



GETTYSBURG HIGH SCHOOL
A Great Place To Learn

Gettysburg Area High School Post-Secondary Planning Guide

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Introduction

As you approach the end of your high school career, there are many questions that we in the GAHS Counseling Center can help you answer. This booklet was designed to help reinforce what we review in your Junior meeting and then reinforce as a follow-up in your Senior Meeting. In addition, please use this booklet to refer back to when questions/concerns arise throughout your post-secondary research and then ultimately, the application process.

Keep in mind, the decision on what to do after you graduate is never one to take lightly. Whether your decision is to go to a 4-year college, a 2-year trade or technical school, a community college, enlist in the military or enter the work force you need to have all the facts and be aware of the steps to do so effectively and successfully. Here are some steps/questions to consider if you are college bound:

1. Think about what type of college you want to attend. Large or small, public or private, 2-year or 4-year. What do you want your school to look like and where do you see yourself being most comfortable?
2. How far away from home do you want to go? Do you want to be able to commute or do you want to live on campus? Do you want to come home on weekends regularly? All important questions.
3. Have a very frank discussion with your parents/guardians to make sure you are all on the same page.
4. Keep your academic interests and your extracurricular interests in mind. What do you want your major to be? Do you want to minor in something? If you know your major (if you don't, look for colleges with programs to help you figure it out) and you know what type of extracurricular activities you want to participate in, look for a college with those specifications.
5. Do your research! Attend our annual **College & Career Fair at Gettysburg College** (held in September each year) and meet with admission reps that visit our school (see our website for a complete listing). Look at college websites, Xello, and The College Board. Develop a list and then narrow that list down to 3 - 6 schools.
6. Collect information on each of the schools on your final list including application deadlines, open house schedules, and admission criteria.
7. Schedule college visits, open houses and meet with admission representatives that visit our school. If military, speak with a recruiter from the different branches, and take the ASVAB.
8. Prepare yourself to speak with colleges. Some require an interview, some do not. Interview tips and sample questions are included later in this booklet.
9. Create an account on www.commonapp.org

10. Complete application and financial aid information by required deadlines according to the individual schools. Keep in mind, they will more than likely be different.
11. Assess your admission offers and select the college you will attend. Make sure you are contacting any college with any unanswered questions. When you have made your selection, let us know in the Counseling Center so we know where to send your final transcript.

GOOD LUCK and remember, see your counselor if you need assistance with any of these steps.



Chapter 1: College-bound Timeline

A timeline of what you should be doing and when, during your 11th and 12th grade school years.

Junior Year

Fall

- Start brainstorming possible majors and research potential colleges that have that major(s).
- Research colleges.
- Take the PSAT in October.
- If appropriate, start gathering material for your portfolio if interested in majoring in art, music, drama, etc.
- Start to learn about financial aid (online resources are listed on page 20-21)
- Attend the College & Career Fair at Gettysburg College/meet with college representatives.

Winter

- Meet with your counselor for your junior interview to discuss college options and your senior schedule.
- If you haven't done so already, sign up to take the SAT and/or the ACT at least once in the Spring and then again next August or October of senior year.

Spring

- Start visiting colleges – visit different types (small, large, public, private) to get a sense of what you are interested in.
- Begin researching scholarships. Know where to look (check out the GAHS Counseling Center website).
- If you are considering military academies or ROTC scholarships, make sure you are aware of their application process (more information on page 25-27).
- If you are interested in playing a college sport (especially for a Div. I or II school) register with the NCAA (more on page 18-19).
- Take the SAT/ACT.

Senior year

September

- Narrow your list of colleges to 3 – 6 schools. Plan to visit as many of these schools as possible. If you can not visit in-person, take a virtual tour.
- Make a list of important dates/deadlines, forms needed, fees due, etc. for each school you plan to apply to.
- Finish your college visits.
- Attend Financial Aid Night at GHS - A date will be communicated to you in the fall.
- Begin exploring scholarships on GAHS Counseling Center website.

October

- Finalize your college choices.
- Prepare Early Decision (binding), Early Action, or rolling admissions applications as soon as possible. Make sure you are checking out each of your interested college's websites and applying on www.commonapp.org when possible.
- Ask for counselor and/or teacher recommendations if you need them. Give each teacher a "Recommendation Request Form" (more information see Appendix and "Application Process" pages 10-15).
- Begin writing application essays. Make sure you have teachers read them to provide feedback.
- Attend College & Career Fair at Gettysburg College if you have additional questions for admission representatives.
- Take the SAT/ACT for the 2nd time.
- Complete the FAFSA to apply for financial aid beginning October 1.
- Complete CSS Profile if required by the college in which you are applying.
- Continue scholarship search.

November

- November 1-15, for Early Decision admissions, colleges may require test scores and applications between these dates.
- Complete at least 1 college application by Thanksgiving.
- Request transcripts; a google form is available on the Counseling Center Website and Canvas page.

December

- Continue to complete college applications. Send transcripts as you go.

January

- Continue to research and apply for scholarships.
- Keep in mind, if you are dropping courses from your schedule, colleges will want to know what those changes are. If you've been accepted, they may base some of that decision on your senior schedule.

March

- Watch your grades. Colleges do take a very close look at 2nd semester grades and activities. If you are wait-listed, they will want to know how you are doing.

April

- You should start receiving acceptance letters and financial aid offers by mid- April. Make sure you are visiting your final college before accepting their offer. As soon as you decide, inform your counselor.

May

- Send a deposit to the school you have chosen to attend.
- Inform your counselor where you are planning on attending if you have not done so already. We will send them a final transcript.
- Notify the college(s) that you will not be attending, as a courtesy.

