

Dear Freshmen:

Welcome to NDP! This Freshman guide has been created to help you navigate high school and prepare for the college admissions process. You will be using the information provided in this booklet to help you understand, organize, and track the high school experience.

As your counselors, we are here to support you academically, emotionally, and spiritually as you prepare for the next chapter of your life: College! We will work together to make sure you are hitting yearly goals, maintaining a strong GPA, challenging yourself academically, and becoming the most well rounded student you can be. We look forward to working together and helping make the high school process as smooth as possible.

Here is some important information to keep handy:

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Index

Graduation Requirements	Page 4
Graduating with Distinction	Page 5
Grade Point Average (GPA)	Page 6
Dual Enrollment	Page 7
Factors in Selective College Admissions	Page 8
Standardized Testing	Page 10
Extracurricular Activities	Page 11
College Visits	Page 12
College Admissions Trends	Page 13
Skills Needed to Maximize Your Chances for Admission	Page 14
Career Exploration	Page 15
Scoir 101	Page 16
Study Skills	Page 21
Recommendations for Freshmen	Page 22
NDP Counseling Curriculum	Page 23
Action Plans for Parents	Page 24

Graduation Requirements

To receive an NDP Diploma, a student must complete **thirty (30)** credits total; **twenty-eight (28)** academic credits and **two (2)** Christian Service credits.

The required courses for all students in the Class of 2025 are:

Theology 4 credits

English 4 credits

Mathematics 4 credits

Science 3 credits

Social Studies 4 credits

World Language 3 credits (Must be sequential and in same language)

Fine Arts 2 credits (two courses must be sequential and in the same discipline)

Technology .5 credit

Personal Fitness .5 credit

Personal Health & Wellness 1 credit

Elective Courses 2 credits

Christian Service 2 credits (.5 credits per year)

Graduating with Distinction

There are two options for graduating with distinction: Summa Cum Laude and Magna Cum Laude. If you plan to consider this path, there are some important things to take note of.

Honors at Graduation for Class of 2022-Beyond		
	Summa Cum Laude:	Magna Cum Laude:
Credits:	32	32
Weighted GPA:	4.0	3.85
Required Electives:	-H Focus: Seminar (11th) -H Focus: Research (12th) -H Philosophy (11th or 12th) -H Argumentation and Rhetoric (10th)	
Comments:	-Rising seniors are considered to have met the Graduate with Distinction language requirements if they have completed a 4 th level of World Language at NDP. For example, if a current junior successfully completes Spanish IV this year, that student need not take another Spanish class to fulfill the requirement.	

Grade Point Average (GPA)

You will hear the word GPA often over the next 4 years. Your GPA is used for:

- College admissions and scholarships
- Identifying National Honors Society candidates
- Academic advisement
- Much more!

GPA is an averaged score which is calculated based on your final semester grade for each class and the weight of the courses you are taking.

The grading scale is:

A = 93%-100%	4.00	B- = 80%-82%	2.67	D+ = 67%-69%	1.33
A- = 90%-92%	3.67	C+ = 77%-79%	2.33	D = 63%-66%	1.00
B+ = 87%-89%	3.33	C = 73%-76%	2.00	D- = 60%-62%	0.67
B = 83%-86%	3.00	C- = 70%-72%	1.67	F = 0%-59%	0.00

- An Honors class carries a weight of .50 added to the grade earned.
- An AP class carries a weight of 1.0 added to the grade earned.

Example: Oliver takes 8 classes. One class is an honors class. **His GPA would be 3.69.** (Calculated by adding up the points and dividing by the number of classes).

English: B (84%)= 3.00

Social Studies: B+ (88%)= 3.33

Math: B (83%)= 3.00

Science: A- (90%)= 3.67

Honors Spanish: A (97%)= 4.00 + .50 Honors weight= 4.50

PE: A (95%)= 4.00

Theology: A (96%)= 4.00

Art: A (93%)= 4.00

Total points= 29.5

29.5 ÷ 8 classes = **3.69 GPA**

Dual Enrollment

Dual Enrollment (DE) courses are college level courses offered on campus at NDP. You can begin taking DE courses sophomore year.

