit for that school. They also look at applications and help with admissions decisions.

Advanced Classes

These are more difficult classes that you can take. [Advanced Placement \(AP\)](#) and [International Baccalaureate \(IB\)](#) are two kinds of advanced classes you can take. They can help you get ready for your college classes. They're worth more GPA points because they're harder. Talk with your counselor to find out what advanced classes you can take.

Advanced Placement (AP) Course

These are more difficult classes than regular high school classes. Because they're harder, they're worth more GPA points. They're supposed to better prepare you for college coursework. After taking an [AP class](#), you'll take an AP exam. You can get college credit if you pass the exam with a high enough score.

Advanced Placement (AP) Test

This is a standardized test to measure how well you understand a specific subject. The tests are given by the College Board in May. You can take the test after being in the AP class. Or you can take the test without going through the AP class. If you score high enough on the test, you might be able to earn college credit. Talk with your counselor about your options.

Appeal

This is a process you can go through if you didn't get into a college. It means you want a college to take a look at your application again to see if you can be admitted.

Application

This is the form you'll fill out and send to a college you want to go to. They can look similar or very different from each other. Learn how to apply to a [CCC](#), [CSU](#), [UC](#), or [private college](#).

Application Fee

This is money you'll need to pay in order to apply to a college. The amount varies depending on the college you're applying to. If you can't afford to pay for the application fee, you might be eligible for a fee waiver. Talk to your counselor about how to get a fee waiver for your application.

Articulation Agreement

This is an agreement between a CCC and a four-year college. It makes sure the classes you take at a CCC will count for credit when you transfer.

Associate Degree or Associate Degree for Transfer

This is the kind of degree you can get from a CCC. There is an AA or an AS. An AA is an Associate of Arts degree. An AS is an Associate of Science degree. You can also choose an associate degree for transfer, which would be an AA-T or an AS-T. If you choose an associate degree for transfer, you'll start as a junior at the four-year college you transfer

to. Learn more about an [associate degree for transfer](#).

Athletic Associations

These are associations that make the rules for playing sports. They govern sports at the college level and can be national or regional. You'll need to meet specific requirements to play on teams that are part of an athletic association. [Learn about athletic associations](#).

Bachelor's Degree

This is the kind of degree you'll get from a four-year college. You can get a Bachelor of Arts (BA) or a Bachelor of Science (BS). How fast you finish your program depends on the college and your journey to finishing your degree while you're there. [Learn more about graduation rates](#).

Brag Sheet

This is a document where you can write about the great things you've done. It's like a resume. A brag sheet shows all of your awards, leadership activities, and volunteer work. See **Resume**.

Bright Outlook

These are careers that are likely going to have a lot of job opportunities in the near future. The list of these careers is created by the U.S. government. [Learn more about Bright Outlook careers](#).

Budget

This is the way you keep track of how you make and spend your money. You can write a budget for any amount of time. So, you can make a budget for your day, week, month, and year. [Learn how to make smart money decisions](#).

Cal Grant

This is money for college that you won't have to pay back. There are different types of Cal Grants. Each is its own amount depending on the college you're going to go to. To get a Cal Grant, you have to fill out the FAFSA or

CADAA. [Learn more about how to get a Cal Grant.](#)

Cal State Apply

This is the application you need to fill out if you want to go to a California State University (CSU) college. The same application is used by all 23 CSU campuses. It's online and starts October 1. [Learn more about how to apply to the CSU.](#)

Calendar: The system used by an institution to divide its year into instruction periods. The most common are semester, quarter and 4-1-4.

- A **semester** system is a division of the school year into two equal parts, usually 18 weeks in length. Schools may have an additional 8-week summer session.
- A **quarter** system is a division of the school year into three quarters, usually 11 weeks in length. Students take three or four courses per quarter rather than the traditional five in a semester system.
- A **4-1-4** system consists of two terms of about 16 weeks each, separated by a one-month intersessions used for intensive study in one area, research, or internships.

California Aid Report (CAR)

This is the report you'll get after applying for the FAFSA or CADAA. It's from the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC). It tells you about your Cal Grant eligibility.

California Dream Act

These are the laws that allow certain students to be eligible for college. Students who meet AB 540/AB 200/SB 68 eligibility requirements can go to the college or trade school they want and get financial aid. [Learn more about the California Dream Act.](#)

California Dream Act Applications (CADAA)

This is the application that undocumented and nonresident students fill out for financial aid. They can get state and campus financial aid

from applying for the CADAA. [Learn more about the CADAA.](#)

Campus

This is the physical area where you'll go to college. It includes all kinds of buildings, like classrooms, dorms, cafeterias, the library, and more. It is the area that makes up your college community.

Campus Activities (also called Student Activities)

These are the activities that you can do in college. They're also called Student Activities. They can be focused on your schoolwork, your career, or for fun. There are a lot of things to learn from Campus Activities. You can learn more about activities at your college when you use the [College Search Tool.](#)

Campus Visit

This is a trip you can take if you're seriously thinking about going to a specific college. Students might go on a college campus visit while they're still in high school. A campus visit is a chance for you to check out the vibe. You can eat in the cafeteria, meet students, and see how it feels to be there. [Learn more about campus visits.](#)

Candidate Notification Date: The date by which colleges notify students of admission decisions.

