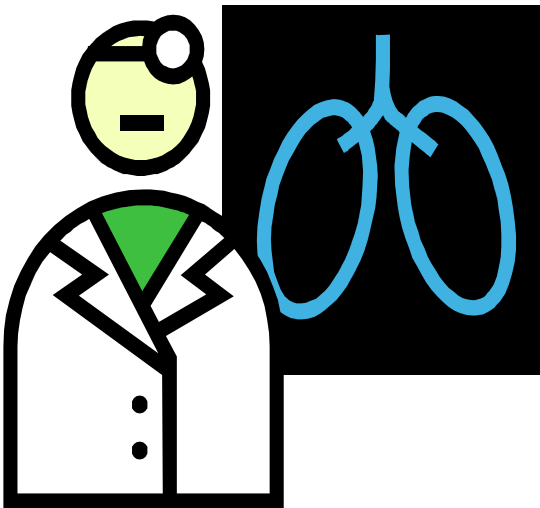


COLLEGE & MEDICAL SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Almost everything you need to know



- Application Process
- Scholarships and other Financial Aid
- Resources and Contacts

Created for the community of Port Angeles
in response to the shortage of rural physicians

Summer 2009

*By Grace Lim, a UW medical student from Portland, OR,
With support from Dr. Rob Epstein (Family Medicine of Port Angeles) and Dr. Roger Rosenblatt, MD, MPH (UW)*

Based on the UW Dream Project 2009 Participant Workbook

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Introduction:

A Shortage of Rural Physicians

According to Jefferson Medical College (JMC) in Philadelphia, 20% of the US population currently live in rural areas while only 9% of the nation's physicians are available in those areas. This shortage of rural physicians has been an increasing concern in the United States and has prompted several medical schools, including the University of Washington School of Medicine (UWSOM), to begin programs and research projects directed towards finding a sustainable solution. Several schools have come up with specialized programs, such as JMC's Physician Shortage Area Program, specifically for students who hope to return to rural hometowns after completing their medical education. Similarly, UWSOM's Rural/Underserved Opportunities Program (RUOP) in part exposes medical students to rural medicine in hopes that students may discover and perhaps be drawn by aspects of rural health of which they had not previously been aware.

Still, research on how to produce rural physicians who will stay in areas of need continues with attempts to further identify factors that draw students to rural medicine. Factors from past research have included one's hometown¹, the hometown of one's spouse², and a desire to serve the medically underserved due to an underserved background or a simple interest in underserved populations³. From mere observation, I have found that most of my fellow classmates who are interested in serving a rural area come from that area; as such, I strongly believe that hometown is an important factor in future physicians' considerations of where to serve. Thus, it can be helpful to use this factor as a guide in how to direct future research and programs.

However, it is not so simple to just recruit medical students from rural areas for many reasons, including an associated lower socioeconomic status and the lack of available resources and opportunities for higher education. According to the 2000 US Census Bureau, only 18.9% of Port Angeles residents have at least a Bachelor's degree. Given this, important work can be done in the area of pipeline programs, supporting local educators in encouraging students to finish high school and proceed to college along the way to medical school. While most colleges have resources by which to aid interested students in the process of applying to medical school, this option often becomes lost to high school students who are too far removed from such decisions of the future. Reaching students early on to inspire them with education about science and the field of medicine, and to provide role models who are eager to volunteer assistance along the way can potentially increase the number of students who enroll in college for the purpose of becoming future rural physicians.

This guide is an attempt to play a part in this idea of helping students on the path to college in hopes that they will look into medical school as a possibility for their future. Most of the following information about 4 year college admissions has been adapted from the University of Washington Dream Project's 2009 Participant Workbook. More information about UW Dream Project can be found on page 5. The medical school admissions process as outlined here is based on my own recent experience. Although I have made an effort to present this material as accurately as possible, I do not guarantee that it will be so and encourage the user to contact specific schools and programs for more complete information. Finally, I highly advise that you use these materials in conjunction with the help of a guidance counselor. I have made this specifically for Port Angeles, WA, but it may be used for educational purposes in any setting.

Grace Lim, MS2
UWSOM

¹Bible, B. "Physicians' View of Medical Practice in Nonmetropolitan Communities." *Professional & Social Aspects* 85.1 (1970): 11-18

²Cooper, et al. "Rural or urban practice factors influencing decision of primary care physicians." *Inquiry* 9 (1975): 18-25.

³Rabinowitz, et al. "The impact of multiple predictors on generalist physicians' care of underserved populations." *American Journal of Public Health* 90.8 (2000), 1225-1228.

We're Here for You!

Alliance for Equal Representation in Medicine (AFERM)

afermuw@u.washington.edu

The University of Washington Dream Project

www.dreamproject.washington.edu

Scholarship Junkies

www.scholarshipjunkies.com

UWSOM Office of Multicultural Affairs Summer Programs

<http://depts.washington.edu/omca/leadership>

Acknowledgements

Roger Rosenblatt, MD,MPH—*MPH Advisor*

Dr. Rob Epstein—*RUOP Preceptor*

Dr. Tom Locke—*Clallam County Health Officer*

Rebecca Pfaff, Meharry Medical College MS2—*PAHS Graduate*

UW Dream Project

Scholarship Junkies

Alliance for Equal Representation in Medicine

The UW Dream Project

www.dreamproject.washington.edu

“The Dream Project is a student-initiated high school outreach program that partners UW students with first-generation and low-income students in Seattle area high schools to assist in the college admissions process (including SAT prep, applications, writing essays, applying for financial aid, and finding scholarships).”

—UW Dream Project website

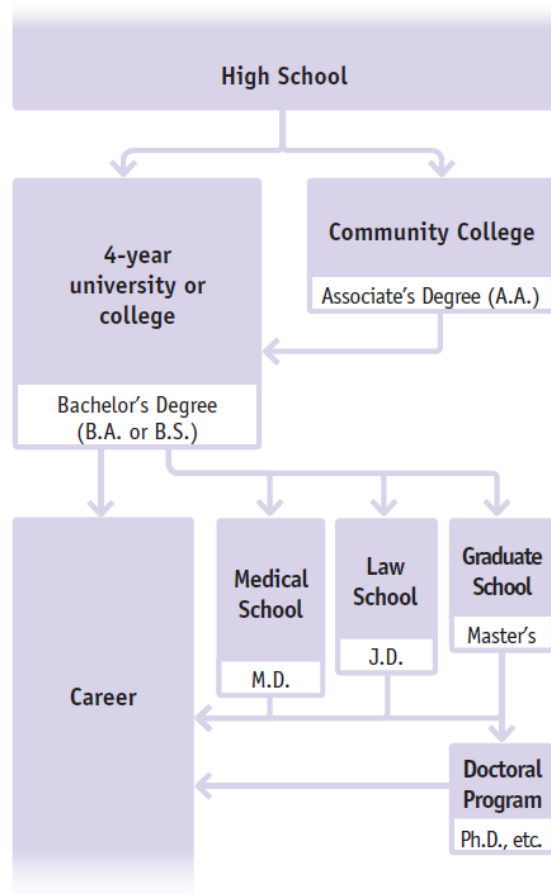
The UW Dream Project is sponsored by the University of Washington Office of Undergraduate Academic Affairs, the Office of the Vice Provost for Student Life, and the Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity. They are comprised of over 150 UW undergraduates and work with over 300 students at eight high schools throughout Seattle. The UW Dream Project not only gives each participant an interactive workbook by which each student can mark his or her progress in applying to college, but the UW Dream Project also provides a certain number of scholarships for several of the 300 students that they work with.

The following information about college admissions has been largely adapted from the UW Dream Project’s interactive workbook for participants. This adaptation was written with permission from the UW Dream Project. Please see the UW Dream Project’s website for more information on college admissions and scholarships.



THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
DREAM PROJECT

A Look at Higher Education



Mean Income by Education Level¹

Less than H.S.	\$30,146
H.S. Graduate	\$38,837
Some College	\$45,232
Associate's Degree	\$47,401
Bachelor's Degree	\$67,766
Master's Degree	\$82,022
Doctorate Degree	\$115,377
Professional Degree	\$130,377

1. Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement. Bureau of the Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics. http://pubdb3.census.gov/macro/032007/perinc/new03_010.htm. Accessed April 4, 2009.

College

The general term for all higher education. In some cases, the term "college" might refer more specifically to a four-year institution that offers only bachelor's degrees.

University

A four-year institution that has both undergraduate and graduate students. A university often includes many "colleges" or "schools" within it, such as the College of Arts & Sciences, the College of Engineering, or the School of Law.

Branch Campus

Some universities have a main campus and multiple branch campuses located elsewhere around the state. They typically offer a limited number of programs compared to the main campus. For example, UW has two branch campuses: one in Tacoma and one in Bothell.

Community College (or Junior College)

A two-year institution that offers only associate's degrees, which is typically the equivalent of the first two years of a four-year degree.

Technical College (or Vocational School)

A school that provides specialized training for a certain industry.

Major

Primary area of study at college, such as English, International Studies, or Civil Engineering.

Double Major

When a college student has two primary areas of study. This second focus typically requires extra coursework.

Minor (or emphasis)

Secondary area of study at college. This may or may not be related to your major.

A.A. or A.S.

Associate of Arts or Associate of Science. A two-year degree from a community college. Also referred to as an Associate's Degree.

B.A. or B.S. (or undergraduate degree)

Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science. A four-year degree often referred to as a Bachelor's Degree, undergraduate degree, or college degree.

M.D. (doctor)

Medical Doctorate. A degree required to be a doctor of medicine. Three to four years of extra schooling after B.A. or B.S.

J.D. (lawyer)

Juris Doctorate. A law degree required to be a lawyer. Typically three years of extra schooling after B.A. or B.S.

Master's

Degree earned after completing graduate school. One to two years of extra schooling after B.A. or B.S.

Ph.D.