Chapter 2: Testing Information

Standardized tests including the SAT & ACT can help colleges assess how ready you are for college-level coursework. Did you know? More than 1,000 four-year colleges and universities do not use the SAT or ACT in the admissions process. Visit www.fairtest.org to learn more and to access a searchable database of test-optional schools.

SAT

You should begin thinking about taking the SAT test sometime during your junior year if you are interested in college after graduation. The SAT is a college entrance exam that many colleges and universities in the United States use as part of the college admissions process. It measures a student's skill in four core areas: Reading, Writing, Language, and Math. Go to sat.collegeboard.org to register.

****Testing accommodations may be available for students with disabilities. More information at: <https://sat.collegeboard.org/register/for-students-with-disabilities>. Please inform your counselor if you are interested in applying for accommodations *at least 10 weeks prior* to the date you intend on taking the SAT.**

SAT will be digital starting in 2024

What is staying the same?

What is changing?

The digital SAT Suite will continue to measure the knowledge and skills that matter most for college and career readiness.	The digital SAT will be more secure and flexible. Each student will get a unique test form, and states, schools, and districts will have much more flexibility for when they administer the digital SAT.
The digital SAT will be scored on a 1600 scale and no concordance is required with the current paper and pencil exam	Students will take the SAT Suite of Assessments on a laptop or tablet.
The digital SAT will still be administered in a school or in a test center with a proctor present (not at home).	The SAT will be shorter - about two hours instead of three.
Students will still have free, world-class practice resources on Khan Academy®.	Calculators will be allowed on the entire math section.
We'll continue to support all students, including those who need accommodations on test day.	Students and educators will receive scores faster - in days, not weeks.

ACT

The ACT is another standardized test that measures a student's skills in five core areas (versus 3 core areas for the SAT): English, Math, Reading, Science, and Writing (optional). It is composed of four multiple choice sections (English, Math, Reading, and Science) and one optional essay section (Writing). Total testing times is 2 hours and 55 minutes for the ACT without the optional Writing and 3 hours and 25 minutes with the Writing. The maximum composite score is 36.

****Testing accommodations may be available for students with disabilities. More information at: <http://www.actstudent.org/regist/disab/>**



Chapter 3: Application Process

The application process can seem overwhelming. Here are some things to know before you start. Colleges prefer the application be done online. Some colleges have their own link to apply through their website. Other colleges will participate with Common Application.

- Common Application: www.commonapp.org The Common Application is a not-for-profit membership organization that, since its founding over 35 years ago, has been committed to providing reliable services that promote equity, access, and integrity in the college application process. The Common Application serves students, member institutions, and secondary schools by providing applications that students and school officials may submit to any of our over 1,000 members. Membership is open to colleges and universities that promote access by evaluating students using a holistic selection process.
- Individual College Websites online applications: You can submit an application online through all college websites directly. Be sure to request your transcript from the Counseling Center. A google form link is available on the Counseling Center Webpage and Canvas page.

How do I request my official transcript?

- All current students should request their official transcript via a google form on the Counseling Center Website or Counseling Center Webpage.

**Fee waivers may be available to those on free or reduced lunch for College Applications, SAT Tests and ACT Tests.*

Tips for the Application Process

- Get organized: Have a binder, folder or spreadsheet to organize all application materials.
- Read through all materials before getting started. Work on a rough draft for your applications.
- All parts of your application should be typed. This is especially important for your essay. Be sure your final copy is neat.
- Have someone review your application and essay prior to sending it.
- Keep a spreadsheet of deadlines for applications and financial aid forms. Set up a timeline for completing each application (keep schedule holiday breaks in mind).
- If you file an online application, please be sure to notify your counselor that you have done so.
- Try to complete all applications early.
- Give your counselor and teachers two weeks to complete their portion of the application. Please account for due dates. Counselors and teachers will not be working on applications during school breaks.

Dos and Don'ts on the College Application Essay

Dos

- Keep your focus narrow and personal. The reader should be able to find your main idea and follow it from beginning to end.
- Prove it. Develop your main idea with clear, specific facts, events and examples.
- Be specific. Again, use clear and specific details. Avoid generic predictable writing.

Don'ts

- Don't tell the reader what you think they want to hear. Bring something new, not just what you think they want.
- Don't write a resume. Don't include information that is found elsewhere on the application. Your essay will sound like an autobiography.
- Don't use 50 words when 5 will do. Eliminate unnecessary words.
- Don't forget to proofread. Don't just rely on spell-check to catch misspellings and grammatical errors.

Find Your Recommenders

Letters of recommendation help colleges get to know you better as a person and student. Don't wait until senior year to secure your recommenders. Ask one or two teachers while you're still in 11th grade if they are willing to write a letter of recommendation for your college and scholarship applications.

Requesting Recommendations

Think of people who know your strengths and achievements. Teachers and counselors are usually the best choices, but you may also use an employer or a community leader if the college accepts a personal recommendation. Complete the Brag Sheet at the end of this document to help your recommender to complete a recommendation for you. A fillable PDF is available online, search Common App Brag Sheet.

- Give your recommender a deadline, allowing a minimum of two weeks.
- Provide a list of activities and awards. Use the attached Brag Sheet.
- Send thank you notes to your recommenders!
- Let recommenders know your application results.