Candidate Reply Date: The date by which students must reply to the colleges that admitted them. The universal date is May 1st, also known as the SIR (Student Intent to Register/ Decision Day)

Career Cluster

This is a term used to group similar careers together. Nurses, doctors, and dentists are all part of a health and sciences career cluster.

Career Pathway

This is a plan for college courses to get you into your career or industry.

CCC (California Community Colleges)

These are public colleges. The programs at CCCs usually last two years or less. They're

different from four-year colleges, like CSUs or UCs. CCCs offer associate degrees and certificate programs. You can transfer to a CSU or UC if you want to get a bachelor's degree. [Learn more about CCCs](#).

CCCApply

This is the application you'll need to fill out to go to a CCC. Look for the application deadline on the CCC's website. [Learn how to apply to a CCC](#).

CEEB: Abbreviation for the College Entrance Examination Board, which creates and supervises the administration of the SAT and the Subject Tests. **The CEEB code for ACS is 054687.** You will need this number every time you register for an SAT, ACT, or apply to college

Certificate Programs

These are programs that you can go through at community colleges. They are usually for careers that don't need an associate or bachelor's degree. Some examples are medical assistants and electricians. There are different kinds of certificates. Talk with your counselor to find the best option for you.

Class Rank

This is a system that compares graduating students in the same class with each other. Students are compared and ranked based on grades. Not all high schools and colleges rank students. If your high school does rank you, colleges, might look at your rank when making your admission decision.

Class Schedule

This is the list of your classes that you're taking or plan to take.

Co-Signer

This is the person who agrees and signs your student loans with you. This means they are legally tied to your loans. Co-signers agree to share the responsibility to repay your student loans.

College

This is the next step in your education after you graduate from high school. You'll study a specific subject, called your major. You can get an associate degree, bachelor's degree, and a graduate degree. [Learn about college](#).

College Catalog (also called a Course Catalog)

This is the list of classes offered at your college. It includes the course descriptions and an academic calendar. You'll find the deadlines in the College Catalog. You'll also find the college's mission statement, history, policies, procedures, tuition and fee information, and campus resources.

College Choice Criteria

These are things about college that are important to you. They help you find the best fit. Some criteria might be the degrees you can get, how far it is from your family, or how many people go there. You'll probably also include financials, like how much it costs to go there and what type of financial aid you can get.

College Costs (also called Cost of Attendance)

This is the total cost to go to college. Some things included in your college costs are your tuition and fees, books, travel, and health insurance. Financial aid helps with college costs. Net price is how much you'll pay after free money from financial aid. [Learn about the net price for college](#).

College Credit

Refers to a number assigned to each college class. Each class is worth a specific number of credits/units, and you need a specific amount of credits/units to graduate from college.

Some colleges grant college credit for Advanced Placement (AP) tests. Also see **Advanced Placement (AP) Test**.

College Entrance Exams (also called Admission Tests)

These are tests you might have to take to get into a college. The most common are the [ACT](#) and the [SAT](#). The UC, CSU, and CCC don't require these tests for admission. But some private colleges or out-of-state colleges might. These tests can also help place you in your English and math classes your first year.

College Essay (also called the Personal Statement or, for University of California, Personal Insight Questions)

This is the essay you'll submit with your application. It will look different depending on where you're applying. Make sure you're writing the essay the way your college wants. Some colleges ask for essays, and some want you to respond to specific questions. This is a creative opportunity to share who you are and what you want out of your college experience. Ask your educators to review your essay. [Learn more about college admissions essays](#).

College Interview

This is the chance you'll have to interview with a college you want to go to. You don't have to interview for every college. The interviews are given by college counselors or college alumni.

College Rankings

This is a ranking system based on students' grades, [graduation rates](#), and what alumni rate colleges, among other things. College rankings aren't always a reliable way to tell if a school is a great choice or not. Some of the more popular rankings include [U.S. News and World Report](#), [Princeton Review](#), [Kiplinger's](#), and [Niche](#).

College Readiness

This term refers to how ready you are for college.

Coalition Application: A universal application for admission used by over 140 public and private colleges and universities.

Common Application

This is a type of college application. It's used by over 800 colleges in the world. It's very popular with independent colleges. The Common App allows you to submit one application to multiple schools. [Learn how to apply to college using the Common App](#).

Common Application Supplements

These are the other things you'll need to send with your Common Application. Most colleges that use the Common App ask that you send in something else with your main application. This is different depending on where you're applying. It could be a form you'll need to fill out or an essay the college wants you to write. [Learn how to apply to college using the Common App](#).

Community College (also called a Jr. College or Technical College)

This is a type of public college. It's known for offering two-year programs called Associate Degrees. Credits you earn at a community college usually transfer to four-year colleges. If you want to join the workforce faster, you can go through a certificate program at a Community College.

Conditional Acceptance: An offer of admission to a college or university that is contingent upon certain steps a candidate must take or criteria they must fulfill in order to ultimately enroll.

Cost of Attendance (also called College Costs)

This is the total cost for college. It might be abbreviated to COA.

Course

This is a term used to talk about a college class. Each course is worth a certain number of credits.

Course Load

This is the number of college courses you're taking each semester or quarter.