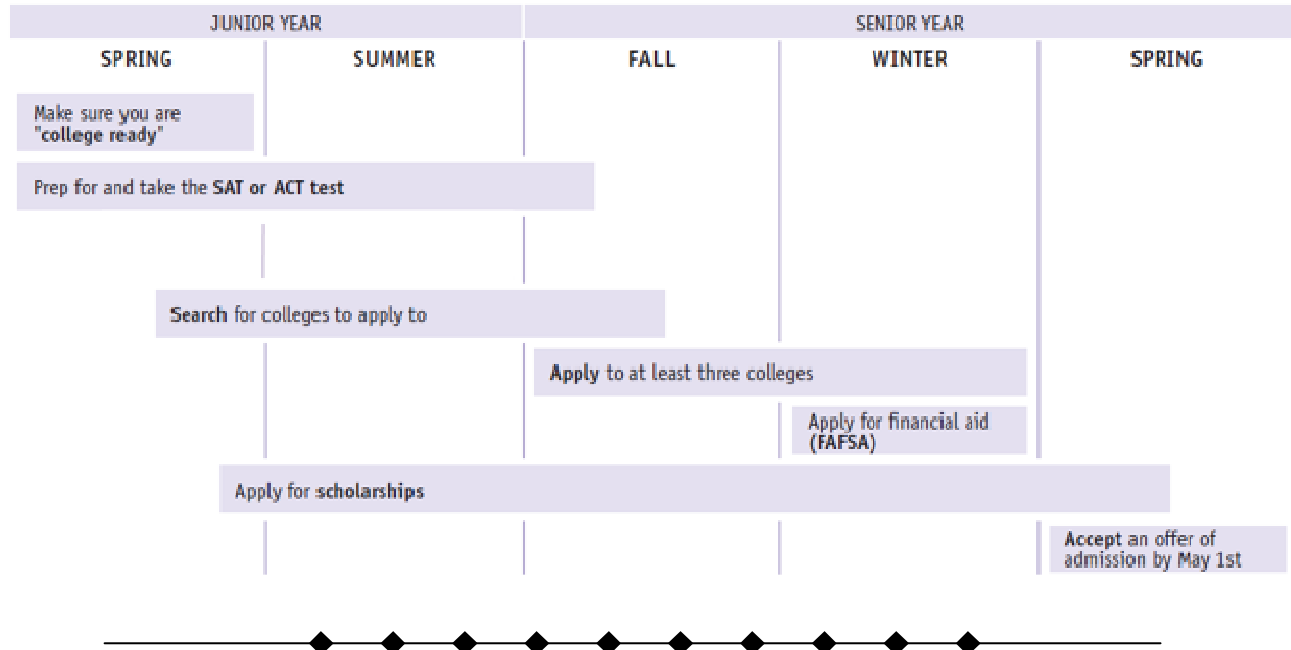
Doctor of Philosophy. Degree earned after completion of a doctoral program. Requires extra years of schooling after master's degree.

Professional Degree

Usually, the highest degree for a specific career, such as M.D., J.D., etc.

High School Timeline

For students who want to attend college immediately after high school, the timeline for preparing for and applying to college is shown below.



“College ready” means:

- On track to meet college entrance academic requirements
- Being “well-rounded”: extra-curricular activities

What else?

- Keep your grades up!
- Know when to take the SAT/ACT, PSAT, etc.
- Research schools to which you want to apply
- Know when to start applying
- Don’t forget financial aid!

Minimum Core Requirements

Page 1

■ High school graduation requirements \neq college entrance requirements!

Mathematics

Advanced Algebra or higher

3 years required (6 semesters)

At least 3 years of algebra, geometry, advanced algebra, or integrated courses that include introductory trigonometry, mathematical analysis, elementary functions, and calculus. An algebra course taken in 8th grade counts if the second year is completed in high school. Courses in arithmetic, pre-algebra, and business math do not meet this requirement.

Class Title	Grade	Credits

Class Title	Grade	Credits

Did you pass all of these classes? (circle)

👍 Yes

☒ No

Will you complete and pass Algebra II?

👍 Yes

☒ No

TOTAL YEARS OF MATH:

Will you meet Math Core? (circle)

👍 Yes

☒ No

Science

2 Lab Sciences

2 years required (4 semesters)

One year must be biology, chemistry, or physics, with laboratory. An additional year can be a lab designated by the district.

Class Title	Grade	Credits

Class Title	Grade	Credits

Did you pass all of these classes? (circle)

👍 Yes

☒ No

Does one of these courses count for your lab credit? (circle)

👍 Yes

☒ No

TOTAL YEARS OF SCIENCE:

Will you meet Science Core? (circle)

👍 Yes

☒ No

Note: Western Washington University specifies that the lab class must be chemistry or physics.

Foreign Language*

All in the same language

2 years required (4 semesters)

Two years of study in a single foreign language. Courses must be in sequence with no repetition. For example, French 1 and French 2 will meet the requirement, but French 1 and Spanish 1 will not.

Class Title	Grade	Credits

Class Title	Grade	Credits

Did you pass all of these classes? (circle)

👍 Yes

☒ No

Were all of these classes in the same language? (circle)

👍 Yes

☒ No

TOTAL YEARS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE:

Will you meet Foreign Language Core? (circle)

👍 Yes

☒ No

➡ *Refer to the flowchart on the back of this page if English wasn't your first language.

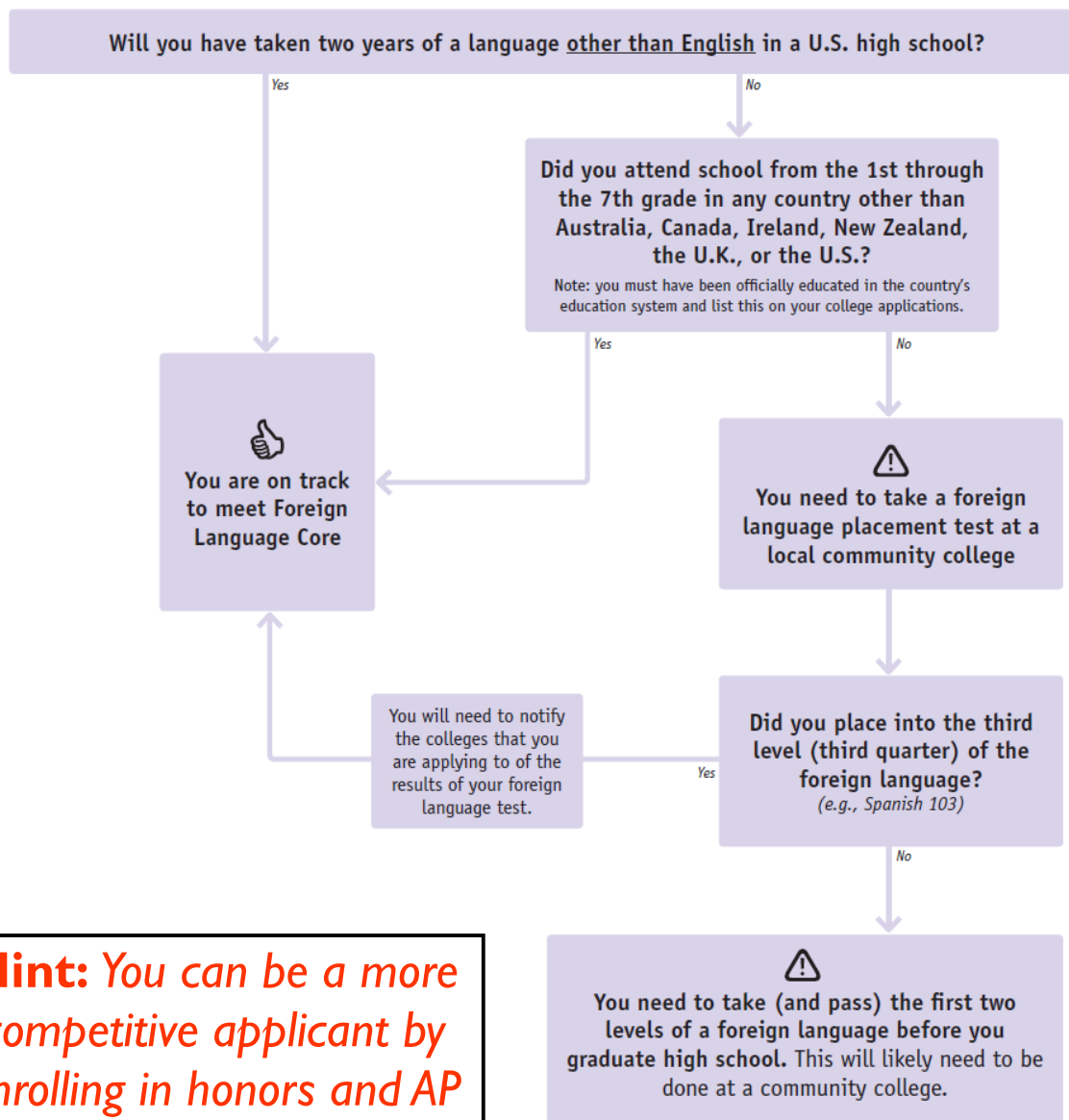
The information on these pages is valid for the six public higher education institutions in the State of Washington, as well as many other colleges and universities. Some text from Upward Bound worksheets.

*Additional requirements may be needed depending on each school.
Be sure to check with each school's admissions office or website.*

What if you already speak another language?

■ If English wasn't your first language, you grew up in a different country, or you took classes outside of the U.S., you should use this page to **make sure that you will meet the core requirements for foreign language**.

By the time you graduate high school...



Hint: You can be a more competitive applicant by enrolling in honors and AP or IB courses. Of course, it's always important to work hard and do well too!

Minimum Core Requirements

Page 2

English/Language Arts*

Only one year can be ESL

4 years required (8 semesters)

At least 3 years must be in composition or literature and the fourth year may be a "soft" English credit, such as drama-as-literature, public speaking, debate, journalistic writing, Business English, or English as a Second Language. Generally, courses labeled as remedial/developmental or basic/review English, yearbook, reading, and newspaper staff do not meet this requirement.

