

Introduction to College Admissions

Agenda

The 4-year College

Picking a major

Applying to College

Paying for College

Role of the Parent

4-Year College: Finding Your Fit

- Things to Consider:

- Selectivity of College
- Type of School
- Location
- Programs Offered
- Extracurriculars
- Support Services
- Financial Fit
- Others



Campus Visits

- Visit Virtually
- Visit In-Person (if possible)
 - Open Houses
 - Groups
 - Daily Tours
 - Can be more individualized



Picking Your Major

- Self-reflect-look at your interests, values, skills, and abilities.
- Take career assessments
- Talk with family & friends
- Set goals
- Research majors
- Review major/minor requirements
- Look into job prospects
- Meet with professors during campus visits
- Take relevant classes in high school
- Get involved



The College Application

Step 1: Apply

- Common Application
- College/University websites
- Other databases
 - Coalition App, Cal State, etc.
 - August 1st

Step 2

- Request transcripts
 - Official v. Unofficial



Types of College Deadlines

Non-Restrictive Application Plans			Restrictive Application Plans	
Regular Decision	Rolling Admission	Early Action(EA)	Restrictive Early	Early Decision
Submit an application by a specified deadline and receive a decision by a designated date	Submit when ready. Schools review application as they "roll-in". They make admission decisions throughout the admissions cycle	Apply early and receive a decision well in advance of the school's regular response date	Apply to a school and receive a decision early. You may be a restricted from applying ED, EA, or REA to other schools. If offered, you have until May 1 to confirm	Make a commitment to a first-choice school where, if admitted, you will definitely enroll. The application decision deadline occur early.
Non-Binding!	Non-Binding!	Non-Binding!	Non-Binding!	Binding!
You are not restricted from applying to other institutions and have until May 1 to consider your options and confirm enrollment.			You are responsible for following all restrictions	

Test Scores

Testing Policy	Meaning	Who Should Submit Test Scores?
Test Blind	Even if submitted, test scores are not used when making admissions or financial aid decisions	No one
Completely Test Optional	If a student does not submit test scores, they will not be penalized when it comes to admissions or financial aid decisions	Anyone who meets or exceeds the average ACT/SAT scores for incoming freshman at that college
Test Optional with Caveats	While students are not required to submit test scores for general admission, scores are required for certain programs (i.e. BS/MD programs), majors, groups (i.e. homeschooled) and/or scholarships	Anyone who meets or exceeds the average ACT/SAT scores for incoming freshman at that college or are required to submit test scores
ACT/SAT Required	All students are required to submit test scores in order for their application to be reviewed for both admissions and financial aid	Everyone

Essays & Letters of Recommendation

Essays

- Make sure to choose essay topic thoughtfully
- Some universities/programs have specific prompts
- Essay is our opportunity to get to know you!

Letters of Recommendation

- Letters of recommendation are not always required by the college. Many times, they are optional or not wanted at all
- Make sure to ask teachers who know you well

AP / Dual Credit

AP Courses/Exams

- Taking exam after course to receive 1-5 Scores
- Some exam scores can be awarded college credit
- Students will send scores through College Board website
- Taking courses won't get you college credit, only exam scores

Dual Enrollment Courses

- College level course (typically through local junior college)
- Passing grade can usually transfer to 4-year degree program
- Transfer equivalency guides
- Send official transcripts once final grades are posted

Paying for College

Financial Aid

- Money from various sources to help cover gap in college expenses
- Gift Aid = Grants/Scholarships
- Self-Help Aid = Federal Student Loans, work study
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
 - FREE!
 - Opens Oct. 1st for Seniors
 - Make sure to list ALL preferred schools

Scholarships

- Merit Scholarships – Often earned through admissions process and based on academic credentials
 - Potential to be enhanced based on updated information
- College Website & Financial Aid Office
- Community Organizations
 - Local orgs., churches
- Employers and businesses
- Scholarship Search Engines
 - Fastweb, Scholarships.com, etc.