CSS Profile

This is an online application you might need to fill out to apply for financial aid. The

College Board administers the CSS Profile. Colleges use the application information to figure out your eligibility for non-federal student aid funds, such as institutional grants and scholarships. The CSS Profile is used in addition to the FAFSA or CADAA. [Learn more about the CSS Profile.](#)

CSU (California State University, also called Cal State)

This is a California public system for college. There are 23 campuses all over the state. You can get a bachelor's or master's degree at a CSU. [Learn more about the CSU.](#)

Data Release Number (DRN)

Refers to a four-digit number assigned to your FAFSA application by Federal Student Aid. It is printed on the upper right corner of the paper Student Aid Report (SAR), in the upper right corner on the electronic SAR, and on your confirmation page.

Defer (also called Deferred Admission)

This is an option you can choose if you want to postpone your college enrollment. You can defer for one year after being admitted. Talk to the college admissions office if this is something you want to do.

Deferment or Forbearance (also called Loan Deferment)

This is a specific amount of time you choose to postpone payments on your federal student loans. You might not need to pay for the interest on some types of federal loans during your deferment. You'll need to pay interest on all types of federal loans during your forbearance. [Visit Federal Student Aid](#) to learn more about eligibility and how to request a deferment or forbearance.

Degree

This is what you get when you successfully finish a program at your college. You can get a degree for a certificate program, an associate degree, a bachelor's degree, a master's degree, and a doctorate. It means you have finished the required classes on a certain subject.

Demonstrated Interest: An applicant's level of enthusiasm for or engagement with a college as shown through visits, communication, and other contact with the admission office. Some schools track these interactions closely and use them a factor in admission decisions.

Demonstrated Need: Cost of attendance minus the Expected Family Contribution give the student's demonstrated need.

Denial: An application for admission to a college or university is declined.

Dependent Student

This is the title for students who are assumed to have financial support from their parents. You'll need your parents' financial information to apply for the FAFSA or CADAA if you're a dependent student.

Deposit

For banking, this refers to when you put money in your checking or saving account. For college admissions, this is the money you put toward a college when you accept an offer for admission. A college admissions deposit secures your spot at that school. The amount varies. The deposit is usually taken out of the total amount you'll owe the college for that year. It's usually non-refundable. If you can't afford the deposit, you might be able to get an extension, or your deposit waived altogether.

Disbursement

This is the way your financial aid money is given to your college. Some money goes straight to the college. Some money goes straight to you.

Dual Enrollment

This is a program you can go through in high school to get ahead with college credits. Once you fill out a college application, you can take college courses while you're still in high school.

Early Action (EA)

This is a specific kind of college application and admission. Students can apply for EA if they're almost 100% they want to go to a

college. You don't have to go to that college if you're accepted. If you're accepted to a college you applied to with EA, your spot will be held for you until you've heard from other colleges.

Early Admission Programs (also called Early Decision, Early Action, and Restrictive Early Action)

This is an admission program at some colleges. You'll apply before the regular deadline and get the admissions decision earlier than other students.

Early Decision (ED)

This is an early admission program at some colleges. This program is for students who are 100% sure they want to go to a specific college. You'll have to go to a college if you apply for ED and are accepted. You're committing yourself to that college. You can only apply to one college with ED. You can apply to any college if you're not admitted to the college you choose for your ED application.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

This is the amount of money the government thinks your family can put toward your college education. Your FAFSA or California Dream Act Application (CADAA) helps to find this number. You'll need your family's tax and financial information when you apply if you're a dependent student. You can use the [Financial Aid Eligibility Tool](#) to get your EFC.

Extracurricular Activities

These are the activities you do outside of your classes. They can be sports, clubs, volunteer hours, and more. Learn more about how [your activities can help you get into college](#).

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)

This is a free application you can fill out for federal financial aid. You can get grants, [work-study](#) opportunities, and [loans](#). Learn more about FAFSA. If you're an

undocumented student, you'll fill out the [CADAA](#). Learn more about [financial aid](#).

Family Income (also called Household Income)

This is the total amount of money everyone in your house over 15 years old makes. This includes wages, social security, child support, and investment income.

Fee Waiver

You can fill out a fee waiver if you can't pay for your college application or registration fees. It's an application you'll need to fill out. Colleges, the College Board, and ACT all have different fee waivers. Talk with your counselor to make sure you're applying for the right fee waiver.

Fees

These are what you'll have to pay for different things for college. There are application fees and fees for various activities. You'll have to pay for fees on top of your tuition and room and board.

Financial Aid

This is a term for the help you can get to pay for college. It includes grants, scholarships, loans, and work-study. You can get financial aid from the federal government, state government, your college, and private organizations. Learn about [financial aid](#).

Financial Aid Offer (also called Award Letter or Financial Aid Package)

This is a letter you'll get from colleges that accept you. It is a breakdown of the costs for that college. It also includes the kinds of financial aid you can get if you go to that college. Learn how to [compare your financial aid offers](#).

Financial Need

This is how much financial aid you'll need to pay for college. It's how much is needed to pay for college after you subtract how much your EFC is from how much college will cost.

For-Profit College

This is a kind of college that is owned by a private company. It makes a profit from your tuition and fees. Private, not-for-profit colleges and public colleges don't make money from your tuition and fees. Some for-profit colleges aren't accredited. That means you might not be able to transfer to another college with the credits you earn. It also means some employers might not really consider the degree you earned. You don't want that. Learn more about [for-profit colleges](#).