Class Title	Grade	Credits

Class Title	Grade	Credits

Did you pass all of these classes? (circle)

☐ Yes

☒ No

TOTAL YEARS OF ENGLISH:

➡ *Refer to the back of this page if English wasn't your first language.

Will you meet English Core? (circle)

☐ Yes

☒ No

Social Studies

3 years required (6 semesters)

Courses that typically count include American Studies, anthropology, civics, contemporary world problems, economics, geography, government, history, philosophy, political science, psychology, and sociology. Credits awarded for student government, marketing, leadership, and community service do not meet this requirement.

Class Title	Grade	Credits

Class Title	Grade	Credits

Did you pass all of these classes? (circle)

☐ Yes

☒ No

TOTAL YEARS OF SOCIAL STUDIES:

Will you meet Social Studies Core? (circle)

☐ Yes

☒ No

Art & Electives

1 year required (2 semesters)

Needs to be one semester of visual, literary, or performing art and one can be a semester of academic electives that goes above core.

Class Title	Grade	Credits

Class Title	Grade	Credits

Did you pass all of these classes? (circle)

☐ Yes

☒ No

TOTAL ARTS CREDITS:

Note: Eastern Washington University requires a full year of Art.

Will you meet Arts Core? (circle)

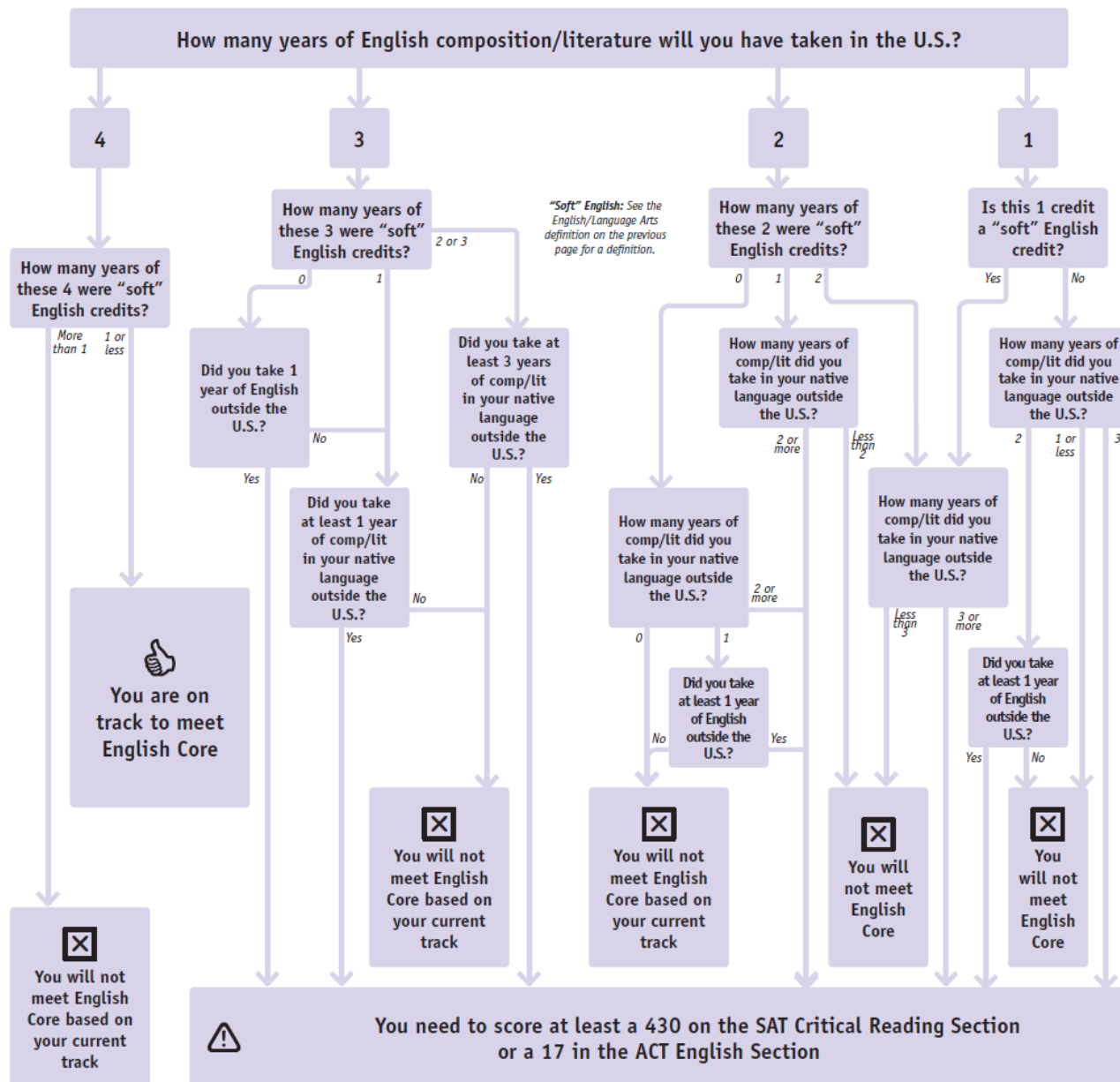
☐ Yes

☒ No

How do you meet core requirements if your first language isn't English?

■ If English wasn't your first language, you grew up in a different country, or you took classes outside of the U.S., you should use this page to **make sure that you will meet the core requirements for English**.

By the time you graduate high school...



Being “Well-Rounded”

Traits that colleges are looking for:

It's not just that you participated, but what did you learn from this activity? In college applications, you will need to **describe how the activity has impacted you.**

- leadership
- commitment
- service
- passion

- **Leadership:** *Taking initiative*
- **Commitment:** *Sticking with it*
- **Service:** *Sacrificing for others*
- **Passion:** *What do you care about?*

Use your time wisely. It may be better to devote more time (*commitment*) in *leadership* and *service* to something you really care about (*passion*) than to spread yourself thin with too many activities. Take advantage of summers to volunteer or find internships.

Be sure to keep track of all your hours and positions as some schools may want to know how long you have been doing something. It may be helpful to keep all this information written down as you do each activity through the years so that you do not have to take much time trying to remember in the end.

Some sample activities include:

- activities and clubs
- jobs
- sports
- ASB or student government
- family obligations
- community service
- arts or music activities
- involvement at church/mosque/synagogue/etc.
- significant achievements
- personal endeavors
- study abroad

Taking the Tests



PSAT:

What? The Preliminary SAT not only allows you to practice the SAT for a low rate (depends on the high school), but also enters you into the National Merit Scholarship Competition. Top scorers on the PSAT can qualify.

The test is 2 hours and 10 minutes long (half the time of the actual SAT) and is made up of the three sections on the SAT: Critical Reading, Mathematics, and Writing.

On the test, you can check “yes” for the Student Search Service if you wish to receive college information by mail.

When? You must take the PSAT during your JUNIOR year to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship. However, it is also possible to take it during sophomore year to see how you do.



SAT or ACT:

What? The SAT or ACT is required as part of the college application process. Either test is acceptable for most schools although most people choose to take the SAT. Both can be taken multiple times (many people choose to take the test once for practice a year before) and you can later choose which scores will be available to the colleges to which you apply.

See the following page for a comparison of the SAT and ACT.

SAT versus ACT

SAT	- VS -	ACT
www.collegeboard.com	WEBSITE	www.actstudent.org
\$45	COST	\$46
Three Sections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical reading • Mathematics • Writing 	SECTIONS	Five Sections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English • Mathematics • Reading • Science • Optional Writing Section
Each section worth 800 points Total of possible 2400 points	POINTS	Each section worth 36 points Section scores averaged into "composite score" out of 36
4 hours, with short breaks	TIME	4.5 hours (including Writing Section), with short breaks
Correct answers get 1 point Wrong answers deduct .25 point	SCORING	Correct answers get 1 point No penalty for wrong answers (so answer <u>every</u> question)
Required and included	WRITING SECTION	Optional, but required for most colleges

Notes:

1. The Writing section on the SAT is a 25 minute essay.
2. Other sections on both tests are multiple choice.
3. If you take the ACT, be sure to take the optional Writing section as most schools require it for admissions.
4. **The SAT does not deduct point for omitted answers but takes 1/4 of a point for all wrong answers!** (The ACT does not deduct points.)
5. Registration deadline is usually 1-2 months before the test. You can register online or by mail.
6. **If you cannot afford the \$45 or \$46 per test, you may qualify for a FEE WAIVER.** You can receive up to two fee waivers per test if you have free-or-reduced lunch.



SAT Subject Tests:

What? The Subject Tests are in several different categories:

- English
- History & Social Sciences
- Mathematics
- Sciences
- Languages

Not every college requires Subject Tests, but some require up to three different tests so check with the admissions office. Subject Tests are scored out of 800, just like each section on the SAT.

When? Although people may take the PSAT, SAT and ACT for practice once before they retake it, most people do not do so for Subject Tests. Subject Tests are usually taken in the fall of SENIOR year.

Hint: *Always check for fee waivers if you are unavailable to afford test and application fees!*

Sending Test Scores



You must send each college an **official score report** BEFORE the application deadline. This can take up to 4 weeks so be sure to take the test and send it in before then!

On each test, you will be able to select up to 4 schools that will be sent your scores from this test for free. Take advantage of this even if you have not yet applied or are unsure whether or not you will apply to these schools. The Admissions Office will keep your scores on file until you do apply. Be aware though that your scores from that test will be sent to these schools.

Each additional score reports cost \$9.50 for the SAT and \$9 for the ACT.