For an additional fee, you can receive college credit for these courses and begin your college GPA while in high school. This saves time and money by getting those college credits completed early.

Not every college will accept Dual Enrollment transfer credits. All Arizona state universities do, and a good resource is www.aztransfer.com. For out of state universities/colleges, check their individual transfer credit policies to know if the DE credit will transfer.

Here is a list of Dual Enrollment classes we are currently offering through Scottsdale Community College unless otherwise specified:

- Pre-Calculus Honors**
- US History Honors**
- English 3
- English 4
- French 3 Honors**
- French 4 Honors**
- Guitar Orchestra
- Engineering & Design (University of Arizona)
- Ethics, Economy, & Entrepreneurship (University of Arizona)
- Guitar 1
- Guitar 2
- Rock Music & Culture
- Music Theory

**All DE courses are considered regular level classes and do not add weight to your GPA except the honors classes listed above.

Factors in Selective College Admissions

- **Grades-** Your freshman year grades do count!
- **Strength of Curriculum-** Colleges are looking to see what courses Notre Dame Prep offers and how students challenge themselves within what was available.
- **Standardized Test Scores-** Colleges accept either the ACT or the SAT. Please be aware that many schools are moving towards test optional.
- **Essay-** This is where students can showcase their personality and share information not already in the application.
- **Letters of Recommendation-** Schools may require teacher and/or counselor letters of recommendation. Develop a good rapport with your teachers and counselor!
- **Extracurricular Activities-** Colleges want to know how you are spending your time outside of school. It's all about the *quality* of involvement, not *quantity*.
- **What Colleges are Looking for that Particular Year-** this "7th factor" is difficult because we do not know what colleges will be looking for year-to-year.

Other admissions factors considered:

- **Special Talents-** This applies mostly to arts and athletics where a sample of student work/performance is required.
- **Legacy-** Some schools give preference on the basis of relatives who are alumni.
- **Geographic Mix-** a "7th factor" that is hard to predict. Each college is trying to have representation from across the country.
- **Exceptional Academic Talent-** Independent research, a science fair project, or National Merit recognition may be what singles you out.

- **Diversity of Background and Cultures-** a “7th factor” that is hard to predict.
- **Demonstrated Interest-** Colleges want to know you are interested in them. This can be by attending college visits at NDP, college fairs, campus tours, or contacting the admissions team directly.

Standardized Testing

SAT & ACT

- Taken in the spring of junior year
- The test serves as a predictor of how students will perform academically during their freshman year in college
- Scores will be used for college admission decisions, scholarships, and placement in college courses

PSAT

- Taken in the fall of sophomore and junior year
- Taken at NDP, free of cost, during the school day
- NDP requires that students take this practice test in anticipation of the official SAT
- Junior year PSAT scores will determine if you qualify to be a National Merit Scholar
- Scores may be used to identify students eligible to take Dual Enrollment courses
- Scores are used in the appeal process for Honors/AP classes

Practice ACT

- Taken in the spring of sophomore and/or junior year
- Taken at NDP, for a fee, outside of school hours
- Optional, but highly encouraged that students take this to prepare for the official ACT

How to prepare for the tests

- Khan Academy
- ACT Academy
- Dictionary.com
- Albert
- Reading a book during your free time
- Test prep tutoring and classes
 - ◆ Not recommended until junior year
 - ◆ Counselors can provide you with a list of referrals

If you have any questions about the tests or how to better understand your scores--please reach out to your counselor!

Extracurricular Activities

- When it comes to extracurriculars, we always emphasize **quality, not quantity**.
- Colleges are not interested that you have joined every club our school has to offer. Instead, they are looking for a student who is involved in 1-2 activities for all four years, takes on a leadership role and is passionate about the work that they are doing. This rule applies to clubs, sports, fine arts, jobs, volunteering, etc.
- Please see the NDP website for information on athletics, clubs, and fine arts offered on our campus.
- If you don't find something you are interested in on our current list, you can start a new club! If you need help locating information on clubs or you would like to know how to start your own club, see your counselor.

College Visits

Throughout the fall, colleges and universities all over the country and the world will hold information sessions just for NDP students. This is a great opportunity to learn more about your dream school and meet with admissions representatives who will be reading your application in the next few years.