FSA ID

Your FSA ID stands for Federal Student Aid Identification. It was called your PIN before. You can see your financial aid information when you log in, like your FAFSA. You'll have a username and password that you choose. You and your parents will have to have your own FSA IDs. Keep your information safe so no one can log in to your financial aid applications.

GAP Year: A yearlong break between high school and college, allowing a student to travel, work, and explore a passion (language, sport, culture).

General Education Requirements: Also called G.E.D., breadth, distribution, or core curriculum requirements, they are courses required by all candidates for a bachelor's degree at a college.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

This is the average of all of your class grades. Each grade is a number. Your GPA is the average of all those numbers. If an A is worth 4.0, then your GPA would be a 4.0 with all As. There are two types of GPAs. Unweighted is the value for all the classes you've finished. Weighted includes the extra points you'll usually get with AP, IB, and Honors classes.

Graduate Degree

This is a degree you can get after you get your bachelor's degree. There are different kinds.

You can get a J.D., Master's, PhD, and more.

Graduation Rate

This is the number of freshmen who graduate from a college in a specific time period. For example, you can see how many students could get their degree in four years or six years.

Grant (also called Gift Aid)

This is money you can get with financial aid. It's a gift. That means you won't have to pay it back. Grants are usually from the federal or state government.

Greeks or Greek Life: At a college campus, the collective term for members of sororities and fraternities.

Guaranteed Transfer: An applicant is denied admission as a first-year student but is offered the option to transfer to the college (frequently as a second-year student) provided the student earns a specific GPA at another institution.

Higher Education

This is a term for the schooling you get after graduation from high school.

Holistic admission: A method for reviewing applications that accounts for a student's quality and achievement both inside and outside the classroom.

Honors Course

This is an advanced high school course. It can raise your GPA because these classes are harder and worth more points. It can look better on your college applications if you do well in an honors course.

Impacted Major

This is a major that has more students enrolled than can take classes. These majors are harder to get into because so many people want to take the classes.

Independent Colleges

This is a term for a private, not-for-profit college. These are not public colleges. You

can apply for financial aid at private colleges. There are many private colleges in California. Learn more about the [Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities \(AICCU\)](#).

Independent Student

This is a student applying for financial aid who meets certain criteria. They are at least 24 years old, have been a ward of the court, are married, are a graduate student, are a veteran, are a member of the armed forces, or are experiencing homelessness. If you're an independent student, you won't have to report your parents' information on the FAFSA or CADAA.

Industry

This is a label for companies that are similar. They can offer similar activities, products, or services. For example, nurses, physical therapists, and mental health counselors are all in the healthcare industry. You can use the industry filter in the [College Search Tool](#).

Intent to Register (also called Intent to Enroll, Statement of Intent to Register, or SIR)

This is a form that you'll need to fill out to tell colleges your decision to go there or not. It might be online or paper. You should wait until you hear from every college you applied to before you fill it out. Make sure to let the colleges know. If you want to go there but don't turn in your form or deposit, the college could reverse its admission. Colleges you don't want to go to can use your spot to admit someone on the waitlist.

Intercollegiate Teams (also called Varsity Teams)

These are sports teams that represent colleges in competition with other colleges. They're also called varsity teams, and they compete in conferences managed by athletic associations. Learn more about [athletic associations](#).

International Baccalaureate (IB) Program

This is a program students can go through in high school. It includes advanced coursework. You can get an IB Diploma. Learn more about [IB](#).

Intramural and Club Sports (also called Recreational Sports)

These are sports that you can play in college. They're less rigorous than intercollegiate teams. These are sports that are good for students who want to play for fun. They don't have an intense practice and travel schedule.

Ivy League: The term used to designate highly selective eastern colleges. Strictly speaking, however, it is an athletic league comprised of the following colleges: Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, University of Pennsylvania, Princeton, and Yale.

Job Shadow

This is an opportunity to check out a career. Students follow someone in their workplace to see what their days are like.

Legacy: an applicant who is the son or daughter of an alumnus and alumna (or sometimes a more distant relative). Private colleges sometimes give special consideration to such candidates.

Letters of Recommendation (also called College Recommendations)

These are letters that your counselors and teachers can write to recommend you to a college. Some colleges ask for them. Colleges usually like it when you send letters of recommendation from teachers who taught you in 11th or 12th grade. Some colleges accept extra letters from mentors or coaches.

Liberal Arts: The studies in a college (such as language, history, mathematics, literature, and abstract science) intended to provide chiefly general knowledge and to develop the general intellectual capacities, such as reason and judgement, opposed to professional and vocational skills.

Loan

This is money you borrow for college. It's a part of your financial aid that you'll have to pay back after college. All loans gain interest as time goes by. You're responsible for paying for the loan and the interest it gains. Federal loans have lower interest rates and more benefits. They're more flexible when the time comes to repay them. Learn more about [student loans](#).

Major (also called College Major)

This is an academic field you can study in college. Some examples are biology, engineering, and education. You'll need to take specific classes to meet your major's requirements. Learn how to [choose your major](#).