For more complete information on sending scores, go to the following websites:

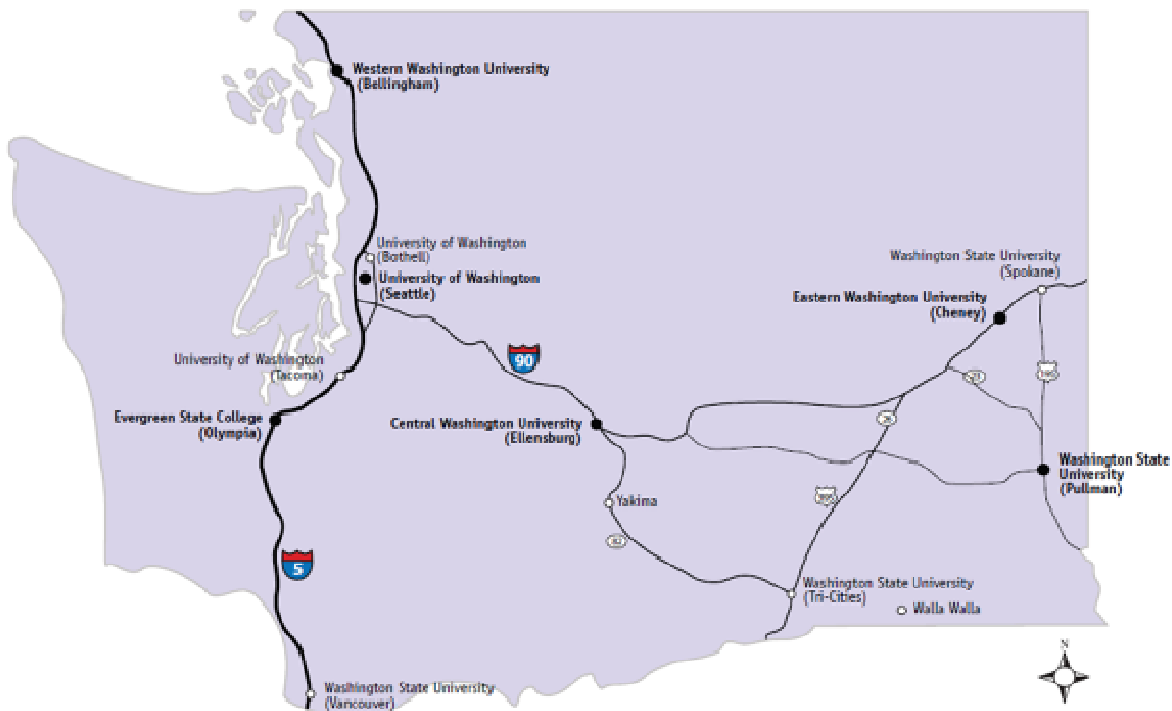
- **SAT:** www.collegeboard.com/testing
- **ACT:** www.actstudent.org

There are also practice test questions on these websites, as well as free test prep at sites like www.ineedapencil.com.

For comparison, mean SAT scores for 2008 college-bound seniors were:

- Critical Reading: 502
- Mathematics: 515
- Writing: 492

Some 2008 State Averages...



There are 6 public schools and over 14 private schools in the state of Washington. Most schools post profiles of their incoming freshman class, including average GPA and test scores. Here are a few from 2008...

Eastern Washington University

Average GPA: 3.3

Average SAT: 977

Average ACT: 21

University of Washington

Average GPA: 3.59-3.90

Average SAT sections: 520-670

Washington State University

Average GPA: 3.48

Average SAT: 1117

Have bad grades? Schools like to see improvement. If you did not do well early on but show steady improvement, they know you have the potential to do well in college.

Researching & Choosing Schools

Factors to Consider and Discuss

- **Location.** Distance from home, weather, urban or rural, etc.
- **Programs Available/School Focus.** Are there programs here that aren't available at other colleges?
- **Public vs. Private.** A public university's tuition is subsidized by the state government, so it can sometimes be cheaper.
- **Secular vs. Religious.** You don't have to be religious to go to a religious college and you don't have to go to a religious college to study religion. Some might require attendance at religious services.
- **Diversity.** The types of cultures, languages, and people represented on the campus or community.
- **Size.** Number of students, campus size, city population, etc.
- **In-state vs. Out-of-state.** In-state tuition at public schools is usually cheaper than tuition at out-of-state public schools.
- **Cost.** Don't let the listed cost of attendance stop you from applying. The cost to you depends on a financial aid package, which is offered after you are accepted.
- **Selectivity.** How competitive is it to get in? How many new students do they accept each year?
- **4-year vs. community college.** Community colleges offer 2-year degrees with a path to transfer to a 4-year school.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU?

College is a time for personal growth. Look at the school's campus life—What kind of activities might you be interested in? What kind of students would you like to be around?

- Are you interested in sports? Music? Drama?
- Big city or small town?
- Near water? Near other cities?
- Close to home or other relatives?
- If it is a secular college, are there religious groups you can join if so desired?
- **What else?**

Make a list of things that are important to you and rank them. You may only get to keep your top few, but know which ones you have to keep and which ones are disposable.

There are too many colleges to go through all of them. To make the task a little easier, ask your teachers and counselor for suggestions based on what you are interested in studying. Look through the mail you get from schools. Use Google.

US News & World Report puts out an annual report on school rankings based on research, programs, tuition, acceptance rates, etc. Although some of this information is online, it is not all free. Be aware of how they rank schools and know that it is not always objective. Although it may be helpful to take a look, remember that how happy you are with a school's student life and academic programs, and whether or not it is a fit for you is more important than rankings.

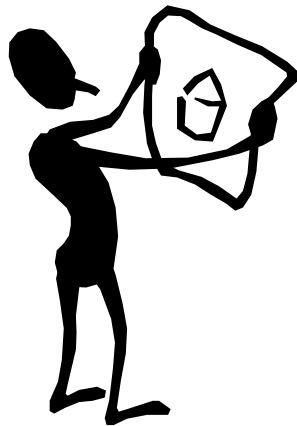
Note: *Private schools often cost more but may also give better financial aid packages as they have more private donors. Private and/or smaller schools may also have better support programs, whereas public and/or larger schools may better opportunities to do certain activities—doing research, for example.*

The Plan

The UW Dream Project recommends that you apply to at least 3 colleges that fall within three different categories:

1. **Reach:** You might not get in, but it's worth it because you really want to go
2. **Solid:** You're a competitive applicant and will likely get accepted (...but may not for whatever reason*)
3. **Safety:** You'll definitely be accepted, and it's a backup in case the others don't work out

Each of these schools should be places you can see yourself at, but you don't need to be looking for the PERFECT school just yet. Leave that for after you are accepted so you know what your choices are.



The admission process can be somewhat of a toss up. The person looking at your application may be having a bad day or may feel extremely nice at the moment because she won the lottery. Many students with great scores get rejected from top schools while there are also cases, though much fewer, of students with lower grades entering programs with more competitive applicants. This can also change depending on how “well-rounded” an applicant is, however. Don’t be discouraged! But don’t forget your **safety school...*

The Application Process

Most medical school have online applications in addition to paper applications now. Choose what is easiest for you and make sure that throughout the application process, you don't set yourself up to fail. For example, if you know you will lose paper applications, apply online or keep a file in an obvious place for all your applications.

There are several components to the application process so it may be helpful to keep a notebook with all the information that you will need. Although there is only one application deadline per school that you will need to worry about, you must also give yourself personal deadlines for each part of the application.

Here is a list of things you may want to keep track of for each school you apply to:

- **Fee waiver for SAT/ACT:** Must be requested before applying for the tests.
 - This process may take a while. Be sure to start early.
- **SAT/ACT Scores:** Must be requested from testing agency
 - Check to make sure they are sent and received.
- **Request Application -OR- Create online account**
 - If you are requesting a paper application, this may take a few days.
- **Application Fee Waivers:** The request will differ per school so be sure to check their website.
- **Official Transcript Request:** Find out from your high school how long this will take.
 - If this is sent separately from your application, make sure the schools receive it.
- **Letters of Recommendation:** It will take more than a semester to find the right people to write you LOR's. Give them plenty of time to write this. For more information, see page 24.
- **Write Personal Statement:** This may take several drafts. Don't wait until the last minute!

The Personal Statement

Your personal statement (PS) is arguably the most important part of your application. Aside from your numbers and activities, it tells the reader:

Who YOU are and WHY you do what you do.

This ties your entire application together to say how you show *leadership, commitment, service, and passion.*

Here are some sample questions from 2008. Notice that behind each question, what the school really wants to know is **WHO ARE YOU?**

Seattle University

- Why do you feel that Seattle University is a good match with your educational goals?

University of Washington

- Discuss how your family's experience or cultural history enriched you or presented you with opportunities or challenges in pursuing your educational goals.
- Tell us a story from your life, describing an experience that either demonstrates your character or helped to shape it.

Western Washington University

- If you are interested in a particular academic area, tell us why. Do you have a dream job in mind? If so, we'd love to hear about it.
- Tell us how culture—either your own or your experience with others—has affected your outlook on the world. How have you contributed to a multicultural community and/or how will you promote multiculturalism at Western or in your career?

Sam Lim, the founder of ScholarshipJunkies.com, uses the analogy of investments when explaining how to make oneself look attractive for scholarships. This can be applied to schools as well. He says that schools or organizations look for applicants to **INVEST** in. They want to see your **potential** for growth, and they base this off of your track record: your grades and your activities.

Use the PS as your opportunity to explain to them why your track record proves you have potential for growth. See the following page for suggestions on what to write about.

Be Unique

- Be **PRACTICAL**: If you need to explain some academic mishaps, do so briefly unless the reason is something that greatly affected your life. For example, if you failed 3 of your classes one semester because you were ill and this illness was a big factor in your personal growth during the past few years, you could use this as a way to talk about how you have grown.
- Be **PERSONAL**: Everyone has a story but it's not always easy to find. Use some of the questions below to brainstorm. But think about what is important to you and tell the reader why you chose to participate in the activities and clubs you were in. Remember, they are looking for *passion* and *commitment*.
- **Personal Growth**: What have you learned about yourself, about the world, or about life in general? How did you learn it? This could be an opportunity to talk about *leadership* and *service*.

Brainstorm

What makes you or your family unique?

Have you faced any challenges or overcome any obstacles that have made you stronger? If so what were they?

