

MAP YOUR FUTURE

A step-by-step
guide to keeping
you on track the
year before you
go to college.

JCC
JAMESTOWN
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

S U N Y



YOU'RE PLANNING ON GOING TO COLLEGE? GREAT! BY RESEARCHING YOUR OPTIONS AND DOWNLOADING THIS GUIDE, YOU'RE ALREADY OFF TO A GREAT START.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO NEXT?

Stay on track as you prepare for college. Follow our planning timeline to get organized, stay aware of important deadlines, and avoid procrastination.

Our guide takes you step-by-step through your senior year and keeps you on track for acceptance at the college of your choice. Don't worry if you're just getting started. You have plenty of time.



AUGUST & SEPTEMBER

Top 10 college choices:

1.) _____
Tour date _____
2.) _____
Tour date _____
3.) _____
Tour date _____
4.) _____
Tour date _____
5.) _____
Tour date _____
6.) _____
Tour date _____
7.) _____
Tour date _____
8.) _____
Tour date _____
9.) _____
Tour date _____
10.) _____
Tour date _____

✓ CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Create a list of 5-10 colleges you're interested in.

Things to consider when choosing your top colleges:

- **Majors:** Does the school have programs you want to study?
- **Size:** Do you prefer small classes, or a larger campus?
- **Location:** Do you want to be in a city, suburb, or small town? Do you want to be close to home?
- **Graduation rate:** How many of the school's students graduate and find success after college?
- **Cost:** What is the cost of college after financial aid? Does the college have a good financial aid package?
- **Campus life:** Are there events, clubs, and athletic opportunities that you are interested in? Will you live on campus?
- **Services:** What support services are available to help you adjust to college life?
- **Resources:** Do the libraries, technology, facilities, and learning opportunities outside the classroom meet your needs?

- ☐ Get to know your top choices by meeting college representatives who visit your high school, attending college fairs, and visiting campus (in person or virtually).
- ☐ Register for ACT, SAT, or SAT subject tests if you plan to take them in the fall.
- ☐ Meet with your high school counselor to see if you are eligible to receive fee waivers for tests and applications.



OCTOBER

Application process:

College name

Application due date

FAFSA/financial aid form deadlines

Test dates

College name

Application due date

FAFSA/financial aid form deadlines

Test dates

College name

Application due date

FAFSA/financial aid form deadlines

Test dates

College name

Application due date

FAFSA/financial aid form deadlines

Test dates



CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Create a calendar with application due dates, financial aid form deadlines, test dates, and your high school's application processing deadlines.
- ☐ Download your top colleges' applications and financial aid forms.
- ☐ Request personal recommendations from teachers, school counselors, or employers. These may be needed with your application.
- ☐ Search and apply for scholarships and grants. Ask your counselor, top college choices, and civic groups what scholarships you may qualify for.
- ☐ If necessary, finalize your college essay. Many schools require that you submit one with your application.



NOVEMBER

Completed applications:

College name

Date of submission

College name

Date of submission

College name

Date of submission

College name

Date of submission

College name

Date of submission

College name

Date of submission

College name

Date of submission

✓ CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Complete college applications due this month. Have a parent, counselor, or teacher review the application before you submit it.
- ☐ Make sure testing companies (SAT and ACT) have sent your scores to your colleges.
- ☐ Make sure your high school counselor knows which colleges should receive your transcripts, score reports, and letters.
- ☐ Request financial aid and scholarship information from your colleges.



DECEMBER

Scholarships, grants, and loans:

1.) _____

Notes

2.) _____

Notes

3.) _____

Notes

4.) _____

Notes

✓ CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Finish and submit the rest of your college applications.
- ☐ Register for the January SAT if necessary. This is the last SAT that colleges are able to consider for a senior.
- ☐ Begin your financial aid search. Research outside sources for scholarships, grants, and loans. Remember that you do not have to pay back scholarships or grants, so apply for as many of these as possible.
- ☐ If you applied for colleges in the fall, you may find out this month if you have been accepted.



JANUARY

Scholarships and grants

1.) _____

Notes

2.) _____

Notes

3.) _____

Notes

4.) _____

Notes

✓ CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Follow up with your counselor to make sure that all forms have been sent to your colleges. Check in with the schools to confirm that they received your application, test scores, transcripts, and recommendations.
- ☐ Complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) to apply for federal and state grants and loans. File the form online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Be sure to file before the deadline because funds may be limited.
- ☐ Complete the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE. This allows colleges to see if you qualify for additional grants and scholarships.
- ☐ Register for the February ACT if necessary. Some colleges may be able to consider it.
- ☐ Continue searching for scholarships and grants. You want as much free aid as possible!



FEBRUARY & MARCH

Accepted:

College name

Date of acceptance

College name

Date of acceptance

College name

Date of acceptance

College name

Date of acceptance

College name

Date of acceptance

College name

Date of acceptance

College name

Date of acceptance



CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Watch your mail for acceptance letters.
- ☐ Compare your financial aid offers carefully to determine which college provides the best award for your needs. Contact the college financial aid offices with any questions.
- ☐ Continue searching for scholarships and grants.



APRIL

My top college:

College

Annual cost

Financial aid package

My total (annual cost minus financial aid package)

Notes

✓ CHECKLIST:

- ☐ The choice is yours. Choose which college fits you best and where you want to learn.
- ☐ Make sure you received a FAFSA acknowledgement.
- ☐ Continue searching for scholarships and grants.



MAY

Notes:

✓ CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Notify all colleges that accepted you of your final decision by May 1.
- ☐ Send in your commitment and deposit to your chosen college by the postmark date of May 1.
- ☐ If you've been offered financial aid, follow the instructions given to accept it.
- ☐ Request that your final transcript be sent to the college you will be attending.
- ☐ If you've been put on a waitlist, you should receive a decision this month.
- ☐ If you haven't secured a spot at a college, apply to schools that have late or rolling application deadlines.



This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

☐ You should receive information from your college about course scheduling, registration, housing, meal plans, and other important points. Complete all forms by the appropriate deadlines.

CONGRATULATIONS, YOU ARE ON YOUR WAY!