- Sign up on Scoir
- Sign up at least 24 hours in advance
- Each college will give information about where/how to log on for virtual sessions
- Every NDP student is allowed an unlimited number of visits with college reps as long as you are eligible (No D's or F's in your classes)
- Classes cannot be missed for college visits if a quiz or test is being administered

College Admissions Trends

- **COVID-19.** Many colleges are making policy changes due to the novel coronavirus and the limitations that this pandemic brings. For example, some colleges are no longer requiring SAT & ACT scores for admission, because many of the testing dates have been postponed/cancelled. This is ever changing, so please look at each college's website for up to date information.
- **More students applying, more competition.** There has been a large increase in applications for admission, resulting in a decline in the percentage of students accepted. This means increased competition. The more applications a school receives, the more selective it can afford to be.
- **New Majors.** Majors continue to merge into interesting new areas of study, such as intelligence studies, corporate and governmental security, forensic chemistry and toxicology, sports business management, professional convention management, bioarchaeology, cyber-security, and courses in the medical field.
- **Funding.** Generally, more funds are being directed at need-based (financial need) aid rather than merit (academic) aid. Loans continue to be the primary means of federal aid to students, comprising nearly half of the aid received.
- **Medical Schools.** They seek undergraduates who have: studied majors in their fields of interest, can write articulately, speak publicly, are well-rounded, and interesting. The highest rate of acceptance into medical school is from liberal arts and sciences colleges where students have strong relationships with professors.

Skills Needed to Maximize Your Chances for Admission

- **Communication Skills:** being able to make your point in writing and in person.
- **Organizational Skills:** being able to effectively stay on top of multiple activities.
- **Leadership:** the ability to motivate classmates to make effective change.
- **Critical Thinking Skills & Logic:** intelligence and problem-solving skills, from analytical to creative.
- **Effort:** a strong desire to succeed.
- **Group Skills:** being part of a team and collaborating with others.
- **Initiative:** seeing a need and taking action on your own to achieve a goal.
- **Be an independent learner.** Don't just do the bare minimum. Read books that interest you or contact professionals in your areas of interest.
- **Be you!** Don't live your high school years obsessing about what you should be doing to please a college admissions officer. The most impressive college applications show that you have pursued your passions, and that you have lived your life according to the values you profess.
- **Don't get discouraged!** The most selective universities reject as many wonderful and talented groups of students as they admit. If you are not offered admission, be confident that another opportunity is out there for you.

Career Exploration

Do not panic if you have not started career planning! Even students who think they know what their field of study will be as a freshman are very likely to change their minds. However, we feel strongly that students should spend some time getting to know their areas of interest and areas of strength- which may not be the same!

- Scoir is an excellent resource that offers a robust aptitude inventory, YouScience.
- Think about the subjects in school that you enjoy (or do not enjoy, that is still narrowing it down).
- Volunteer in one of your career areas of interest. Ask to job shadow someone while you are on a break from school. Remember to send a thank you note.
- If you start working, document your responsibilities, skills, and leadership roles. Look for jobs that match your interests and abilities, rather than a job that doesn't challenge you.
- Research what kinds of degree programs or majors exist. For all career areas that interest you, research the educational requirements and work with your counselor to create a plan.

Scoir 101

Scoir is a college and career readiness platform. It will help you to search for colleges, learn more about each college, sign up for college visits, match you with potential careers, keep a resume, and much more.

Scoir is one of the best tools we have regarding the college process. This is a college prep school, so we want you to be thinking about and become familiar with this tool as early on as possible.

All freshman students and parents will receive access information.

College Search

The College Search tool is a great starting point for the college search process. You can enter information into a set of filters: Must Have, Nice to Have, and No Thanks. Use the filters as a guide to start thinking about each subcategory and whether or not it is important to you. The College Search tool will then create a list of schools that fit the criteria you have entered. You can then “pin” colleges to save them to your My Colleges list.

College Search ⇒ + Add ⇒ Fill out preferences

The screenshot displays the Scoir College Search interface. On the left, there are filter categories: 'Must Have' (Academic Focus: Psychology), 'Nice to Have' (Distance/Location: California, Personal Interests & Activities: hiking), and 'No Thanks' (Campus Setting: Rural). The main area shows three college results, each with a 'Meets all preferences!' badge and a 'My Colleges' link.