What experiences outside of school have influenced your life in and out of the classroom?

What skills do you have (leadership, speaking, writing, etc)?

What book has influenced you most? Why?

What was it like growing up in your town and going to your high school?

Who in your life has influenced you? How? Why?

What impact do you want to make on your community or the world?

Has your race, ethnicity, culture, politics, or religion affected you in positive or negative ways? How?

Have you struggled due to socioeconomic status, physical ability or household situations? How?

Organizing & Writing Your PS

Here are two different ways to organize your essay:

1. Start with your topic or main idea, put in some supporting paragraphs and end with a conclusion
2. Describe an event, then its outcome, and talk about what you learned from the experience

After you've written your draft, ASK:

- Did you **answer the question(s)** posed in the essay prompt in the application?
- Does this statement **describe YOU** and point out your best qualities?
- Did you discuss how this experience has **transformed** you?
- Did you discuss how this event **relates to college** or your future?
- If you have **experienced significant hardships** in your life, did you describe them in your essay?

Tips:

- Proofread
- Read it out loud
- Share it with a few editors, but not too many!
 - Too many different ideas will make your job hard
 - Ask one **close friend** who will not be afraid to tell you the absolute truth. He or she may also offer advice on whether or not your PS genuinely shows who you are, and give suggestions on what to add in.
 - Make sure at least one of your editors checks your grammar and spelling.
 - You may want to ask your counselor to read it and give you feedback as they will have read plenty of past personal statements.
 - Keep going back to these editors until they have nothing left to say. But remember, **YOU** get to decide what to do with any comments they make—it's your statement.
- Don't get discouraged! You may have to go through many drafts but the end product will be all the better.

Letters of Recommendation (LOR's)

Depending on the college and the high school, there may be special forms for letters of recommendation. Be sure to ask your guidance counselor and to check online. The number of LOR's that you need also depends on the college.

Who should I ask?

- Teachers, coaches, volunteer coordinators, employees, religious leaders, etc.
- They should know you well and be able to write about your personal growth in a certain class/activity/etc.
- When choosing who to ask, think about how long they have known you and how well

When? Give them at least 4-6 weeks. They will probably have many seniors asking them for LOR's at one time.

How? Asking in person is always best. Be professional! Do NOT ask on Facebook.

It is usually best to also give them your resume, personal statement, and any instructions (where to send it or who to give it to) when you request a letter.

And then? Always write THANK YOU cards to the people who help you—recommendation writers and others!

Submitting the Application Part 1

Get it in on time!
When is that?

Well, here are some
terms you should
know...



“Rolling Admission”

Decisions are processed depending on when the application is submitted. **Apply as soon as possible.**

“Regular Admission”

Most applicants will hear back in March. The date you submit your application does not impact the decision. **Apply by the final deadline.**

“Early Decision”

You sign a **legally-binding contract** that if you get accepted to that college, you *will* go there. You can only apply to one college as “Early Decision” but you can apply to as many other colleges as you want for Regular, Rolling, or Early Action Admission. **Apply before Early Decision deadline (usually in November).**

“Early Action”

No binding contract, but guarantees that the applicant will hear back by a certain date. Note that your application is not given any special consideration for applying Early Action. **Apply before Early Action deadline (usually in November).**

“Priority Date”

Not a deadline, but a **suggested date** by which to apply so that you can be considered for scholarships or other programs. This does *not* give you special consideration for admission and is also not the same thing as Early Action or Early Decision. **Apply before Priority Date (usually in November/December).**

For Early Decision, some schools give this as an **OPTION**. It does not mean you have to apply Early Decision to any school. Be aware—if you do decide to apply Early Decision, you **MUST** go to this school if you are accepted.

Set your own deadlines based on the type of admissions process for each school. For example, if the school has rolling admissions, set a deadline that is the earliest date you can realistically put everything together. Remember, you have LOR’s to collect, transcripts to request, and a PS to write... and you are most likely in your senior year of high school—

YOUR GRADES STILL MATTER! So be wise.

If the school has regular admissions, you might want to set yourself a deadline that is about a week before the actual deadline just in case anything happens. Then you will have plenty of time to mail in your application. If you apply online, plan for any delays that might happen on the school’s website with students all over the nation submitting their application last minute.

Submitting the Application Part 2

Now you have a deadline... when you get there:

- Read through everything
- Ask someone else to look through it for you
- Make a copy for your own record!!
- Make sure it is submitted before the deadline
- Make sure the school receives your application
 - You should receive a Confirmation or Acknowledgement Letter within 2 weeks. If not, call the admissions office to check—but not too many times or you'll start to annoy them!
- You may be able to check your status online

You should hear back by the end of March/early April. If you are accepted, you will have to make your decision by **May 1st**.

Accepted

You're in! You need to choose whether you will attend this college and send in your Enrollment Verification and Deposit **by May 1st**.

Denied

Go to plan B. Wait to hear back from other schools or look into alternate opportunities for the next year.

Wait listed

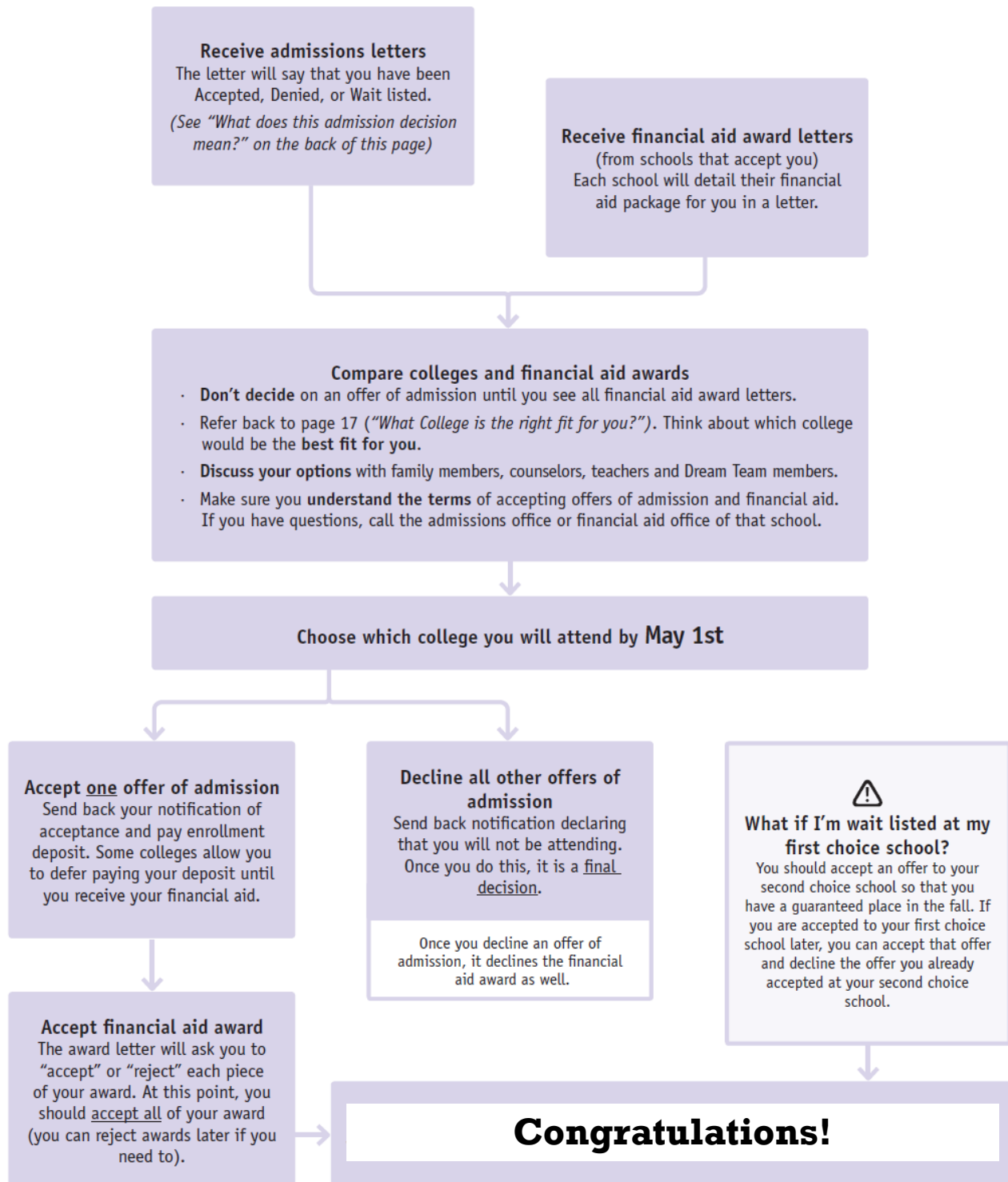
The school is waiting to see how many students will choose to go there. A school **may offer you admission later (after May 1st)**, but you should accept another school's offer to ensure that you have a place in the fall.

Deferred

The school, or you, have decided to **wait a certain amount of time before you enroll**. For example, you might decide to travel for a semester and defer admission so you won't have to re-apply when you get back. Not all schools offer this as an option.

Accepting and declining offers

■ You will have to accept an offer of admission and submit a deposit to secure your spot at a specific college.



Affording the Application Process

Now you know how to do it all... but how will you afford it? Let's take a look at the cost to apply:

Test Fees:

-SAT/ACT	~\$45
-PSAT	<\$20

Application Fees

~\$50 each

(for UW,WSU,Western and Eastern WA)

If you take the SAT/ACT twice and apply to two WA public schools, you already have to pay over \$200! This doesn't even take into consideration how much it cost to visit schools.

First, remember to look into fee waivers for the test and application fees. These can help save you a lot of money!

Next, if you really want to see a school before making your decision but don't have much to spend, it may make more sense to wait until you have heard back from most schools and then take a week off of classes to travel in April. If there are any clubs you are interested in, see if there is a member who is willing to host you while you are there to cut down on hotel costs. That way, you only have to pay for travel and food.