Common College Application Mistakes

- Students do not capitalize their names on applications.
- Students do not read the directions carefully to be sure they know what is needed to complete the application.
- Students write the wrong social security number.
- Students use the wrong college address.
- Students are applying for regular decision but check Early Action.
- Students use the online application but fail to request information from the School Counselor.
- Students have questionable remarks or photos of themselves on social network sites. (Applications and Scholarships have been withdrawn)
- Students do not adhere to the word limit for their college essay.
- Students miss the application deadline.
- Students do not take the ACT or SAT early enough to get the needed test scores before the deadlines. Students should take the SAT/ACT in the spring of their junior year or fall of the senior year at the latest.
- Students send an application but do not send a high school transcript.
- Students copy or buy essays from the internet. This is plagiarizing. Colleges and many high schools have software to detect this.
- The student's parent completes the application.
- Students use acronyms. Spell out each word so everyone understands.
- Students provide incorrect contact information.
- **Students do not check emails frequently enough, missing important communications deadlines.**
- Students forget to sign and date the application or have parents sign it.
- Students misspell their intended major. Students make other typos.
- Students leave out job experiences. This is important for colleges to know.
- Students send the wrong essay.
- Students do not send updated test scores.

- Students' email addresses are in bad taste, vulgar, or otherwise unprofessional.

Early Action versus Early Decision

Early decision plans are binding — a student who is accepted as an ED applicant must attend the college. **Early action** plans are non binding — students receive an early response to their application but do not have to commit to the college until the normal reply date. Approximately 450 colleges have early decision or early action plans, and some have both. Some colleges offer a nonbinding option called single-choice early action, under which applicants may not apply ED or EA to any other college.

Early Decision Applicants

- Apply early (usually by November) to first-choice college.
- Receive an admission decision from the college well in advance of the usual notification date (usually by December).
- Agree to attend the college if accepted and offered a financial aid package that is considered adequate by the family.
- Apply to only one college early decision.
- Apply to other colleges under regular admission plans.
- Withdraw all other applications if accepted by ED.
- Send a nonrefundable deposit well in advance of May 1.

Early Action Applicants

- Apply early.
- Receive an admission decision early in the admission cycle.
- Consider an acceptance offer; do not have to commit upon receipt.
- Adhere to each college's Early Action policies.
- Give the college a decision no later than May 1, the national response date.

Making the Most of a College Interview

The interview process is an opportunity for you to learn about the college and for the interviewer to learn about you. The interview rarely has a negative impact on your college admission. Use the interview to assist you in your college selection.

- When you schedule an interview, check to see if it is evaluative (used as a factor in admissions) or informational (used in helping the applicant learn more about the college). Knowing the purpose will help you prepare for the interview. Regardless of the purpose, **relax** and be yourself!
- Know who the interviewer is: an admissions counselor, an alumnus, a student, or another professional. Keep this person's perspective in mind.
- The interviewer knows you may be new at interviewing and will try to put you at ease. They will answer your questions but the interview will go more smoothly if you have done some research and ask questions about the college.
- Know yourself. Strengths, weaknesses, what kind of learner you are, your rank and test scores, your areas of interest. If you are undecided, say so. However, make sure you know areas you would like to explore.
- Don't go unprepared. Know about the school. Ask about internships, study abroad, January terms, career counseling, sporting events and other activities on campus.
- Be ready to talk about your interests, extracurricular activities, jobs you have had, books you have read, meaningful experiences, reasons for applying to this particular college.
- Be honest. Everyone has strong and weak points.

Application Process for Community College and Technical School

- Individual college websites online applications: You can submit an application online through all college websites.
- Visit the schools you are interested in attending.
- Arrange to take placement tests or SAT/ACT if required.
- Request official high school transcripts to be sent to the schools.
- Meet with an advisor.
- Attend new student orientation

***Remember, if you took any HACC CHS course or took courses at the HACC campus, you are already a HACC student. If you wish to attend HACC after you graduate, you will just need to take your placement exams, if not already done, meet with an advisor and enroll in courses.

Chapter 4: Visiting Post-Secondary Schools

Visiting as many of the schools on your “list” is the absolute BEST way of narrowing down the schools you are most interested in. You can receive 3 excused absences per school year if you wish to visit schools during the school day. Complete an educational field trip form and bring back verification (can be a note or something from their admissions office) to verify where you were. Keep these tips/questions in mind when planning your visit.

TIPS

- ★ Plan at least a full day and stay overnight if possible.
- ★ Visit when school is in session.
- ★ Sit through an actual class in the major in which you are interested.
- ★ Arrange an interview with an admissions officer. A great opportunity for them to see you beyond your transcript and test scores.
- ★ Take a campus tour. Take a more concentrated tour of where your major of interest is located.
- ★ Talk with students and faculty.
- ★ Attend a sporting event.
- ★ Check out what is most important to you (i.e. dorms, student union, dining halls).
- ★ Watch how students spend their time (i.e. are they studying, partying, exercising?)

QUESTIONS FOR ATHLETES

- ★ What clubs/intramural sports are available?
- ★ Are there separate dorms for athletes?
- ★ Is this a Division I, II, III, or NAIA school?
- ★ Will my game/practice schedule interfere with my intended major?
- ★ What is the graduation rate for your athletes?
- ★ Do athletes at your school have tutors and do athletes utilize their services?

QUESTIONS FOR MUSIC/ART/THEATRE MAJORS

- ★ When are your audition dates?
- ★ How soon will I hear about the results of my audition?
- ★ What is the timeline/application process when submitting a portfolio?

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Housing/Dining

- ★ How many students live on campus?
- ★ Is housing guaranteed all 4 years?
- ★ Is there special housing for freshmen?
- ★ Can you stay in the dorm for more than freshman year?
- ★ How does the dining plan work?
- ★ How many dining options are there?

Financial Aid/Scholarships/Tuition

- ★ What is your average financial aid package?
- ★ What is your average award for a merit scholarship?
- ★ What is the average college debt that students leave with?
- ★ What extra fees are added to my tuition?
- ★ When is your financial aid deadline?
- ★ Do I need to complete the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE?