College	Average SAT Score	Average ACT Score	Acceptance Rate	No. Undergrads
Scripps College (Claremont, CA)	1375	31	33%	973
California State University (Sacramento) (Sacramento, CA)	1040	20	68%	27,723
University of California (Davis) (Davis, CA)	1245	28	43%	28,257

You can then click on each college to find more detailed information. This includes acceptance rate, cost, virtual tours, average SAT/ACT scores, student

life, makeup of the student body, retention rates, top majors, and proximity to transportation.

SCOIR College Search My Colleges My Profile

Explore

LET'S GO

Powered by YouTube

GONZAGA UNIVERSITY

Overview Wall Analysis My Colleges

Gonzaga University
Spokane, WA

Acceptance Rate: 65% | Tuition In-State: \$40,540 | Tuition Out-of-State: \$40,540 | Avg. Net Cost: \$34,085

More Details

My Colleges- Following

As a junior, you can add colleges to your My Colleges list. This will help you to keep track of your schools as you go through the college search process.

My Colleges ⇒ Add and view colleges under Following

SCOIR College Search My Colleges My Profile

Recommendations and Fee Waivers sort by Deadline

Following (13) Schools you like

Add a College

- Arizona State University (Main Campus)
Tempe, AZ
Safety
- Chapman University
Orange, CA
Match
- Gonzaga University
Spokane, WA
Match
- Loyola Marymount University
Los Angeles, CA
Match
- Northern Arizona University
Flagstaff, AZ
Safety
- Pennardine University

Applying (0) Applications in Progress

Add a College

College application progress.
Checklist and deadlines to help you along the process.

Applied (0) Submitted Applications

Add a College

Enrolling
Where are you planning to attend?

ACCEPTED

Not Interested View

Sign Up for College Visits

Many college admissions representatives visit NDP during the school year. They give a 30-40 minute presentation about their college or university, and allow time for the students to ask questions. These visits occur during the school day.

Home Page ⇒ Visits & Deadlines ⇒ Filter ⇒ Count Me In

The screenshot displays the SCOIR website's 'Visits & Deadlines' section. At the top, there are navigation links for 'College Search', 'My Colleges', and 'My Profile', along with notification and user profile icons. A left-hand sidebar contains a 'Filters' menu with options: 'Application Deadlines' (unchecked), 'College Visits' (checked), 'All Upcoming Visits' (selected), 'Visits from My Colleges' (unchecked), and 'Only My Registered Visits' (unchecked). The main content area shows a calendar view of visits:

- March 2019:**
 - 21 Thu:** West Chester University of Pen...
 - Time: 12:00 PM - 01:00 PM
 - Location: TBD
 - Registered: 0
 - View
 - Count Me In

- April 2019:**
- 2 Tue:** Pennsylvania State University (... University Park, PA)
 - Time: 09:00 AM - 10:00 AM
 - Location: TBD
 - Registered: 0
 - View
 - Count Me In
- 9 Tue:** Temple University (Philadelphia, PA) and Drexel University (Philadelphia, PA)
 - Time: 09:00 AM - 10:00 AM
 - Location: TBD
 - Registered: 0
 - View
 - Count Me In
- May 2019:**
- 3 Fri:** Villanova University
 - Time: 09:00 AM - 10:00 AM
 - Registered: 0
 - View
 - Count Me In

YouScience

It's okay if you do not have a major or a career in mind, SCOIR is here to help! YouScience is a career and aptitude assessment within SCOIR that features brain teasers and puzzles to match you with careers that are geared towards how you think.

My Profile ⇒ Career Profile ⇒ Get Started

The screenshot displays the SCOIR user interface. At the top, the SCOIR logo is on the left, and navigation links for 'College Search', 'My Colleges', and 'My Profile' are in the center. On the right, there are icons for chat, notifications, and a user profile. The main content area is titled 'Career Profile' and features a 'Complete your Career and Aptitude Assessment' section powered by YouScience. This section includes a list of benefits: Personalized Career Matching, In-Depth Career Information, Insights about YOUR abilities and strengths, and Match Favorite Careers to Majors to guide your college search. A 'Finish your assessment' button is present. Below this is a 'My Drive' section with a circular icon containing a printer, a photo, and a video player. A sidebar on the left lists navigation options: Personal Details, Academic Overview, Personal Bio, Activities & Achievements, College Preferences, Career Profile (highlighted), and My Drive. A blue circular icon with the number 8 is in the bottom right corner of the main content area.