However, this can still be costly depending on where your schools are. If you are unable to travel, ask the school or contact different clubs to see if you can call current students. Ask them how they like the school, what they like about it, why they chose it, and ask about activities you are interested in, about the surrounding area, about career advising at the school, etc. Compare their answers to what you would like to see in a school... but remember, everyone's experience with a school will be different.

Affording College

The following are Annual Tuitions for three schools in 2008:

- University of Washington (in-state): \$19,138
- University of Oregon (out-of-state): \$32,061
- University of Puget Sound (private): \$44,990

These are estimates from each school's website. The estimates include books and supplies, as well as housing and food, but they do not include any travel expenses (when you go home for Thanksgiving, for example). They also do not include any extra activities you might want to do so you may have to add extra for football tickets and dorm dances.

The thing about these estimates is that they assume you will be living in the dorms. For many schools but not all, the dorms are actually more expensive than if you rent an apartment near campus and eat out or cook. Although dorms are a good experience and help you make friends during your first year, if the cost is too much, it may help to live "off-campus" (out of the dorms) after freshman year.

The following pages describe the financial aid process, but before you accept it all, do some budgeting. Add up the following numbers... you can find them online:

- Tuition (usually comes with any extra fees for the school)
 - Look to see if you have or need student health insurance
 - Fees may include bus fare for the semester/quarter, student government fees, etc.
- Cost of dorms (usually include meal plan)

Then estimate any travel expenses and add on a little bit so that you can have fun getting to know the area and new friends. As a student, you may have much more at your disposal than you usually do while others may have less money than they are used to at home. Be wise in spending your money—although you may get money from financial aid, you may have to pay it back with interest in the future if most of your financial aid is in the form of loans.

Usually, if you are willing to not always be able to eat out, buy new clothes or attend functions, you will come up with a budgeted number that is a little smaller than the school's estimate. At this point, take out only enough financial aid to cover this amount and take out more later if you need to (check with your financial aid office to see how possible this will be).

Applying for Financial Aid


So now that we've talked about budgeting and how to think about our financial package, how do we apply for financial aid?

There will be a deadline for each school by which you have to apply at www.fafsa.ed.gov. FAFSA is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. There are a couple steps to apply:

1. Apply for a **PIN number**. You need one for both the student AND the parent. This will take at least a few days so do this early. **DO NOT LOSE THIS PIN**—you will need this to apply for financial aid every year!!!
2. Gather your **family's financial information**. You can either use estimates for this year's tax information by looking at last year's, but in the end you will have to edit the application for this year's numbers.

Once you submit your application online, you will receive a computer estimate for your Estimated Family Contribution, or your EFC. This is what the government thinks your family should be able to pay each year for your education. That means that you will receive a Financial Aid Package that covers the rest.

EXAMPLE	Cost of Attendance	\$ 19,138	← This is the total cost of going to college, including tuition, books, rent, food, etc.
-	Estimated Family Contribution	\$ 3,261	← The government calculates how much money your family can provide for your education. This is called the estimated family contribution. You can get an estimate of yours at www.finaid.org .
=	Your "Financial Need"	\$ 15,877	← This is the amount that schools should offer you in financial aid.

 To be considered for federal financial aid, you must submit the FAFSA by the earliest priority date of the colleges that you are applying to. Every college's date is different, so check with each one.

Hint: You must use FAFSA every year to receive financial aid for the next school year. The FAFSA always comes out on January 1st of each year. Your school will have its own deadline—depending on the school, you may get better packages if you apply earlier.

Financial Aid

There are three different kinds of aid:

1. **Grants & Scholarships:** These are FREE. You DO NOT have to pay these back. Always be sure to accept grants and scholarships! Not every school automatically checks to see if you are eligible for certain grants and scholarships so check with your financial aid office.
2. **Work-Study:** See below
3. **Loans:** See page 32.

What is Work-Study? If you qualify for work-study, your financial aid package summary will say, for example, that you have \$3,000 worth of work-study money. This means that to get this money, you must find a work-study job on or near campus. There are jobs specifically for work-study students and the pay per hour is usually more than other jobs. For example, non-work-study positions may pay \$8 an hour whereas a work-study position will pay \$12 an hour.

You will be working for an employer who will later be repaid what they paid you with money from your financial aid package. So they are not really paying from their pocket. You can make up to the total amount of your work-study money. If you get \$3,000 a semester, you have the opportunity to earn this much only per semester. After this, if your employer is unable to pay you from the organization's budget, you will not be able to work for pay until the following semester.

Is it worth it? You may not always be able earn the full amount of work-study given to you each year. For example, if you work for \$12 an hour at 15 hours a week, you may only make \$2,100 in the semester. You must take this into account when budgeting at the beginning of the year.

Depending on your major and what other sort of activities you want to be involved in, you may or may not be able to work over 15-20 hours while taking classes each week. Talk to your boss and think about what is realistic for you. Budget your time—when will you be in class, how much time do you need to do homework, when will you have time to rest and have fun? Is it more important to you to be president of a club or to avoid another \$2,000 in loans? Think in terms of the future. Depending on your career path, \$2,000 in loans (plus interest... this may even double the original amount) may not be too much to pay back or you may want to take out as little as possible.

The bottom line is to be careful to make sure you enjoy yourself in college and that you take time to rest and do things that make you happy. It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity so you don't want to miss out, but also balance this with a picture of the future and how realistic it will be to pay back loans.

Loans

Know the terms:

- **Subsidized:** Interest does not start accruing until 6 months after you graduate. Thus, the amount you owe at the time of graduation is the same as the amount you took out during school.
- **Unsubsidized:** Interest accrues during your time in school. At the time of graduation, the amount you owe is MORE than the principal amount you took out in school.
- **Private Loans:** Student loans have lower interest rates, but private loans usually have higher rates than public loans. If you are for any reason need to take out private loans (e.g. your financial aid package was not big enough), be sure to understand what you are signing. Many loans allow you to defer payment of the loan if you continue to go to school full time (graduate school, for example). Some private loans do not allow this so you will have to pay it back while you are in graduate school. Some also accrue interest while you are in school so be clear on the terms of the loan.

Most loans give you a 6 month grace period after graduation. This means that you do not have to begin paying back the loan until then. Interest will also start accruing then. This can be a factor to consider if you are hoping to go to graduate or medical school after graduation and don't know when. However, know that you have other options as well. If you do not feel that you are ready to apply to medical school and would like to take a couple years off, some government-sponsored programs such as AmeriCorps and Teach For America allow you to defer your loans during the duration of the program. But these programs only pay you a minimal living allowance while you volunteer with them for a 10 months to a year.

Again, remember that you do NOT have to take out all of your financial aid package. Keep the grants and scholarships, budget the amount of work-study you can get, and take out only the loans you estimate that you will need. You can always take out more later if really necessary though you might try not to. Know that if you have to take out more later, it may take a while so look ahead! Some schools have emergency loans that you can take out and repay within several months so if you cannot receive a public or private loan until a few months later and need to pay your rent, this may be a good option.

Budgeting Tips

Before every school year, sit down and budget how much money you will need...

- **Tuition** and other academic fees: This may change from year to year...
- **Student Health Insurance:** This is required at some schools unless you are under your parents' policy. Though you may not think you need this, it is usually important to have as you are living in close contact with many different people and have different risks to your health now that you are in a new place. (Make sure you get all the shots you need!)
- **Books and Supplies:** Try to find used books at the bookstore or online as this will be cheaper than buying new books from the student store. Sell your books at the end of the semester/quarter online or to friends as the student store will only give you a small percent of what you paid if you sell it back to them.
- **Room and Board:** Although you may want to experience dorm life during your first year, it may be cheaper to room with friends in an apartment after that. Ask around and look online (but be careful when looking online as there may be scams).
- **Travel:** If you buy airfare, it may help to use a credit card that gives cash back or earns air miles. Many airlines also have frequent flyer programs. Southwest, Virgin America, and Alaska Airlines are usually the cheapest way to fly.
- **Other Activities:** Sports events, fine art performances, eating out with friends, checking out any cities or ski lodges nearby... these all cost money. If something is important to you, don't deprive yourself but you may also want to remind yourself that you can't do it all.

Know that the first year may cost more as you may need to buy dorm supplies and move everything to your new home. Moving to an apartment in the future will also require new expenses as you will need to buy furniture, set up utilities and internet access, etc.

Also remember that if you have work study, you may not earn all of the money offered to you. Once you accept the different parts of your financial aid package, the school will automatically pay off tuition first. You will then receive the rest of the money by check or Electronic Funds Transfer—check with the Financial Aid Office to see when this will disburse so that you can pay your bills on time.

Scholarships!

There are lots of places to look for scholarships. There are local scholarships (check at your high school), there are scholarships at your college (see you if you need to fill out separate applications from the FAFSA to qualify), and then there are state-wide and national scholarships.

There are also different types of scholarships. Some are merit scholarships (based on your grades, scores and resume), others are need-based (based on your family financial information). In addition, some scholarships are renewable (some for only a certain number of years—you will need to ask how to renew this scholarship each year), whereas others are one-time scholarships (although some may guarantee money for several years).

Most of the time, the trouble is **where to start...?** Here are several resources that can help you:

- Google
- Your guidance counselor
- www.fastweb.com
- www.scholarships.com
- www.finaid.com
- www.scholarshipjunkies.com

Some of these sites will allow you to make a profile and then match you to scholarships so that you are able to see ones that fit you (e.g. scholarships for African-American women, scholarships for graduates of Clallam County interested in medicine).

Note: Beware of scams! No legitimate scholarship will ask you to pay money to submit an application or make a profile!

- What's a local scholarship?

A scholarship awarded to students from a certain region (school, city, state, etc.). Applicant pools for local scholarships are much smaller than national applicant pools. As such, students who apply for local scholarships have a higher chance of receiving the scholarship.

- What's a national scholarship?

A scholarship awarded to students across the country. Applicants may be required to meet certain eligibility requirements that are not limited to geographic location. National scholarships tend to have larger applicant pools and are much more competitive.