Academic/Career

- ★ Is there a language requirement?
- ★ How do you provide academic advising?
- ★ Do you offer assistance with career services/placement?
- ★ What services do you offer for learning disabilities?
- ★ What is your 4-year graduation rate?
- ★ Do you have an honors college?
- ★ What percentage of freshmen return for their sophomore year?
- ★ What type of tutoring is available?

Other

- ★ What's available off campus? (Restaurants, theaters, museums, job opportunities)
- ★ Are there fraternities/sororities on campus?
- ★ Can you have a car freshman year?
- ★ How safe is the campus? Where are the campus police? Are there emergency phone boxes around campus?
- ★ What is the student to teacher ratio in my major/in general education courses?
- ★ What ROTC opportunities does your campus have?

Chapter 5 : NCAA Information

Initial Eligibility

Initial-eligibility standards help ensure you're prepared to succeed in college. The eligibility process also protects the fairness and integrity of college sports by ensuring student-athletes are amateurs. If you want to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year at a Division I or II school, the NCAA Eligibility Center must certify you as eligible. This includes both an academic and amateurism certification. International student-athletes planning to enroll at a Division III school are required only to receive an amateurism certification from the Eligibility Center. (Domestic college-bound student athletes planning to enroll at a Division III school are not required to be certified by the Eligibility Center.) Throughout the process, Eligibility Center staff members partner with you and your family, as well as your high school administrators and coaches, to guide you on your journey.

Test Scores

In January 2023, NCAA Divisions I and II adopted legislation to remove standardized test scores from initial eligibility requirements. Check with the NCAA school you plan to attend regarding whether standardized test scores are necessary for admission or scholarship requirements. Test scores on transcripts will not be used.

Grade-Point Average

The NCAA Eligibility Center calculates your core-course grade-point average based on the grades you earn in NCAA-approved core courses. Only your best grades from the required number of NCAA core courses will be used. This means that the cumulative GPA listed on your high school transcript could be different from the NCAA core-course GPA used in your certification. Your core-course GPA is based solely on the grades you received in NCAA-approved core courses. To find your high school's list of NCAA approved core courses, visit eligibilitycenter.org/courselist. Your core-course GPA is calculated on a 4.0 scale. Numeric grades such as 92 or 87 are changed to letter grades, such as A or B. As part of this calculation, each grade received is assigned "quality points," as shown in the scale below. The Eligibility Center does not use plus or minus grades when calculating your core-course GPA. For example, grades of B+, B and B- will each be worth three quality points. Weighted honors or advanced placement courses may improve your core-course GPA, but your high school must notify the Eligibility Center that it awards weighted grades in these classes. In "Pass/Fail" grading situations, the Eligibility Center will assign your high school's lowest passing grade for a course in which you received a "Pass" grade. For most high schools, the lowest passing grade is a D, so the Eligibility Center generally assigns a D as a passing grade.

NCAA-Approved Core Courses

The NCAA core curriculum (**core course**) requirement ensures you're taking high school courses that prepare you for the academic expectations of college. **Note:** Not all high school classes are NCAA-approved core courses and may not count toward your 16 core-course credit requirement.

What is a Core Course?

An NCAA-approved core course must meet the following requirements:

Is a four-year college preparatory course in one of these subject areas:

English	Math (Algebra I or higher)	Science (Including one year of lab, if offered)	Social Science	World Language	Comparative Religion or Philosophy	✓
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Is taught by a qualified instructor.



Is taught at or above your high school's regular academic level.



You receive credit toward high school graduation and course appears on an official transcript with course title, grade and credit awarded.



Is in a noncore area, such as driver education, typing, art, music, physical education or welding.



Prepares you for work or life, or for a two-year college or technical school, such as personal finance, consumer education or tech prep.



Is taught below grade level, at a slower pace or with less rigor or depth, such as basic, essential, fundamental or foundational courses.



Is a credit-by-exam course.



REMEMBER

Scan the QR code to find your high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses.



Courses that meet the above criteria must be submitted to and approved by the Eligibility Center. Approved classes are included on [your high school's list](#) of NCAA-approved core courses. (For additional information on how your high school addresses core-course credits in your transcript, review the High School Information section of your high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses.) Make sure you're taking courses on your high school's approved list; ask your high school counselor if you need help. For more information regarding courses that can be taken in each core-course subject area, including additional subject areas, scan the QR code or visit on.ncaa.com/CCL.

Core-Course Credits

You can earn credit for a core course only once. If you take a course that repeats the content of another core course, you earn credit for only one of these courses, and the higher grade counts toward your **core-course GPA**. For more information on core-course credits, visit ncaa.org/student-athletes/future/core-courses.

Dual-Enrollment Coursework

Dual-enrollment coursework may be used to satisfy NCAA core-course requirements if the course appears on your high school transcript with grade and credit and meets all requirements for an **NCAA-approved core course**.