Master Promissory Note (also called MPN)

This is a legal document for your financial aid. You promise to repay your federal student loans and any accrued interest and fees to your lender or loan holder. There are different MPNs for Direct Subsidized/Unsubsidized Loans and Direct PLUS loans. The entire MPN process must be completed in a single session and usually takes less than 30 minutes.

Merit-Based Financial Aid

This is a term for financial aid based on merit, not need. Merit may be based on academics, leadership, or involvement in activities.

Merit Scholarships: Financial awards based on a student's achievement or potential (academic, athletic artistic, other), typically awarded by the college/university or private organizations. Merit scholarship is not need based "gift aid" and does not need to be paid back.

Minor (also called College Minor)

This is a little like a major, but it has less requirements. You have to take a certain number of classes in a field. You might want to minor in a field that will support your major.

NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association)

This is a nonprofit organization that regulates college athletes in college and conferences.

Learn more about [athletic associations](#).

Need-aware Admissions: A process of reviewing applicants for admission in which the student's ability to pay is taken into consideration.

Need-Based Financial Aid

This is financial aid that you need to pay for your college. You'll put your family's financial information in your FAFSA or CADAA application. Then FAFSA or CADAA figures out an estimate for how much money you'll need to pay for college. Learn more about [financial aid](#).

NMSQT: The National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test is combined with the PSAT, taken in October of the Junior Year. Scoring well on this test is the first requirement toward recognition in the National Merit Scholarship competition.

Net Price

This is the amount one year of college will actually cost after free money, like grants and scholarships. It's how much you'll have to pay to go to college. When comparing college costs, it's better to look at Net Price than Cost of Attendance (COA). Use the [Net Price Calculator](#) to find the Net Price for colleges on your list.

Networking

This is when people try to meet others in their field to support their professional growth.

On-Campus Housing (also called Campus Housing or Dorms)

These are housing options at your college. It's usually dormitories (or dorms). If you want to live in a dorm, you'll need to accept a housing offer from the college and pay a non-refundable deposit.

Open Admissions

This is an admissions process that some colleges use. It means that you'll be admitted no matter what. Community colleges usually use it.

Orientation

This is an event to prepare you for college. Most colleges offer one for first year and transfer students. It supports your transition to that college and helps you get to know the campus.

Parent PLUS Loan

This is a type of federal loan for parents to help them pay for their child's college.

Placement Exam

Some colleges use placement exams to find the right classes for you. They are usually used to place students in math, English, and foreign language classes. Learn more about [college placement](#).

Postsecondary Education

This is a term used to describe the education you get after high school. It's used to describe two-year and four-year colleges. It's also used to describe vocational and technical schools.

Priority Registration

This is a time frame when some students can sign up for their classes earlier than others. It makes sure that you get into the classes you need before they become full. Check with your counselor to find out if you can sign up for priority registration.

Private Loan

This is a loan that is taken out through a private bank, not through your college or the government. They usually have higher interest rates than other loans. Learn more about [student loans](#) and [financial aid](#) before you commit to a private loan.

Professional Organization

This is an organization that supports professionals in a specific field. They offer an insight into the field and great networking

opportunities. You can meet a mentor through a professional organization, too.

Prospective Student

This is a student who is still deciding on which colleges to apply and go to.

PSAT/NMSQT

This is a practice test for the SAT. It's usually given to 10th and 11th grade students. Learn more about the [PSAT](#).

Public Colleges

These are colleges that are run by the state or other government agencies that are managed by public boards. [CCCs](#), [CSUs](#), and [UCs](#) are public colleges. Tuition for California residents is more affordable than for students who move from out of state.

Registration

This is when you sign up for your college classes. Students are usually given a specific date and time to register for their classes. If you can, prepare a list of the classes you want ahead of time so that you're ready.

Regular Decision

This is the typical admissions process and deadline for applying to college. Check the college's website to see updates on their deadlines.

Repayment

This is the process of repaying your loans after you've graduated. You'll have a grace period right after graduating before you need to start repaying your loans. Talk with your financial aid office before you graduate to make sure you understand the timeline for repayment. Learn more about [repaying your student loans](#).

Residency

This is a term for where you live. You need to prove where you live to qualify for in-state tuition at many colleges. For UCs, you'll need to send your Statement of Legal Residence (SLR) to your campus deputy after you send

in your Statement of Intent to Register (SIR). Each UC campus has specific instructions for how to fill out and send the SLR. For CSUs and CCCs, your residency is based on your application information. You might need to fill out an additional questionnaire if the college determines you're a non-resident.

Restrictive Early Action

This is a way of applying for a college that you can do if you're confident you want to go there. You can only apply to one college this way. But you can apply to as many other colleges as you want. You don't have to go to a college if you apply with Restrictive Early Action and are accepted, unlike with Early Decision. Your spot is held for you until you hear from all colleges you applied to.

Resume

This is a list of information about your education, work experience, and accomplishments. You use this list of information when you apply for jobs. It's an important part of the job application process. Your resume is usually one page. It shows off your background and personal skills. Learn more about [resumes and interviews](#).

Rolling Admissions

This is an admissions process that accepts applications throughout the year. Colleges with rolling admissions review applications as they arrive. They send decision letters as soon as they are made.