Here are some scholarships recommended by the UW Dream Project. Note that not all may apply to Port Angeles High School Graduates.

Spring of Junior Year

Nordstrom Scholarship

The Nordstrom Scholarship will be awarded to five students in the Washington/Alaska region. Each \$10,000 scholarship will be paid over four years in equal installments of \$2,500. Scholarships are for attendance at a four-year college or university. All scholarship awards will be paid directly to the educational institutions by Nordstrom.

- Due: May 2009
- Website: N/A (Ask your career center)

Fall of Senior Year

Horatio Alger National Scholarship

The Horatio Alger Association offers up to \$20,000 in scholarships for students who have demonstrated integrity and perseverance in overcoming adversity, strength of character, financial need, a good academic record, commitment to pursue a college education, and a desire to contribute to society.

- Due: October 30, 2009
- Website: www.horatioalger.org

Mount Baker MLK Scholarship (Due: December 2009)

To further the dream of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the Mt. Baker Community Club awards approximately 15 scholarships in the amount of \$3,000 each to local high school seniors who reside in one of the following zip codes: 98104, 98108, 98118, 98122, 98134, 98144. Students must also be a member of a racial or ethnic group that is underrepresented in higher education and will be selected based on overcoming adversity, financial need, academic progress, community service and desire to continue their education.

- Due: December 4, 2009
- Website: www.mountbaker.org/mlk-scholarship.php

Winter of Senior Year

Gates Millennium Scholarship

Gates Millennium Scholars Program (GMS) seeks to "promote academic excellence and to provide an opportunity for outstanding minority students with significant financial need to reach their highest potential." GMS

offers scholarships for minority students (African America, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian Pacific Islander American, and Hispanic American) who exhibit "academic achievement, leadership potential, and community service."

- Due: January 12, 2010
- Website: www.gmsp.org

Dell Scholars Program

The Dell Scholars program recognizes students who have overcome significant obstacles in pursuing their education. The program awards over 250 scholarships at \$20,000 each and also provides students with technology, a scholar networking community, resources and mentorship to provide them with the support necessary to succeed in college.

- Due: January 15, 2010
- Website: www.dellscholars.org

Elks Most Valuable Student Competition

Elks National Foundation awards 500 four-year scholarships (\$1,000 to \$15,000 per year) to high school seniors who demonstrate scholarship, leadership and have financial need. Students that receive the award must be pursuing a four-year degree on a full time schedule and attending an American college or university in the U.S.

- Due: January 2010
- Website: www.elks.org/enf/scholars/mvs.cfm

Ron Brown Scholar Program

The Ron Brown Scholar Program "recognizes African-American students who will make significant contributions to society." The program awards a minimum of ten scholarships of \$10,000 a year for four years to students that demonstrate leadership potential and community involvement.

- Due: Applications received on November 1, 2009 will also be considered for additional scholarship providers, but the final deadline is January 9, 2010.
- Website: www.ronbrown.org

USA Funds Access to Education Scholarship

USA Funds Access to Education program provides scholarships to underrepresented students who demonstrate financial need. They award non-renewable scholarships at \$1,500 each. Students may re-apply but awards from the program may not exceed \$6,000.

- Due: February 16, 2010
- Website: www.usafunds.org/planning/access_to_education_scholarship/index.htm

Spring of Senior Year

Washington State Scholarship Foundation Scholarship

The Washington State Scholarship Foundation awards a number of \$5,000 scholarships to graduating high school seniors in Washington who will be attending four-year institutions. High school seniors planning on attending two-year institutions have the opportunity to be awarded \$2,500 scholarships.

- Due: March 1, 2010
- Website: www.washingtonscholarships.org/who.html

Washington PTA Financial Grant

Washington State PTA awards \$1,000 to \$2,000 financial grants to Washington State high school seniors who will be entering their freshman year of college. Awards are based on "financial need, academic performance, and community service."

- Due: March 31, 2010
- Website: www.wastatepta.org/programs/financial_grant.htm

UW Alumnae Board Scholarship

University of Washington Alumnae Board (UWAB) will provide renewable full-tuition scholarships to incoming freshmen and current undergraduate students at the University of Washington based on "financial need, scholastic achievements, leadership, community service, and a demonstrated strong work ethic."

- Due: March 31, 2010
- Website: www.washington.edu/alumni/meet/groups/uwab/scholarships.html

Seattle Swedish Community Scholarships

The Seattle Swedish Community Scholarships provide \$1,000 to \$3,000 scholarships for high school seniors in King County. Scholarships will be awarded based on the candidate's high school record, ACT or SAT score, financial assessment, and leadership and community service.

- Due: March 31, 2010
- Website: www.swedishculturalcenter.org/scholarships.htm

Scholarships Junkies

www.ScholarshipJunkies.com

“Scholarship Junkies was created in Spring 2006 to provide high school students with an insider’s guide to the scholarship process from the perspective of students who have won national scholarships. Through articles and profiles, the information covered includes how to find scholarships, how to choose which scholarships to apply for, how to compile competitive applications, and much more.

The goal of Scholarship Junkies is to connect students who have won scholarships with students who are applying for scholarships in an effort to assist with compiling competitive scholarship applications. More than just providing the tools for achieving scholarship success, Scholarship Junkies strives to help students learn how to best maximize those tools in their personal scholarship application process.”

—www.ScholarshipJunkies.com

Scholarship Junkies was created by a UW undergraduate, Sam Lim, who won 18 scholarships to cover his entire college education. His site helps you connect with other winners so that you can ask for tips and help in applying to those same scholarships. You can also find up-to-date information about upcoming scholarship deadlines.

Sam also travels around the country giving talks to high school students about the scholarship application process. Find out more by going to his website.

Applying to Scholarships

Applying to scholarships is similar to applying to college. You often need much of the same information. Therefore, you should be just as organized. Just as before, keep a notebook of what each scholarship requires. Some are simple applications. Others require essays, transcripts, and LOR's. Again, make sure you give yourself plenty of time to submit it.

When choosing scholarships to apply to, again use your time wisely. There are many scholarships but not all will fit who you are. It is a better use of time to make sure you are a strong candidate for a few scholarships that you have a good chance of getting rather than spending a little bit of time on many scholarships that may not be right for you.

How do you know if it's right for you? Look at profiles of past winners. See if you have similar passions—don't BE them, be yourself. But their profile can give you a good idea of what the scholarship committee is looking for. Remember, you want to present yourself as a good INVESTMENT for them. Show them your potential and prove to them that you are worth it, that you will use their money to do good in the future.

Hint: *If you get a scholarship, you MUST notify your school's financial aid office. This will change your financial aid package.*

Writing your scholarship essay

■ Use the personal statements from your college applications as a starting point.

General Tips

- Brainstorm with bullet points first.
- You can **take bits or entire sections from your college application personal statements** and reuse them. Once you have a solid personal statement, it makes it easier to apply for scholarships.
- **Scholarship essays can be reused** for other scholarships. Sometimes you just need to tweak the details to make sure that you're answering the prompt directly.

Things to keep in mind

- Be very personal. Just like your personal statement for college, think about this as if you're talking to a real person.
- Show, don't just tell. Give real examples instead of talking about abstract concepts.
- Don't use big words if you don't normally use them. Your essay won't feel natural.

Sample Scholarship Essay Prompts

Many scholarship essay prompts are **very similar** to college application personal statement prompts. This often makes it easier to construct your scholarship essays because you can **use the same tips and ideas**. Here are some sample scholarship essay prompts:

- "Discuss a significant activity, leadership experience, or achievement that has changed your life and why."
- "Who are you? (Include family/personal information, community service, positions of leadership, involvement in school and community, work experience, and youth group activities.)"
- "Why do you need this scholarship?"
- "How will this scholarship be a bridge to your future?"
- "Briefly describe a situation in which you felt that you or others were treated unfairly or were not given an opportunity you felt you deserved. Describe how you responded and if your response changed the situation."
- "How will your area of study contribute to your immediate and long-term goals?"
- "What do you consider to be the single greatest challenge facing the youth generation today?"
- "How has your education contributed to who you are today?"
- "How do you plan to fund or finance your education?"

Community College Process

■ If you are using the community college option, the process is much simpler.

Factors to consider in choosing a community college

- **Location.** Consider how close you will be from home as most community colleges do not offer on-campus housing
- **Academic Programs Available.** Find out what programs the community college offers as focusing your education to specialized fields may help with the transfer process if you plan to attend a four-year university after community college
- **Cost.** Check for financial aid and scholarships for merit and financial need
- **Campus Life.** What activities or resources are available outside of the classroom on campus
- **Size of student body.** Class size, student population, advisor-to-student ratio, etc.



Contact information for local community colleges can be found on page 61.

Process for applying

Each community college is different in their application process, so make sure to find out the process for the schools you might want to go to and work with your Dream Team mentor to make sure you know all the steps.

- ☐ Apply online or in person.
 - Most Washington community colleges use the same online application:
<https://admissions.ctc.edu/applicant/>
- ☐ Submit a financial aid application.
 - The **FAFSA** works for community colleges as well.
 - Some community colleges also have their own forms for financial aid, so check with each school's financial aid office.
- ☐ Take your placement tests.
 - Check with the community college to see which placement tests are required.
 - The two most common tests are **COMPASS** and **ASSET**.
- ☐ Schedule an advising appointment.
 - Focus your education. Plan out your community college experience to ease the transfer to a 4-year school.
- ☐ Enroll for classes and pay tuition.

