



SENIOR TO DO LIST

Class of 2025



Do your research. Look at what types of majors each institution offers, tuition costs, campus size, clubs and sports, study abroad opportunities, etc. CFNC.org, collegescorecard.ed.gov, and bigfuture.collegeboard.org are great resources for finding the school that is right for you. Plan to come to admission presentations offered by various colleges/universities during lunch. These will be advertised over the intercom.

Look at colleges' first year/freshman profile. This will show you the average GPA, rank, test scores, etc. of their most recently admitted freshmen. You can find freshmen profiles on each institution's website or at collegedata.com. Do you fit their profile? You have a stronger chance for admission if you fit the most recent first year/freshman profile.

Reach/Safety/Match: Many college planning guides recommend having a list of 3-6 colleges to which you plan to apply by the time you return to school in August. Your list should contain at least one **reach** school (a long-shot but possible—your GPA, test scores, etc. fall below the school's range for average freshmen); several **safety** schools (a safe bet-- your GPA, test scores, etc. fall above the school's range for average freshmen); and 2-3 **match** schools (strong shot of being accepted because the profile matches you—your GPA, test scores, etc. fall well within or even exceed the school's range for avg. freshmen).

What will I be expected to submit to college admissions offices? Most schools will require a minimum (1) an online application to be submitted (2) official test scores sent directly from the testing agency (ACT and/or SAT) (3) an official transcript. Some schools require letters of recommendation. FAFSA (all schools) and Residency Determination (for NC schools) will also be required. See more information regarding FAFSA and Residency Determination below.

Common Application: The Common Application is just that – ONE application common to numerous colleges and universities allowing students to conveniently apply to multiple universities simultaneously. Go to <https://www.commonapp.org/Login> to create an account. UNC, NC State, UNC-W, Wake Forest, Duke ASU, ECU, UNC-C, UNC-G, NC A & T, High Point University and many more colleges (over 1000) participate in the Common Application.

Coalition Application: Similar to Common Application but with around 150 college/university members

Community Colleges: Want to save tens of thousands of dollars while fulfilling your general education requirements? Consider one of NC's 58 community colleges. There is one community college within a 30-minute drive of all NC residents. Each offers a 2-year college transfer program. The very best bang for your buck!

- o **GTCC:** Offers over 80 degree, diploma, and certificate programs. Go to gtcc.edu to apply for admission using their online application (rolling admission). GTCC has 7 campus locations and offers online courses.

Application Deadlines: On Common App, you will choose your application decision plan for each school to which you apply, and it will appear on your dashboard. You can also go to <https://www.cfnc.org/media/fadgkugj/nc-college-admissions-deadlines-and-visit-information.pdf> to view the various deadlines and open house dates for all NC public and private colleges and universities. Rolling admissions means the school allows applications to be submitted within a large window (usually 6 months or more) and will notify applicants of their decision within a few weeks of submission. Put all deadlines in your calendar because colleges hold firmly to them.

Early Decision vs. Early Action: Which do I choose?

Early decision is **binding**. This means if you are accepted through an early decision, you are committed to attending that school, and will withdraw any applications you may have submitted for the regular deadlines at other schools. You may not apply to more than one college under early decision. If you are not accepted, you will either be denied or deferred. Denied applicants may not apply again that year. Deferred applicants will be reconsidered during the regular admission period and are free to apply to other schools. Early decision deadlines are often in October/November, and students are typically notified of the decision in December.

Early action is **non-binding**. This means you are not obliged to attend if you are accepted. You may also apply early action to multiple colleges. Early action deadlines usually fall at the same time as early decision.

If you are sure that you have found your best-fit school, you know it's one you want to attend, you're a strong candidate for admission, and you know that you can afford the tuition no matter the financial aid offered, go ahead and apply early decision.

If you're uncertain about any of those factors, keep your options open by applying early action or by the priority deadline. Priority deadlines put you in the running for institutional scholarships just by applying for admission.

ACT / SAT scores: All seniors had the opportunity to take the ACT at no cost this past spring. If you haven't taken either test a 2nd time, it's advisable to take the ACT and/or SAT at least one more time early this fall. Repeat the test that best reflects your academic potential (i.e. score higher on). Not sure which test you did better on? Use this handy conversion table to find out. <https://www.princetonreview.com/college-advice/act-to-sat-conversion>. Remember that most colleges superscore, meaning they cherry-pick your highest section scores from across all your ACT/SAT attempts to create a new average composite score. Nearly 90% of colleges superscore the SAT, while 68% superscore the ACT by calculating a new composite score from across your test dates.