Room and Board

This is the amount of money it costs to live and eat during the academic year. To see estimates for room and board at colleges you're considering, use the [College Search Tool](#). Find the college, and click on the **Costs and Financial Aid** tab.

Sanctuary Campus

This is a campus that is part of a group of schools that reaffirm the constitutional right to

education. They protect and create a safe environment for all students. They protect the rights of undocumented immigrants and other vulnerable populations. They limit access to student information with the federal immigration authorities, restrict immigration agents' access to the campus, prevent campus security from collaborating with federal immigration authorities for the purposes of enforcement, and provide resources and information for immigrant students and their families.

SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test)

This is a college entrance exam, like the ACT. It's given by the College Board. Learn more about the [SAT](#).

SAT Subject Tests (formerly called SAT II)

These were SAT tests given on specific subjects: English, math, science, foreign language, and history. They're no longer offered. Learn more about the [SAT](#).

Scholarship (also called Gift Aid)

This is a type of financial aid. It's a gift, meaning you don't have to pay it back. They're usually given out by private organizations.

School Counselor

This is someone at your high school who is trained to support you. They can help you choose high school classes, figure out which colleges to apply to, and find the best career.

Selective Colleges and Universities

These are colleges that have a lot of criteria students need to meet. They look at GPA, extracurricular activities, essays, letters of recommendation, and a lot more. These colleges usually accept less than 50% of applicants. Colleges that accept less than 30% of applicants are considered highly selective. If you are applying to highly selective institutions, you should also apply to less selective institutions.

Selective Service

This is the U.S. federal agency that facilitates the mobilization of military forces by requiring the registration of males between the ages of 18 and 26 years. Visit the [Selective Service System](#) for more information.

Note that federal and California financial aid programs no longer require this registration to be eligible for aid.

Senior Slump

This is a term for the emotion some 12th grade students feel toward the end of their high school experience. It means they're tired and wanting to slow down the last few months of school.

Single Choice Early Action: A nonbinding admission plan where the student may choose to apply to only one private university with deadlines typically between Mid–October to Late November. Decisions are typically released in December or January.

Specialty Schools

This is a college that has a focus on minority or special populations. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) are two examples of specialty colleges. Use the Specialty Schools filter in the [College Search Tool](#) to narrow your results to HBCUs or TCUs.

Spring/January Acceptance: An offer of admission to a college or university with a second semester start date. Often these offers include the opportunity to enroll in a college sponsored program off campus (usually abroad) to earn college credit during the first semester.

Student Aid Report (SAR)

This is the financial aid report you'll get from your FAFSA application. It lists the information you put in your FAFSA and the schools you want your financial aid information to go to. Make sure to check your SAR for accuracy and resubmit your FAFSA if you find any mistakes.

Subsidized Stafford Loan

This is a federal loan for students wanting to go to college or a training program. It's based on your financial need and borrowed money. The federal government pays the loan's interest while you're enrolled at least half time. Once you graduate, you're responsible for paying back the loan and new interest.

Syllabus

College instructors give students a syllabus as a guide through a class. They usually include course policies, necessary textbooks and materials, a schedule of assignments, and other expectations.

Test Optional: Standardized test scores are not required for admission. Note: some colleges will require additional essays or other information if student is not submitting scores.

Textbooks (also called Books or Texts) and Supplies

These are the books and materials you'll need for a class. It includes the required reading and the things you'll need for assignments. These are usually listed on the Syllabus for each class. Students can buy textbooks new or used. They can also rent them. Some textbooks are available electronically, too. Supplies might be a book bag, notebooks, specific calculators, pens and pencils, paper, and computer software.

TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)

This is a test to see how well a student knows English if it's not their first language. The test has spoken and grammar exercises. Talk with your counselor to see if you should take the TOEFL.

Transcript

This is a list of the classes you've taken in high school or college. It includes the grades you've gotten in each class and your overall GPA. Colleges look at your transcripts when you apply. They usually ask for a final transcript once you've graduated.

Transfer (Transfer of credit)

This is the process of changing schools. A lot of community college students transfer to a four-year college. Some students transfer from one four-year college to another. Talk to your counselor to see what units you can transfer. Learn more about [transferring schools](#).

Tuition

This is the amount of money it costs to go to a college or university. Public colleges have in-state tuition for residents of California. That can make college much more affordable. Independent colleges charge the same tuition for all students. Each independent college has its own tuition amount.

Type of Environment

This is a term to describe where a campus is physically. Colleges are in cities, towns, suburban neighborhoods, and rural parts of the state. You can use the **Type of Environment** filter in the [College Search Tool](#) to find a college in an area you'll like.

UC (University of California)

This is one of the three public college systems in California CCCs and CSUs are the other two. The UC has nine undergraduate campuses throughout the state. A tenth campus offers professional and graduate programs in the health sciences. Learn more about the [UC](#).

UC Application

This is the online application to go to a UC. You only need to fill out one application for all 10 campuses. Learn more about [how to apply to the UC](#).

UC Personal Insight Questions

These are essay questions that you'll need to answer for your UC application. They're similar to a college essay. Your answers to these questions help the UC learn more about you, your background, interests, and achievements. They're a chance to share your story. Freshmen applicants have to fill out four out of eight possible questions. Transfer

applicants have to answer one question about their major and three out of seven possible questions. For writing tips, see [College Admissions Essays](#).