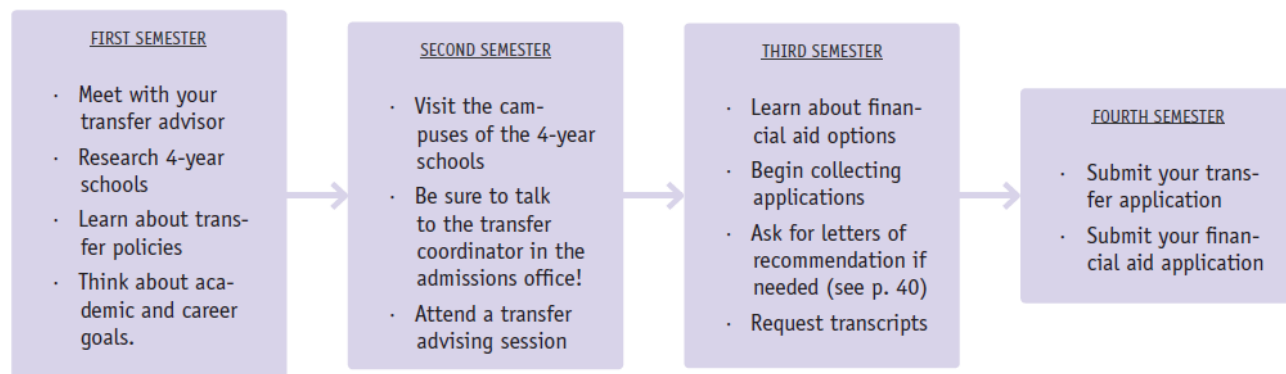
Transferring from 2-year to 4-year

■ Most community colleges and universities make it easy to transfer to a 4-year school after you earn your Associate's Degree.

How to make a successful transfer

- ❑ **Talk with a transfer advisor** at your community college
 - Make sure you're on track to meet the community college's **graduation requirements**
 - Prepare for the other steps of transferring
 - **Meet regularly** with the advisor; transfer policies change often.
 - ❑ Meet with a **transfer adviser at the 4-year college** you plan to transfer to
 - 4-year schools often have transfer advising sessions.
 - ❑ Learn about your community college's **articulation agreements** (or "direct transfer agreements")
If your community college has an articulation agreement with a 4-year school, then:
 - Your freshman and sophomore general education requirements will already be met, and
 - All of your credits will transfer and count toward your 4-year degree
- ⚠ **Note:** The University of Washington does *not* have a direct transfer agreement.
- ❑ Make sure your **credits** are transferable
 - If your community college does not have a transfer agreement with the 4-year school, contact the 4-year school's admissions office to find out which credits will transfer.
 - If a 4-year institution will not accept your credits, you can appeal the decision. Talk to an admissions counselor at the 4-year institution.
 - ❑ **Apply** for admission at the 4-year colleges you want to attend
 - You'll need to fill out a **transfer student** application.

Transfer Timeline (from FastWeb.com)



Sources: College Board, <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/csearch/where-to-start/37.html> and <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/csearch/where-to-start/36.html>, 28 March 2009. FastWeb, <http://www.fastweb.com/fastweb/resources/articles/index/110257>, 28 March 2009. CollegeAnswer.com, http://www.collegeanswer.com/selecting/content/select_cc_transfer.jsp, 28 March 2009.

Medical School Admissions 101

The purpose of this section is to give you an idea of what might be ahead of you if you are interested in going into medicine. As such, it is more of a general overview and not as detailed as the previous sections on college admissions.

Admissions processes are all similar. College and medical school admissions are compared on the next page.

Medical School Admissions is competitive and a rough process that takes commitment, time and money. You may want to make sure you are certain of this path before proceeding on. If you are sure, you should be strategic throughout the process, applying only when you truly feel ready.

Medical school also takes a long time—4 years of school and at least 2-3 years of residency. Further specialization requires another 1-2 years of fellowship. You can easily have almost ten years ahead of you before you can practice on your own. But the rewards make it worth it for those who truly find their calling in medicine.

Medicine can provide job security and almost guarantee that you can pay back all school loans. It is a difficult road to get to medical school, but once you are there, there are tremendous resources to help you succeed. For example, UWSOM offers free counseling services to all students and spouses, as well as flexibility to expand the 4 year program in any event, such as starting a family or dealing with an illness.

Hint: *The official website for medical school admissions is www.aamc.org. More complete information about applying and the MCAT can be found there.*

Did you know? You don't have to major in science to get to medical school! Many medical students majored in English, Philosophy, and many other different non-science subjects. The minimum course requirements for medical school admissions are the basic sciences. Ask your counselor or look at medical school websites online for more information.

College

Medical School

Usually senior year of high school. Process usually takes about a semester.	When to Apply	Medical schools like to see experience and maturity. Many more people are beginning to wait several years before going to medical school. What works for you? Factors to consider include loan repayment, starting a family, and whether or not you feel ready to be a competitive applicant. Process takes about one year—application opens around each June.
Find ways to show leadership, commitment, passion and service.	Being Well-Rounded	Same sort of activities <u>PLUS</u> clinical experience, such as volunteering, shadowing or being an EMT.
The SAT or ACT, PSAT (see previous sections)	The Test(s)	The computer MCAT takes 5 hours and 20 minutes. There are 4 sections: Verbal Reasoning, Physical Sciences, 2 Writing samples, and Biological Sciences. Tests must not be older than 3 years when applying. Studying for the MCAT takes a lot of commitment and time so most people do not take it more than once. Many people use prep courses but these may cost anywhere from \$1000-\$1500.
One application per school for about 3-8 schools	The Application	One common application for all schools you wish to apply to along with secondary applications for almost every school followed by interviews. Apply to at least 10-15 schools due to the competitive admissions process.
Write about who you are and why you do what you do	The Essay	Answer “Why do you want to go to medical school?” in a way that is unique to who you are. SHOW your passion.
\$45/46 for the tests, ~\$50 for the applications Look into fee waivers.	The Cost	\$225 for MCAT, \$160 application for the first school plus \$31 for each school after that. Fee waivers can literally save you thousands of dollars.
Location, type of school, and many other factors as mentioned before	Choosing Schools	Same factors but for the most part, you will have less of a choice as it is difficult to get in. Choose which schools to apply based on these factors and the same concept of Reach, Solid, and Safety (although there aren’t really any Safety schools in this process...)
Use FAFSA	Financial Aid	The only thing that is exactly the same! Use FAFSA. But you will most likely get more loans this time around.

The Secret Formula?

Unfortunately, there is no secret formula. If college admissions is a toss-up, medical school admissions is even more so regardless of what type of applicant you are. Most medical schools accept mainly in-state residents and each school usually accepts a class of only 50-200 students. Furthermore, an applicant with great numbers might be rejected if the interviewer feels that he or she does not fit their profile. Other schools might want diverse classes and feel that the applicant is not so different from those they have already let in.

Apply early. The AMCAS, or primary, application is available online usually starting in June. Medical school admissions IS rolling admissions. The earlier you get your applications in, the better chance you have as classes begin to fill towards the end.

In order to apply early, you should begin preparing early on. Give yourself plenty of time to write several drafts of your personal statement. Remember to look for recommendation letters. If your college is big, it may be difficult to get to know professors in large classes so think ahead!

Still want to go into medicine?

Once you get to college, there will most likely be many resources out there for you—pre-medicine clubs and societies, pre-medicine guidance counselors, and more. This helps make the process easier so you don't have to reinvent the wheel. Don't be afraid to ask for help and don't get discouraged! Take it one step at a time.

Deciding Your Future

Deciding what you want to do can be difficult. There are many interesting things to learn and so little time! Try asking yourself some of these questions to get better insight into what you are looking for:

- What do you enjoy?
- What do you care about?
- What are you passionate about?
- What would you mind doing even when you are tired?
- **Do you have other questions that might help?**

It will take time to realize what is right for you. Don't rush it—take your time but also be wise with your use of time. For example, to fulfill requirements, take some classes that sound interesting that you might not usually take. Many people accidentally find their new majors this way! But be sure not to fall off track while you are exploring.

Try new things and step out of your comfort zone to challenge yourself to grow. You might surprise yourself. Here are some suggestions:

- Study abroad
- Volunteer somewhere new and different
- Attend lectures on exciting new research
- Join clubs to meet people who are unlike you

Pre-medicine Summer Programs

Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMCA)

University of Washington School of Medicine (UWSOM)

Some of you may know that you definitely want to go into medicine, or you may still be curious about medicine and want to know if it will all be worth it. The UWSOM Office of Multicultural Affairs has summer programs for high school and college students for underrepresented and underserved groups. More information can be found at:

<http://depts.washington.edu/omca/leadership>

U-DOC is for high school students and exposes them to medical and dental careers by giving them a curriculum overview and talking to them about community service, research experience, college applications and survival, test-taking strategies, and more!

Summer Medical and Dental Education Program (SMDEP) is for college students and includes observation in the Emergency and Operating Rooms, workshops on medical school admissions and financial aid, mentor visits with doctors and dentists in the community, lectures on health care and current events, as well as basic science lectures similar to those in medical school. There are also many social activities around Seattle.

Alliance for Equal Representation in Medicine (AFERM)

If you decide you do want to apply for medical school, you are not alone! The Alliance for Equal Representation in Medicine (AFERM) was recently conceived in 2008 with this mission:

“To promote diversity within UWSOM for the purpose of providing culturally competent and representative future physicians for all patients and communities.”

AFERM is group of medical students with representatives from each minority medical student group including...

- Al Shifa Health Resource Center
- Asian Pacific American Medical Student Association
- Latino Medical Student Association
- Medicine Wheel Society
- Office of Multicultural Affairs
- Queer Medicine
- Student National Medical Association

AFERM also works with the UWSOM Interview Student Host Program and UW undergraduate groups such as the Minority Association of Pre-Health Students (MAPS).

AFERM actively recruits applicants to the UW School of Medicine and is happy to meet up with any interviewee and answer questions about UWSOM, Seattle and the diversity of the school and surrounding areas.

Contact AFERM at afermuw@u.washington.edu.

Conclusion

This is the end of the College & Medical School Admissions Guide. Hopefully it has been somewhat helpful in dispelling the mystery surrounding the admissions processes.

For further guidance, look to your counselor and the groups that were mentioned in this guide. They may also be able to help connect you with any previous students with backgrounds similar to yours who went on to college or medical school.

Good luck and remember that there are many people out there who are more than willing to help you when you need it!