- Go to www.actstudent.org to create an account in order to access ACT scores, register, and send your test scores to colleges.
- Go to sat.collegeboard.org to create an account to register for the SAT, access scores, and send your test scores to colleges. AP scores are also sent through College Board but only need to be sent to the school you choose to attend.
- Remember that colleges require OFFICIAL tests scores be sent directly from the testing agency. Some schools will initially allow you to self-report on your application and only require you to send an official score report once you decide to enroll at their institution. This will save you money!
- Your counselor has SAT and ACT test fee waivers if you qualify for free or reduced lunch, if you receive Medicaid, or live in federally subsidized public housing. You will need to provide your eligibility letter from the district's nutrition office. If your parents do not have a copy, call 336-370-3252. You may also provide your Medicaid card as proof of eligibility. If you qualify for an ACT/SAT test fee waiver, you can also qualify for a college application fee waiver which can be used to apply to thousands of schools for free.
- Remember when you are registering for the ACT/SAT that you can designate up to 4 colleges to have your score report sent at no cost. If you send them later, it costs \$12 (SAT) and \$18.50 (ACT) per test date per school.
- Northern's testing code is 341603. You will need this to register for either the ACT or SAT.
- If you want to improve your ACT/SAT test scores, take a prep course, take free practice tests at act.org, collegeboard.org, march2success.com, and cfnc.org. Use your PSAT scores from junior year to connect to Khan Academy for free, customized SAT practice. (satpractice.org)
- **Do not wait on your test scores to apply to college.** Go ahead and submit your application and send test scores as they become available.

Upcoming SAT Test Dates (Go to collegeboard.org to register.)

- August 24, 2024 (registration deadline August 9)
- October 5, 2024 (registration deadline September 20)
- November 2, 2024 (registration deadline October 18)
- December 7, 2024 (registration deadline November 22)

Upcoming ACT Test Dates (Go to act.org to Register)

- September 7, 2024 (registration deadline Aug. 2)
- October 26, 2024 (registration deadline Sept. 20)
- December 7, 2024 (registration deadline Nov. 1)

Sending your Official Transcript:

For North Carolina colleges/universities: Students will send their official transcripts electronically through CFNC. www.cfnc.org. You will need to set up a CFNC account if you don't already have one. Then go under the Apply tab and follow the directions. Need help? Use these step-by-step screenshots as a guide. <https://www.gcsnc.com/cms/lib/NC01910393/Centricity/Domain/8398/CFNC%20Final%20Transcript.pdf>

For out of state colleges/universities: Students will request their official transcripts through ScribOrder. They will either be electronically sent or mailed to each college/university.

- (1.) Go to <https://guilfordnc.scriborder.com/>
- (2.) Select Current Student on the left-hand side and complete the request form.

(3.) When sending to a specific school, click on “Add Delivery Address. In Address Type, select Educational Institution. Once you begin to type in the name of the school, the admissions office address will automatically populate. Remember you can send to multiple schools in one order by clicking on “add additional address.” There is no charge for using Scrib Order until after you have graduated (July 2025).

Remember, if you order an official transcript, and you open the sealed envelope, it is no longer official.

For an unofficial copy for personal use: Students will request their transcript through ScribOrder and will receive an email notification or text that explains how to electronically retrieve it. Make sure you use a valid email address that you will check.

*If you have received college credits through Career & College Promise at GTCC, you will be required to submit your GTCC transcript to the school to which you choose to attend. Log into <https://www.parchment.com/u/registration/2903097/institution>, complete the online request form and follow the online payment instructions. Cost is \$7.50 per copy.

If you are applying through Common App, your counselor will upload your transcript, but you should also plan to order it through ScribOrder (for out-of-state schools) or CFNC (for all in-state schools). When your transcript is sent electronically, it takes one to two business days to be delivered and an additional two to three weeks to processed by the college.