Undergraduate

These are students who are working toward their associate degree, bachelor's degree, or certificate.

Undocumented Student

According to Immigrants Rising, these are students who "(1) entered the United States without inspection or with fraudulent documents; or (2) entered legally as a nonimmigrant but then violated the terms of his or her status and remained in the United States without authorization (as defined by the National Immigration Law Center). Most college-bound undocumented students have lived in the United States most of their lives; been brought to the United States by their parents at a young age; learned English; attended elementary, middle, and high school in the United States; excelled academically in high school and want to pursue a college education; and currently lack a way to become legal residents or citizens in the United States."

Unmet Need: Also referred to as "gapping," the difference between a student's financial aid award (gift aid, work-study, need-based loans) and a student's demonstrated financial need. Many private colleges employ this when they are unable to meet the full demonstrated need of all admitted students.

Unsubsidized Stafford Loan

This is a federal financial aid loan. The federal government won't pay the interest for you while you're in school. You don't have to show you have a financial need. You're responsible for paying back the loan and interest once you graduate.

University: A public or private institution that has both undergraduate and graduate programs.

Vocational Program

This is a program that prepares students for a specific career. You don't need an associate degree or bachelor's degree. The programs are in lots of different subjects, like cosmetology or medical assisting. Students graduate from these programs with a license or certificate.

Waitlist

For college admission, this is a list for students who aren't accepted or denied. They're a strong candidate, but there are stronger candidates. They are in limbo until the college knows if there's room for them. You have to either accept or reject your position at that college if you're waitlisted. Some colleges accept or require additional information from waitlist applicants. Other colleges specifically ask you not to send additional information. The college letter will tell you what to do. It should also tell you when you can expect to hear if you are admitted.

For college course registration, this is when you try to enroll in a course that is already full. You might be able to enroll in the course if other students drop or don't show up the first day of class. You have a better chance of getting into a class the higher up on the waitlist you are.

Work-Study

This is a type of federal financial aid where you work part-time during the school year. You're paid a specific amount by the federal government. Each college has specific jobs that are for work-study students. Work-study is given to students based on their needs. The money can be used to pay for any college costs.

Yield: The number of students admitted to a college who ultimately attend that college. The yield is usually extremely high at selective colleges.

Student Accounts Logins

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

University Of California	Username
	Password
Cal State Apply	Username
	Password
Common APP	Username
	Password
Collegeboard	Username
	Password
ACT	Username
	Password
California Colleges	Username

	Password
NCAA	Username
	Password
NAIA	Username
	Password
California Community Colleges	Username
	Password
FAFSA	Username
	Password
Fastweb.com	Username
	Password

Websites and Resources

College Research

Big Future www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org

Fiske Guide to College

www.fiskeguide.com

Princeton Review

www.princetonreview.com

Peterson's

www.petersons.com

CollegeNet

www.collegenet.com

Colleges of Distinction

www.collegesofdistinction.com

Websites Western Undergraduate Exchange

www.wiche.com/wue

Search 4 Career Colleges

www.search4careercolleges.com

U.S. Department of Education College Scorecard

collegescorecard.ed.gov

Colleges That Change Lives

www.ctcl.org

Database of Higher Ed Institutions

www.findaschool.org

Women's College Coalition

www.womenscolleges.org

www.acinet.org – Bureau of Labor Statistics and great career information

www.act.org – ACT – American College Test

www.aiccumentor.org – California's 76 Independent Colleges

www.assist.org – displays report of how course credits earned at community college can be applied when transferred to another college

www.cavhs.org – UC website providing test preparation advice

www.collegeboard.com/apstudents – info on AP exams for undergraduate placement

www.csumentor.edu – a comprehensive guide to the California State University's 23 campuses. Provides outreach, preadmission, financial aid, and admission information. Students can create a student planner to guide them in meeting CSU admission requirements.

www.csumentor.edu/filing-status – a ready reference to determine which CSU campuses are accepting undergraduate applications and which majors are open or closed.

www.fastweb.com – scholarship search site

www.hsf.net – Hispanic Scholarship Fund

www.mdtp.ucsd.edu – practice tests for mathematical analysis and readiness test

www.mycoolcareers.com – assessment tests and streaming video interviews

www.myroad.com – a personality profile; explore colleges and careers (free for AVID students only)

www.pathways2.ucop.edu – a comprehensive guide to the University of California’s 9 campuses

Test Prep & Information

www.collegeboard.org
www.act.org
www.khanacademy.org
www.number2.com
www.kaplan.com

Applications

www.commonapp.org
www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org
www.calstate.edu/apply
www.cccapply.org
<https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/>

Essay

UC

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

The college essay guy

www.collegeessayguy.com/collegeapplication-hub www.youtube.com/channel

College Miscellaneous

Info For College-Bound Athletes
www.ncaa.org

College Newspapers & Local Papers
www.newslink.org

Public University Honors Programs
<https://publicuniversityhonors.com/>

Education Conservancy
www.educationconservancy.org

Test Optional Universities
www.fairtest.org/university/optional

www.studyabroad.com or
www.istc.umn.edu/rotary.org – gives information studying abroad

www.ucop.edu – use a search engine: new exams – gives new eligibility requirements for new SAT

www.ucop.pathways.edu/doorways/list- UC Course Lists

www.ucop.edu/sas/elc – ELC information

www.universityofcalifornia.edu/apply – online application

www.ucop.edu/pathways – comprehensive information about admissions and financial aid

www.ucapplication.net.ucap – review a sample application

www.ucgateways.org- personal statement tutor

www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/apptour – virtual reality tours of UC campuses