Creating a Resume

SCOIR makes it easy to create a resume. This is something that can be created early, and updated throughout your high school career. You can enter your information in item-by-item, and SCOIR will create a resume for you.

My Profile ⇒ Activities & Achievements ⇒ + Add

The screenshot displays the SCOIR user interface. At the top, the navigation bar includes the SCOIR logo, 'College Search', 'My Colleges', and 'My Profile'. On the right, there are icons for chat, notifications, and a user profile. The main content area is titled 'Activities & Achievements' and features a '+ Add' button. It is organized into three sections: 'Athletics' with a 'Varsity Pom' entry (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, 10 hours/week, 40 weeks/year); 'Community Service' with a 'Feed My Starving Children' entry (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, 2 hours/week, 8 weeks/year, Packaged meals to be shipped to third world countries.); and 'Clubs and Activities' with an 'Honor Choir' entry (Freshman, Junior, 5 hours/week, 40 weeks/year). A sidebar on the left lists navigation options: Personal Details, Academic Overview, Personal Bio, Activities & Achievements (highlighted), College Preferences, Career Profile, and My Drive. A blue circular icon with a white infinity symbol is visible in the bottom right corner of the main content area.

To Download Your Resume:

My Profile ⇒ Personal Details ⇒ Export Resume

Study Skills

After your first big test, you will wonder if there was a way you could have better prepared. The answer is...Yes!

Here are some tips and tricks our previous students have used to be successful at NDP while also managing the stress that comes with high school level courses.

Find a quiet place and put the electronics away (Airplane mode)

Concentrate with intention

Set a study goal

Vary your study activities

Set up a system

Take breaks

Flashcards

Set a timer

Keep a planner

Read chapters backwards

Practice

Use study skills for how you learn (visual, auditory)

Create a study schedule

Quiz yourself

Below are some tips on how to reduce stress. The counseling department is also available if you are feeling overwhelmed.

Stress ball

Take breaks

Deep breaths

Think of a "happy place"

Exercise

Be in nature

Write in a journal

Talk to your counselor or a trusted adult

Positive self talk

Listen to music

Snuggle with family pets

Recommendations for Freshmen

Academics

- Focus on your grades
- Evaluate your course load and take an appropriate level of coursework for *YOU*
- Increase your commitment in extra-curricular activities and keep a resume
- Meet with your counselor

Testing

- Look ahead and start to develop a standardized testing plan
- Download the dictionary.com app on your phone
- Read for fun!
- Look into test prep courses
- Khan Academy & ACT Academy

College

- Become familiar with college planning and the admissions process
- Expand your knowledge about prospective schools by attending college fairs and information sessions
- Log on to Scoir and utilize YouScience and College Search tools
- Meet with your counselor

NDP Counseling Curriculum

Here is a timeline of events over the next 4 years when counselors will be meeting with you and/or your student. We may be calling your student to the counseling office additional times. You or your student are welcome to make an appointment at any point throughout the year. **Curriculum is subject to change due to Covid19**

9th Grade Fall

- Underclassmen Parent Night
- Presentations in classrooms regarding academics, college planning, and personal/social readiness

9th Grade Spring

- Presentation in classrooms regarding course registration for next year
- Individual student meetings to discuss required courses to take sophomore year. Students will receive a copy of the NDP Transcript Audit/Credit check-list

10th Grade Fall

- Presentation in sophomore classrooms regarding the PSAT
- Individual student meetings with assigned counselor for an introduction and to check in

10th Grade Spring

- Presentation in classrooms regarding course registration for next year.
- Presentation in sophomore classrooms regarding academics, college planning, and personal/social readiness
- Individual student meetings to review PSAT scores and courses to take junior year