DO NOT FORGET TO SEND YOUR FINAL TRANSCRIPT TO THE COLLEGE YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO ATTEND AFTER GRADUATION. You will not be able to attend the college/university if you do not send your **final official transcript**. *If you initially send your transcript through CFNC, they will automatically send your final transcript to all of the schools to which you applied.* **All students applying to in-state schools MUST order their transcript through CFNC. If ordered through Scrib Order, it will be denied.**

Residency Determination: You must prove you are a resident of NC to receive in-state tuition at public colleges/universities as well as community colleges. Go to www.ncresidency.org to complete the online residency application process. You will need your CFNC login credentials to get started. You will also need your social security number and birth date, driver’s license number and license plate information for both you and your parent, the year your parent moved to NC, and last year’s tax return. When you finish the residency determination online “interview,” be sure to put your assigned Residency Certification Number (RCN) in a safe place. You will need to enter your RCN on all of your applications.

FAFSA: (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) Complete the FAFSA to apply for financial aid for college. It is required to qualify for low-cost loans as well as need based federal and state grants, and work study. No matter the household income, all students must complete the FAFSA as it is also used to evaluate students for institutional scholarships. Go to www.fafsa.ed.gov to access the application. It is FREE! **Make sure your parents complete the 2025-2026 FAFSA—the year you will be a freshman!** . Fill it out ASAP so you do not miss out on any financial aid. Colleges have their own deadlines for submitting the FAFSA. **BEST ADVICE:** Do not wait! You will use your family’s 2023 income tax information. 2024 income tax information can NOT be used for the 2025-26 FAFSA.

FSA ID: An FSA (Federal Student Aid) ID is required before completing the FAFSA online. The FSA ID will serve as an electronic signature for all federal aid documents. Both the student and the parent will each need their own FSA ID, since each will be required to electronically sign the FAFSA. Never share your FSA ID with anyone as it can lead to identity theft. Go ahead and create your FSA ID now by going to fsaid.ed.gov. If you have an older sibling(s) in college who has previously filed the FAFSA, your parent will use the same FSA ID already created but you will need to create your own.

CSS Profile: Students applying to Duke, Elon, Davidson, UNC-Chapel Hill, and Wake Forest **MUST** complete the FAFSA **AND** the CSS Profile. cssprofile.collegeboard.org. Cost=\$25 for the initial profile, \$16 thereafter. Fee waivers available through College Board.

Letters of Recommendation: Seniors need to identify teachers and/or influential community members, employers, etc. who can present their best qualities. It is common courtesy to request a letter of rec **at least two weeks in advance of the due date**. Make sure you provide your recommender with a copy of your resume. Resumes are useful for future employment, college admission, and scholarship applications. Be sure to write a thank you note afterwards to express your gratitude for letters of recommendation written on your behalf. Not all colleges require recommendation letters. Counselor letters of recommendation are only sent to schools that **require** them. If the school says, “not required,” a counselor letter of recommendation is not sent.

Should I waive my FERPA right? Yes! The FERPA waiver only waives your right to access your recommendation letters AFTER you’ve been accepted to and enrolled in a college. If you don’t waive your FERPA right, you could accidentally signal to admissions officers that you don’t trust your recommender or that the letter may be less candid/genuine.

Put your feet on campuses: Putting your feet on campus is always preferable to the virtual alternative. You can book your tour—live or virtual-- online on the institution's website. Tours of colleges are considered an excused absence (educational opportunity) as long as you provide proof of your visit from the college.

National Decision Day: May 1st.....this is the final deadline for choosing the college/university you will attend.

Grades: Keep your grades and attendance STRONG throughout senior year. Colleges/universities will receive your mid-year transcript in February and final transcript in mid-June. They maintain the right to rescind your acceptance if you demonstrate a significant decline in grades.

Going into the Armed Forces or Interested in GAP (Guilford Apprenticeship Partners)? See Mrs. Smith (room 257) or email her at smithl2@gcsnc.com to get connected to a recruiter. You will need to take the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery), a timed multi-aptitude test. Your score will determine whether you are qualified to enlist in the US Military, and a high score will improve your chances of getting the specialty/job and signing bonus you want. Prepare for the ASVAB by taking practice tests at <https://www.military.com/join-armed-forces/asvab> and also at march2success.com.

NCAA Eligibility Center: Athletes wanting to compete at NCAA Division I and II schools need to create a Certification Account to make official visits or to sign a National Letter of Intent. You MUST be certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center to compete at a NCAA Division I or II school. For athletes who plan to compete at a division III school or are undecided as to where they want to compete, complete a Profile Page. Go to <https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/> create either a Certification Account or Profile Page.

COUNSELORS ARE HERE FOR YOU AS YOU PLAN YOUR FUTURE!

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Counseling Department Website:

Scan QR Code to access more information on scholarships, important dates, service learning, summer opportunities, graduation and many more.