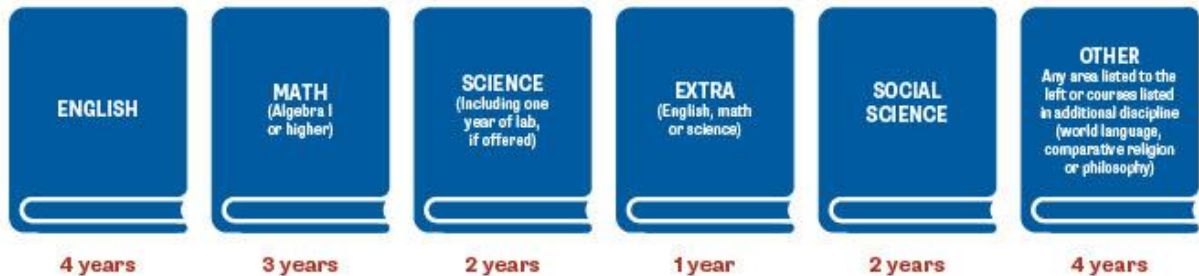
Division I Academic Standards

Division I schools require you to meet academic standards. To be eligible to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship in your first year of full-time enrollment, you must meet all the following requirements:

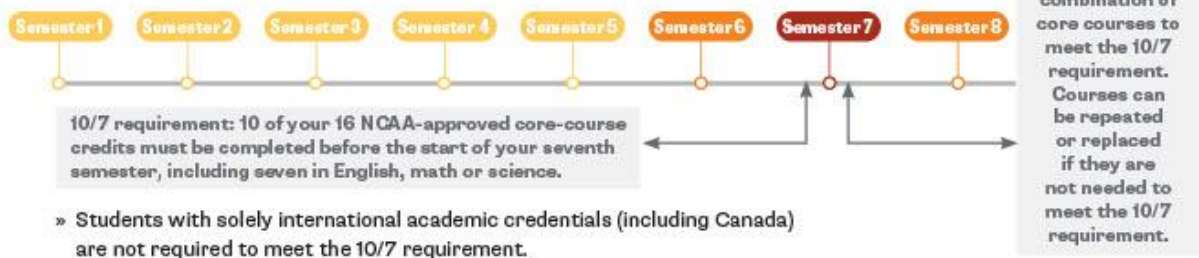


DIVISION I

1. Earn 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits in the following areas:



2. Complete 10 of your 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits, including seven in English, math or science, before the start of the seventh semester. Once you begin your seventh semester, any course that is needed to meet the 10/7 requirement cannot be replaced or repeated.



3. Complete your 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits in eight academic semesters or four consecutive academic years from the start of ninth grade. If you graduate from high school early, you still must meet core-course requirements.
4. Earn a minimum 2.3 **core-course GPA**.
5. Ask your high school counselor to upload your **final official transcript** with proof of graduation to your Eligibility Center account.

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

$$4 \times 4 = 16$$

9th GRADE

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

4 CORE COURSES

10th GRADE

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

4 CORE COURSES

11th GRADE

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

4 CORE COURSES

12th GRADE

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

4 CORE COURSES

Division II Academic Standards

Division II schools require you to meet academic standards. To be eligible to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship in your first year of full-time enrollment, you must meet all the following requirements:



DIVISION II

MAKE IT YOURS

1. Earn 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits in the following areas:

ENGLISH	MATH (Algebra I or higher)	SCIENCE (including one year of lab, if offered)	EXTRA (English, math or science)	SOCIAL SCIENCE	OTHER Any area listed to the left or courses listed in additional discipline (world language, comparative religion or philosophy)
3 years	2 years	2 years	3 years	2 years	4 years

2. Earn a minimum 2.2 **core-course GPA**.
3. Ask your high school counselor to upload your **final official transcript** with proof of graduation to your Eligibility Center account.

What If I Don't Meet Division II Standards?

If you have not met all the Division II academic standards, you may not compete in your first year of full-time enrollment at a Division II school. However, you will be deemed a partial qualifier. All Division II partial qualifiers may practice and receive an athletics scholarship, but may NOT compete, during their first year of full-time enrollment.

Division II Worksheet

Use the **Division II Worksheet** to assist you in monitoring your progress in meeting NCAA initial-eligibility standards. The Eligibility Center will determine your academic status after you graduate. Remember to check **your high school's list** of NCAA-approved core courses for the classes you have taken or plan to take.



ACADEMIC CERTIFICATION DECISIONS

Academic certifications are required for all college-bound student-athletes planning to compete at an NCAA Division II school. If you're being recruited by a Division II school, below are the most common decisions you may receive once a certification has been completed.

EARLY ACADEMIC QUALIFIER

If you meet **specific criteria** after six semesters of high school, you may be deemed an early academic qualifier for Division II and may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

QUALIFIER

You may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

PARTIAL QUALIFIER

You may practice and receive an athletics scholarship, but may NOT compete, during your first year of full-time enrollment.





REMEMBER

Log in to your Eligibility Center account frequently to update your school information if you take courses from additional academic programs.

To find out if a nontraditional program or course is approved, search for the school/program on eligibilitycenter.org/courselist and review the "High School" or "District Information" box.

Nontraditional and Online Courses

Nontraditional courses are taught online or through distance learning, hybrid/blended, independent study, individualized instruction, correspondence or similar means.

Generally, for a nontraditional course to count as an NCAA-approved core course, it must meet all the following requirements:

- » Course must meet all requirements for an **NCAA-approved core course**.
- » All students in the course must have regular and ongoing instructor-led interaction for the purposes of instruction, evaluation and assistance for the duration of the course. For example, exchanging emails, online chats, phone calls, feedback on assignments and the opportunity for the teacher to engage the student in individual or group instruction.
- » Course must have a defined time period for completion. For example, it should be clear how long students are required to be enrolled and working in the course and how long a school would permit a student to work on a single nontraditional course.
- » Student work (e.g., exams, papers, assignments) must be available for evaluation and validation.

- » The course should be clearly identified as nontraditional on the student's official high school transcript.

A nontraditional course may not be approved for any of the following reasons:

- » Does not have teacher-based instruction.
- » Does not require regular and ongoing instructor-led interaction between the student and teacher.
- » Does not require students to complete the entire course.
- » Does not prepare students for four-year college class work.
- » Does not have official student grade records.
- » Does not meet NCAA core-course requirements.