Award Offer

- Each school that a student is admitted to will send a Financial Award Offer
 - Breaks down full financial assistance and estimated cost of attendance
 - Includes results of FAFSA, university aid
 - Allows students and families to see what they can anticipated remaining costs to be
- If there is confusion, reach out to Financial Aid or Admissions Offices
- Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC)

Parents and Their Role

- Even if you don't have all the answers, the best advice I can give is listen to your student
- Communicate clearly and have healthy and productive conversations about limitations with college
- Use college experts, both at high school and universities. Please ask for help, that's what we are here for!
- Keep an open mind





Joliet, IL

52,000 alumni worldwide

**Hispanic Serving
Institution**

40+ Majors

46+ Minors

Visit USF





Important Dates

Discover USF – Oct 13th, 2025

Admitted Day – Apr. 17th, 2026

Endowment Scholarships

Nov. 1st, 2026



Applying is FREE!!

Up to 25,000 Academic Aid

2.5 GPA

20 ACT

1030 SAT





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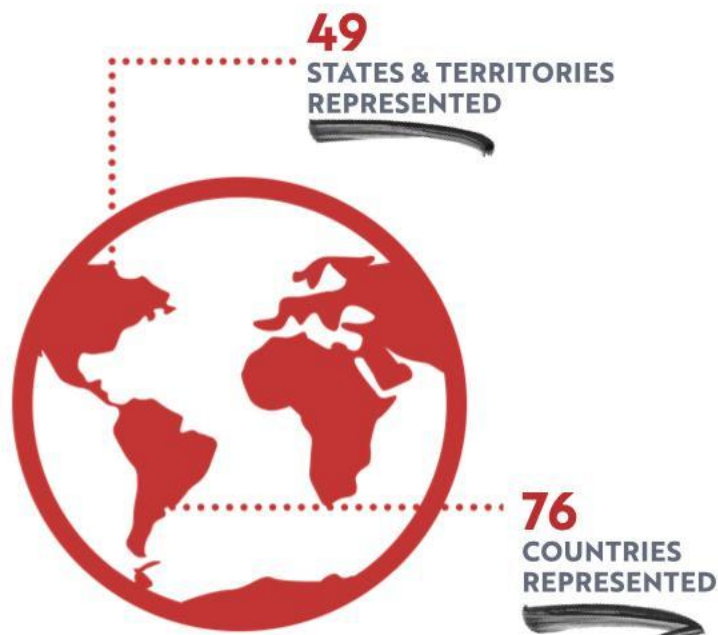
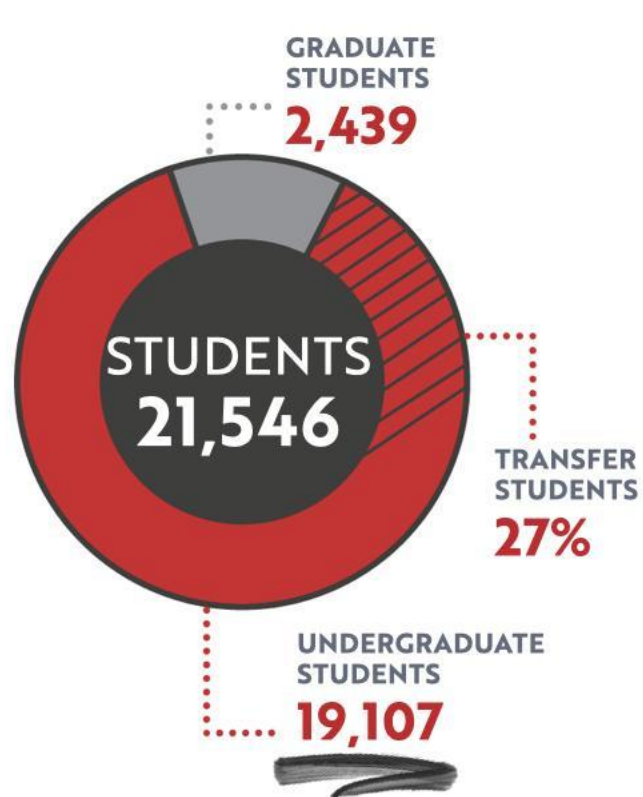


Welcome
TO
ILLINOIS
STATE





OUR Community



17%
of Redbirds are
FIRST GENERATION
college students

1 in 3
students come from
underrepresented
backgrounds

MORE THAN 40
DINING AND SHOPPING
OPTIONS IN UPTOWN NORMAL
(JUST A STEP OFF CAMPUS)