11th Grade Fall

- Presentation in junior classrooms regarding the PSAT.
- Individual student meetings

11th Grade Spring

- Junior parent night: "College 101"
- Presentation in classrooms regarding course registration for next year
- Presentation in junior classrooms regarding the college application process
- Individual parent/student meetings for college planning

12th Grade Fall

- Presentation in senior classrooms regarding the college application process
- Individual parent/student meetings for college planning

12th Grade Spring

- Senior Awards Night
- Individual student meetings for final check-in

Action Plans for Parents

Freshman Year Action Plan

- Make the most of high school – make sure your student is enrolled in challenging courses
- Monitor academic progress – log on to Powerschool or Canvas for current grade and attendance information
- Help your student get organized and budget his/her time. It's important to schedule time to complete homework assignments, prepare for tests and quizzes, complete projects and still have time for social activities
- Help your student build a resume. Keep a folder that contains records of Christian service, honors and awards
- Encourage your student to get involved in activities that he/she enjoys. Colleges like to see involvement in activities throughout the high school years because it shows focus and commitment
- Encourage your student to volunteer for Christian Service
- Discuss with your student college options and the importance of starting to plan for college early
- In January, review your student's course request form, making sure he/she has selected appropriate courses for the sophomore year
- Encourage summer reading. Look in the Patroness or on the NDP website for information regarding required summer reading for sophomore English classes

Sophomore Year Action Plan

- Continue to monitor academic progress.
- Your student will take the PSAT in October
- Help your student review his/her results on the PSAT and use as a study guide in preparing for the PSAT to be taken again in junior year
- In January, review your student's course request form
- Start attending college nights and college fairs. Students should begin developing a preliminary list of colleges
- Continue to encourage your student to update his/her resume
- Encourage your student to stay involved in school and community-based extracurricular activities

- Encourage summer reading. Look in the Patroness or on the NDP website for information regarding required summer reading for junior English classes.

Junior Year Action Plan

- Continue to monitor academic progress. Encourage your student to keep his/her grades up – remember the junior year is the last full year of grades that colleges and universities will see for admission
- Your student will take the PSAT in October. Information will be available in the counseling office in September. Remember, it is the junior year that enters students in the National Merit Scholarship Program
- Help your student register online to take the SAT and/or ACT in the spring of junior year (collegeboard.org OR act.org)
- In January, review your student's course request form, making sure they are taking challenging classes
- Attend the Junior Parent College Presentation in January
- Review materials and information that is presented to all juniors in the college preparation lesson taught by the counselors in February
- Attend the Junior Parent/Student Individual Meetings with counselors
- Attend the National College Fair held at the Phoenix Convention Center in October (<https://www.nacacfairs.org/attend/national-college-fairs/greater-phoenix-national-college-fair/>)
- If applicable, make sure your student is registered for Advanced Placement exams
- Help your student review their resume. The resume should include clubs, sports, Christian Service and leadership opportunities
- Encourage your student to take responsibility for college planning. It is important to keep on top of things and take the initiative
- Start searching for scholarships. Make sure your student is registered on fastweb.com – a free scholarship search. Also, search goingmerry.com for scholarships
- Attend college nights and arrange college visits
- Help your junior student narrow his/her college list
- If your student qualifies, encourage him/her to take Honors or AP or Dual Enrollment classes
- Student athletes should register with the NCAA and NAIA eligibility centers: www.eligibilitycenter.org, www.playnaia.org

Senior Year Action Plan

- Don't let your senior student get "Senioritis" – continue to monitor academic progress. Colleges require that an official transcript be sent at the end of the senior year
- Monitor student's effort to update resume
- Review with your student the College Planning 101 booklet to make sure he/she is keeping up with timelines
- Encourage your student to meet with college and university representatives when they visit the NDP campus
- Check goingmerry.com or fastweb.com for available scholarships
- Discuss finances with your student
- Together with your student, submit the FAFSA electronically (www.fafsa.ed.gov) after October 1
- If applicable, make sure your student is registered for Advanced Placement exams
- Discuss with your student his/her final college choices
- Check dates for registering for college – most offer parent nights and/or parent weekends
- **WATCH WITH PRIDE AS YOUR SENIOR GRADUATES!**