When viewing your **school/program's list** of NCAA-approved core courses you will find information about any nontraditional programs or courses in the "High School Information" or "District Information" box as seen below.

HIGH SCHOOL OR DISTRICT INFORMATION

Coursework from this school/program meets NCAA nontraditional core-course legislation.

Chapter 6: Online Resources

The GAHS Counseling Center website and Canvas page are the best sources of information when you have questions about many components of the application process. Here are more websites that may prove very helpful with the post-secondary application/financial aid process:

<https://studentaid.gov/> - the ONLY website you need to complete and submit the FAFSA. Beware,

<http://www.fastweb.com/> - college and scholarship search engine.

<http://www.meritaid.com/> - search engine for merit scholarships.

<http://www.educationplanner.org/> - website to help with career exploration, college/scholarship searches, and financial aid information.

www.collegeboard.org – SAT registration, college information, “BIG Future”, CSS Profile, PSAT information, AP information, etc.

www.cappex.com -create a student profile and then you can search for schools, save schools to your list, search for scholarships, plan campus visits, read student reviews and gauge your chances at getting into a school.

www.mykidscollegechoice.com - use in the early stages of the college search when you want to develop a college search spreadsheet. You will find most, if not all, of the data you want to track about a school right on the US News site.

<https://colleges.niche.com/> - has a criteria-based college search feature, college “grades” by current students and actual current student reviews. There is also scholarship information and the ability to gauge your chance of getting into a college basing your grades and test scores against what the site has compiled for comparison data (from actual admitted students).

www.nacacnet.org/studentinfo - has a special section for Students and Parents with a search tool and a lot of good advice on things like paying for college, applying to college, college preparation and succeeding in college.

www.collegedata.com - has a college search tool and College Chances Calculator. The search tool allows you to get data on average student debt, percentage of students receiving merit awards, freshman satisfaction rate, and more.

collegecost.ed.gov - College Affordability and Transparency Center

commonapp.org/ready - Get to know the Common App and how the application works.

www.pacareerlink.pa.gov/jponline - Job Search, Apprenticeships, Job Market Data, Training Resources

Chapter 7: Common College Terms

Common terms you may see throughout the college application and financial aid process.

Early Action: A non-binding application that typically has a deadline in November. Occurs before a regular or rolling decision. If accepted, you are not required to attend (see pages 13-14 for more information).

Early Decision: A binding application; should be used if you are **absolutely** sure that is your number one choice of college. If you are accepted you are required to go to that school (see pages 13-14 for more information).

Regular Decision: Standard admissions deadline.

Rolling Admission: As applications are received, they will be reviewed; typically, a faster review process (4-6 weeks).

Superscore: If you take the SAT or ACT multiple times, the admissions office will use your best scores from each section.

Test-Optional: A college may not require standardized test scores for admission; however, you may need test scores to be eligible for Merit Aid or other scholarships.

Wait List: The list of applicants who may be admitted to a college if space becomes available. Colleges wait to hear if all the students they accepted decide to attend. If students don't enroll and there are empty spots, a college may fill them with students who are on the waitlist.

Student Aid Index (SAI): Is an eligibility index number that a college or career school's financial aid office uses to determine how much federal student aid the student would receive if the student attended the school. This number results from the information that the student provides in their FAFSA® form.

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid): How SAI is determined; Vital Step in applying for federal grants, work-study, and loans for college

Grant/Scholarship: A form of financial aid that does NOT require the student to pay back the amount of money.

Merit Aid: Financial aid award given based on high school GPA, SAT scores, or sometimes leadership/community involvement. Students are not required to pay back.

Need Based Aid: Form of financial aid based on how much of the total cost of a college is leftover after factoring out the SAI; may come in the form of grants, scholarships, or loans.

Net Price: What the remaining cost of paying for college is after factoring out the SAI and any grants and scholarships.

Work-Study: Financial aid given in exchange for work (typically at a job on campus). To qualify for the Federal Work Study (FWS) program, you must complete the FAFSA.

Subsidized Loan: Government pays the interest on a loan while the student is in school.

Unsubsidized Loan: Interest is added to the balance of the loan while you are in college; the government does not pay interest on this type of loan.



Chapter 8: Financial Aid/Scholarships

- When you write or email colleges that interest you, ask for financial aid info, including what forms to file and their due dates.
 - All colleges ask you to fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).
- Some colleges require the CSS/Financial Aid Profile. Go to:
<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org>.
 - Ask if the college requires their own forms.
 - If you plan to apply for Early Decision, ask whether the college offers an early estimate of financial aid eligibility and which forms to file.

Fall

- FAFSA is available as of Oct 1. Start your application at studentaid.gov
- Investigate aid opportunities using financial aid books and Web sites including but not limited to educationplanner.org, fastweb.com, meritaids.com, and raise.me. Your counselors may have other resources, too. Look for the following:
 - federal financial aid sources
 - private scholarships
 - state and local programs
 - scholarships, including merit and departmental scholarships, offered by colleges
- Use financial aid calculators to estimate your family's college costs

Winter

- You and your family may want to save final pay stubs for the year. You can use the stubs to estimate income.
- Colleges will have a financial aid deadline, make sure you know when it is and complete the forms by that date.
- Parents and students are encouraged to complete and file income tax returns as soon as possible. Colleges may request copies of your tax returns to finalize aid offers.
- As you receive letters of acceptance, check with aid offices to see if additional documentation must be submitted.
- Use online tools to help you understand and compare your aid packages

Spring

- Be sure to accept the offer from the college you will attend as instructed in your award letter.
- Let the other colleges you applied to know you will not be attending.