Academic & Adventure Summer Camps

www.educationunlimited.com
www.summerfuel.com
www.supercamp.com
www.summerdiscovery.com
www.adventurecamp.com

Career Exploration

www.mappingyourfuture.org
www.myfuture.com
www.onetonline.org
www.self-directed-search.com

Military

ROTC Information

www.bestcolleges.com/resources/rotcprograms

AFROTC

www.afrotc.com

NROTC

www.nrotc.navy.mil

Army ROTC

www.goarmy.com/rotc.html

Army

www.goarmy.com

Air Force

www.airforce.com

Navy

www.navy.com

Marines

www.marines.com

Coast Guard

www.gocoastguard.com

International Colleges and Universities

British Council (Study in the UK)

www.britishcouncil.us

4International - International School Database www.4icu.org

Association of American International Colleges & Universities

www.aaicu.org

Education Ireland:

www.educationinireland.com

Top Universities - Study in Europe:

www.topuniversities.com/where-to-study

The Complete University Guide:

www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk

Financial Aid Information

www.admission.uci.edu/ats – academic talent search

www.csac.ca.gov – California Student Aid Commission lists services for college financial aid and for GPA verification

www.easi.ed.gov – scholarship search

www.edfund.org – Ed Fund

www.fafsa.ed.gov – guides you in the completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. March 2 – last date to file

www.fastweb.com – over \$1 billion in scholarships; summer programs, volunteer opportunities

www.finaid.org – scholarships, financial aid, loans

www.free-4u.com – scholarships are grouped by category

www.ftc.gov – info on scholarship scams

www.gocollege.com – lists scholarships

www.sallie.com – info on grants and financial aid

www.scholarships.com – scholarship information

www.ucop.edu/sas/publish – to request *Financing Guide for Students & Parents* (Or email a request to ucpubs@ucop.edu)

California Colleges

www.californiacolleges.edu

Independent CA Colleges & Universities

www.aiccu.edu

University of California (UC)

Office of Admissions

www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions

A-G Guide

www.ucop.edu/agguide

Berkeley

www.berkeley.edu

Davis

www.ucdavis.edu

Irvine

www.uci.edu

Los Angeles

www.ucla.edu

Merced

www.ucmerced.edu

Riverside

www.ucr.edu

San Diego

www.ucsd.edu

San Francisco (Graduate Programs Only)

www.ucsf.edu

Santa Barbara

www.ucsb.edu

Santa Cruz

www.ucsc.edu

California State University

(CSU) CSU System Information

www.calstate.edu

Bakersfield

www.csub.edu

Chico

www.csuchico.edu

Dominguez Hills

www.csudh.edu

East Bay

www.csueastbay.edu

Fresno

www.csufresno.edu

Fullerton

www.fullerton.edu

Humboldt

www.humboldt.edu

Long Beach

www.csulb.edu

Los Angeles

www.calstatela.edu

Cal Maritime

www.csum.edu

Monterey Bay

www.csumb.edu

Northridge

www.csun.edu

Cal Poly Pomona

www.cpp.edu

Stanislaus

www.csus.edu

San Bernardino

www.csusb.edu

San Diego

www.sdsu.edu

San Francisco
www.sfsu.edu

Community College Information

El Camino College
<https://www.elcamino.edu/>

Los Angeles City College
<https://www.lacitycollege.edu/>

Los Angeles Harbor College
<https://www.lahc.edu/>

Los Angeles Southwest College
<https://www.lasc.edu/>

Los Angeles Trade-Technical College
<https://www.lattc.edu/>

West Los Angeles College
<https://www.wlac.edu/>

Santa Monica College
<https://www.smc.edu/>

References

Want to Play College Sports? - NCAA.org.

<https://www.ncaa.org/sports/2021/2/8/student-athletes-future.aspx>

NCAA Eligibility Center. <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>

NCAA Clearinghouse / Overview - Humble Independent School District.

<https://www.humbleisd.net/domain/14819>

NCAA Core Course List | NCAA Approved Courses - NCSASports.org.

<https://www.ncsasports.org/ncaa-eligibility-center/ncaa-core-courses>

What Colleges Look At When Accepting Applicants - CollegeChoice.

<https://www.collegechoice.net/choosing-a-college/admissions/what-colleges-are-looking-for/>

Present Yourself | CollegeFocus Main. <https://www.collegefocus.net/present-yourself>

Top Ten Strengths and Experiences Colleges look for in a High-School

<https://magellancounseling.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/top-ten-strengths-and-experiences-colleges-look-for-in-a-high-school-student1.doc>

What Colleges Are Looking For, College Admissions Tips.

<https://www.familyeducation.com/school/admission-interviews/top-10-things-colleges-look-high-school-student>

Character Counts: What Are Colleges Looking For? – BigFuture.

<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/plan-for-college/college-prep/stand-out/character-counts-what-are-colleges-looking-for>