TOP 20
SAFEST CITIES FOR WOMEN
IN THE NATION

-SECURITYCHOICE.COM

Top 50
COLLEGE TOWN

**BASED ON ENTERTAINMENT AND CULTURAL OFFERINGS,
BUSINESSES AND LARGE EMPLOYERS, AND LOW COST OF LIVING**

NO. 8
MOST AFFORDABLE
COLLEGE TOWN

-BROKE SCHOLAR

**#1 IN ILLINOIS, #28 IN
NATION**

BEST SMALL PLACES FOR
BUSINESS AND CAREERS

-FORBES

ACADEMIC Options

AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

NURSING, HEALTH, & WELLNESS

ARTS, COMMUNICATION, & MEDIA

POLITICS & LAW

BUSINESS & ECONOMICS

SCIENCE & MATHEMATICS

EDUCATION

SOCIETY & CULTURE

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT & SERVICES

TECHNOLOGY

HUMANITIES & LANGUAGES

Explore more than 150 majors at
IllinoisState.edu/Academics

ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

AVERAGE
CLASS SIZE
32 STUDENTS

97%
OF OUR
PROFESSORS
HOLD THE
HIGHEST DEGREE
IN THEIR FIELD

19 to 1
STUDENT
TO
FACULTY
RATIO



COSTS

2025-2026



IN-STATE



TUITION AND FEES*

\$16,144

HOUSING AND MEALS

\$12,382

TOTAL

\$28,526

Out-of-State



TUITION AND FEES*

\$28,210

HOUSING AND MEALS

\$12,382

TOTAL

\$40,592

*Students in the College of Business, College of Engineering, Mennonite College of Nursing, cybersecurity, and computer science pay \$60 more per credit hour.

SCHOLARSHIPS

FRESHMAN SCHOLARSHIPS

3.25+
GPA

TRANSFER SCHOLARSHIPS

3.5+
GPA

LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP

PARENT OR GRANDPARENT
WHO ATTENDED ILLINOIS STATE

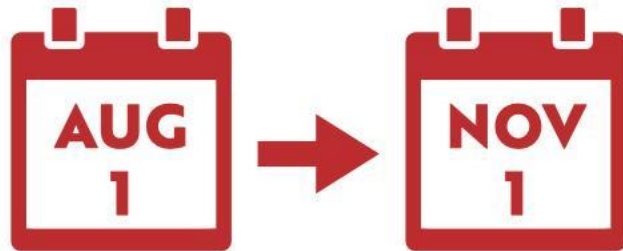


IllinoisState.edu/Scholarships ←

ILLINOISSTATE.EDU/APPLY

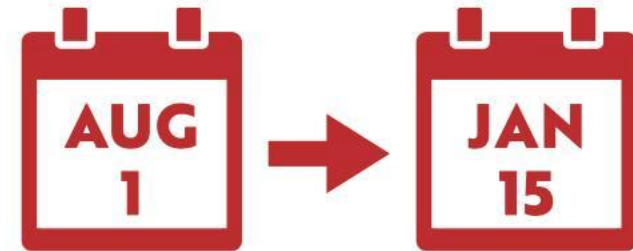
SUBMIT \$55 APPLICATION FEE

FRESHMEN FALL



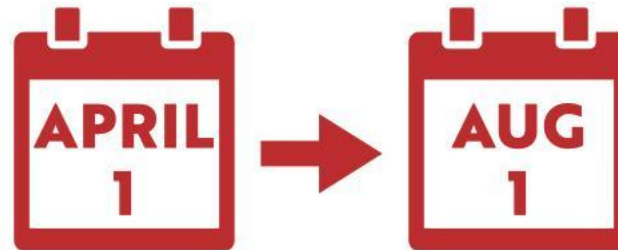
> DEADLINE APRIL 1

TRANSFERS SUMMER/FALL



> DEADLINE MAY 1

SPRING



> DEADLINE NOVEMBER 1



WHAT WE CONSIDER

- Courses completed
- Grade point average
- Optional SAT/ACT scores and subscores
- Optional academic personal statement



2024 Admitted Student PROFILE

(MIDDLE 50% RANGES)

FRESHMAN

GPA: 3.33-4.07

on a 4.0 scale

SAT: 1040-1250 or ACT: 22-28
(optional)

TRANSFER

GPA: 2.90-3.67

on a 4.0 scale



CREATE
YOUR
LEGACY



THANK YOU!