Student Scholarships

Scholarships, unlike student loans, don't have to be repaid and can reduce the cost of college.

Check the Counseling Center Website and Canvas page for a list of current local scholarship opportunities. There will be occasional Canvas and morning announcements made about scholarship opportunities and to remind students of scholarship deadlines.

- It is not too early to start searching for scholarships. There are many scholarships available your junior year.
- Determine your eligibility before you start a scholarship application.
- Make sure to submit all required application materials by the deadline.



Dollars for Scholars - Students may start a Dollars for Scholars profile at any time. Senior students will be alerted when the application becomes available. The expected application deadline is mid March. Visit: gettysburg.dollarsforscholars.org to start your profile.

Chapter 9: Military Information

If you have decided to enlist in a branch of the US military or are interested in applying to a US service academy, or join ROTC in college, below are some things to keep in mind.

Military Entrance Requirements

- No drug violations
- No felonies
- ASVAB (see next page for more information)
- HS diploma
- All branches have strict medical qualifications and differ with each branch. For more specific and up-to-date information, speak to a military recruiter (A list of recruiting offices are on the following page).

US Service Academies

There are 5 services academies (list below). All of which have a very rigorous application process which must be started no later than junior year in high school. You should start familiarizing yourself with the application process by freshman year, which may include securing a nomination by a member of the US Senate or Congress or the Vice President or President of the United States. Each service academy is quite competitive with the acceptance rates generally somewhere between 6-10%. Please make sure you research and visit the service academies in which you wish to apply.

- The United States Military Academy, West Point, New York
- The United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland
- The United States Coast Guard Academy, New London, Connecticut
- The United States Merchant Marine Academy, Kings Point, New York
- The United State Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado

ROTC

Participating in a Reserve Officer Training Corp while attending a participating college or university can provide valuable military leadership training that will allow students to become officers once they graduate with a bachelor's degree. The United State Army, Air Force, and Navy have ROTC programs throughout the country. There are many scholarship opportunities that will help with tuition as well. There is more specific information on each of the branches' websites including participating colleges/universities.

- www.goarmy.com/rotc
- www.afrotc.com
- www.nrotc.navy.mil

ASVAB

The Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) is used by all of the Services to determine if an applicant is eligible for the military. Four of the ASVAB subtests are combined to form the AFQT. It measures general cognitive ability and is composed of verbal and mathematics subtests. AFQT scores are grouped into categories for reporting purposes. The table below shows the AFQT categories and the percentile score ranges corresponding to the categories. Applicants that score in AFQT category IIIA or higher may qualify for enlistment incentives.

AFQT Category	Percentile Score Range
I	93-99
II	65-92
IIIA	50-64
IIIB	31-49
IV	10-30
V	1-9

The minimum AFQT score required to qualify for enlistment varies across the different branches of service. Contact a military recruiter or visit one of the Service-specific websites listed below to find out more about the required minimum AFQT score.

Air Force: www.airforce.com

Army: www.goarmy.com

Coast Guard: www.uscg.mil

Marine Corps: www.marines.com

Navy: www.navy.com

Military Recruiting Offices

Army National Guard

10025 South Mountain Road

Fayetteville, PA 17222

(717) 749-7237

Air National Guard

81 Constellation Court

Middletown, PA 17057

1-800-532-0858

US Air Force

1000 Carlisle Street

Hanover, PA 17331

(717) 632-9663

US Army Recruiting Center

1000 Carlisle Street

Hanover, PA 17331

(717) 852-0087

US Coast Guard

4337 Union Deposit Road #A

Harrisburg, PA 17111

(717) 561-0972

US Marine Corps

26 Springs Avenue

Gettysburg, PA 17325

(717) 334-1392

US Navy

2159 White Street

York, PA 17404

(717) 848-4171

Chapter 10: Joining the Workforce

- Develop a Career Plan: Think about what you want to do and research the type of training, education, and skills you will need to achieve your goal.
- Assess your Skills and Interests: Consider what you enjoy, what you are good at, and what type of personality you have. You want to be sure that the job you have is a good fit with who you are. Consider also if you enjoy working with people, working indoors or out, and if you enjoy set hours or flexible hours.
- Research Occupations: Find out more about the jobs that interest you, the educational requirements, the salary, the working conditions, future outlook and anything else that will help you narrow your focus.
- Learn about job-hunting tips as you prepare to graduate: where to look, contacts in the community.
- Prepare your Resume and Practice Job Interview Skills
- Connect with a representative from Career Link

Chapter 11: How can I earn college credits in high school?

1. College in the High School (CHS) – These courses are taught at Gettysburg High School by GHS teachers. You are able to earn credit from both the college and GHS. They will be applied towards GHS graduation requirements.

The cost of a HACC CHS course is \$83.50 per HACC credit (2023-2024 cost). Our available HACC CHS courses are:

- HACC CHS English 101 (3 HACC credits, ENGL 101)
- HACC CHS English 102 (3 HACC credits, ENGL 102)
- HACC CHS Health (3 HACC credits, HLTH 101)
- HACC CHS Humans & the Environment (3 HACC credits, BIOL 103)
- HACC CHS Anatomy and Physiology (4 HACC credits, BIOL 121)
- HACC CHS Intro to Software for Business (3 HACC credits, CIS 105)
- HACC CHS Principles of Management (3 HACC credits, MGMT 201)
- HACC CHS Business 101 (3 HACC credits, BUSI 101)

There are also opportunities to earn CHS college credits through Carlow University (**Accounting I & Accounting II**), and Harrisburg University (**Biology-AP**).

2. Advanced Placement (AP) – All AP courses are designed to prepare students for the AP exam given in May each year. Students enrolled in an AP class must take the AP exam. The cost of the exam is around \$98. You can choose to take an AP exam for a subject that we do not offer, however, this is not usually recommended. Most colleges/universities will award credits for an AP score of 3 or higher but that is determined by each college/university. Our available AP courses are:

- AP English 11 Language
- AP English 12 Literature
- AP US Government & Politics
- AP Psychology
- AP Human Geography
- AP Calculus AB
- AP Calculus BC
- AP Physics
- AP Biology
- AP Art (2D, 3D, & Drawing)
- AP Spanish
- AP US History
- AP World History
- AP Statistics
- AP Chemistry I & II

3. Dual Enrollment – During your junior and senior year, you have the opportunity to take courses at the HACC Campus in Gettysburg or on-line depending on the flexibility of your senior year schedule. Most HACC credits will transfer to other colleges/universities but make sure you are checking with the college/university you plan on attending. You will be charged the dual-enrollment HACC tuition rate of \$175.00 per credit (2023-2024 cost).

* IMPORTANT: To ensure your credits from HACC are reviewed by the college/university you plan to attend, you must contact HACC directly to send your official transcript. Though your HACC CHS courses will show on your GAHS transcript, the college/university will only accept a HACC transcript to apply your credits towards your degree requirements. For AP courses, you must send your AP exam scores from your CollegeBoard account.

Chapter 12: Going to College with a Disability

- **A Section 504 plan or IEP** will NOT transfer over to college automatically; you would need to reach out to the Office of Disabilities Services to obtain accommodations.
 - Under the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) Amendments of 2008, a person is entitled to accommodations if they meet the criteria
 - Maintain documentation of your disability
 - Put a transition plan in place with realistic long-term goals.
- **The ACT and SAT** are required to comply with ADA requirements
 - Some examples of accommodations include:
 - Preferential seating
 - Extra time for assignments
 - Use of a note taker
 - Use of a tape recorder
- **Some things to look for in colleges include:** Program for students with Learning Disabilities, mentors, writing specialist, instructor-tutors, advocacy help, assisted technology, special summer orientation programs, support groups, LD specialists, ADHD coaches, ASD specialists, BRIDGE program
- **Helpful Website:** <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>
 - Become informed about the law
 - Browse through frequently asked questions about things like loans & grants
 - How to act against discrimination

GETTYSBURG AREA HIGH SCHOOL PLANNING GUIDE

Name:	Post Secondary Goal: <div style="text-align: center;"> <input type="checkbox"/> 4-Year College/University <input type="checkbox"/> 2-Year College Technical/Trade/Community <input type="checkbox"/> College <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Full Time Employment </div>
Career Goal:	

Credit Requirements: (28 Credits)	Grade 9 (9.0 credits)	Grade 10 (9.0 credits)	Grade 11 (8.0 credits)	Grade 12 (8.0 credits)
English (4 credits)				
Social Studies (4 credits)				
Mathematics (3 or 4 credits) * - 2 Math credits recommended in 9 th gr.				
Science (3 or 4 credits) *				
Physical Education & Wrap Around Courses (4 credits)	<i>Physical Education 9 (.5 cr.) & F.A.C.S. (.5 cr.)</i>	<i>Physical Education 10 (.5 cr.) & Safety Education (.5 cr.)</i>	<i>Physical Education 11 (.5 cr.) & Health (.5 cr.)</i>	<i>Physical Education 12 (.5 cr.) & Personal Finance (.5 cr.)</i>
Career/Research				
Electives				
Electives				

* A MINIMUM total of 7.0 credits are required between Mathematics and Science. Three credits in one subject and four credits in the other (Student's choice).

** It is possible to earn a maximum of 34.0 credits in grades 9-12.



Brag sheet:

Student questionnaire for teacher letter of recommendation

Brag sheets are a way for you to help your counselor and teachers write letters of recommendation. These forms give them more insight into who you are outside of school and your interests. Fill out these forms, and share them with your counselor and teachers when you ask them for a letter of recommendation!

This form is for students to fill out.

Complete this form to help your teacher write a letter of recommendation on your behalf. Keep in mind, the more specific the details you can give, the more personal and effective your recommendation will be. Don't forget to take the time to thank your teacher! At the top of the form you'll find a suggested thank you note to include.

.....

Dear [name of teacher],

Thank you so much for agreeing to write a letter of recommendation on my behalf. I hope you find the additional information about me helpful.

Sincerely,

Name of student (printed)
Name of student (signature)
Date



Student's full name: _____

Student's email address: _____

List the name of the course(s) you took with this teacher, including the grade you were in (9,10,11,12, other) when you took the course(s).

List three adjectives you would use to describe yourself.

Describe why you have chosen this teacher to write a letter of recommendation for you.

Describe a lesson or unit in the class that you enjoyed and why.

Describe a project you worked on in the class that you are proud of.

What is something your teacher probably doesn't know about you?



Below is a list of attributes colleges consider when evaluating your application. Select 1 or 2 of these attributes and share an example of a time you demonstrated these characteristics in class.

Academic achievement, intellectual promise, quality of writing, creative and original thought, productive class discussion, respect accorded by faculty, disciplined work habits, maturity, motivation, leadership, integrity, reaction to setbacks, concern for others, self-confidence, initiative, and independence.

Additional information.

Use this space to share any additional information with your teacher. Is there anything not already stated that you want to make sure they know prior to writing your letter of recommendation?

Thank you for taking the time to share this important information with your teacher!

* Thank you to the members of Common App's Outreach Advisory Committee and counselors around the world for contributing to this resource.

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