GETTYSBURG HIGH SCHOOL
A Great Place To Learn

Gettysburg Area High School Post-Secondary Planning Guide

24-25 GAHS Counseling Center

CEEB Code - 391510

Visit our [Counseling Center Website]

Mrs. Carrie Myers, Counseling Center Secretary

Mr. Jonathan Zimmerman, School Counselor

Mr. Mark Smith, School Counselor

Mrs. Lakota Bowers, School Counselor

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Gettysburg Area High School

1130 Old Harrisburg Road, Gettysburg, PA 17325

(717) 334-6254

Chapter 1: College-bound Student Information

1. Earn strong grades in the most challenging classes you can take, commit to community service and engage in extracurriculars.

2. Understand the opportunities presented through the AP / College in the High School, PSAT/NMSQT, SAT, ACT, and ASVAB.

3. Visit the Counseling Center Website or meet with your school counselor for planning purposes. Family planning meetings are encouraged.

4. 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?

5. 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? Use this 30-item survey to help focus your search.

6. Have regular and scheduled discussions with your parents/guardians.

7. What college major(s) are you considering? Do you want to minor in something? Ensure the colleges you are considering have the academic/extracurricular programs you are interested in.

8. Attend the **College & Career Fair at Gettysburg College & Financial Aid Night** (both held in September each year) and meet with admission reps that visit the GAHS Counseling Center (see our website for a complete listing). Look at college websites, the Common App and The CollegeBoard. Develop a broad list of schools and then narrow that list down by senior year.

9. Collect information on each of the schools on your final list including potential costs (using NET PRICE CALCULATORS or https://myintuition.org/, application deadlines, college visit opportunities, and admission criteria. Familiarize yourself with the FAFSA and PA State Grant.

10. Schedule college visits, open houses and meet with admission representatives that visit the GAHS Counseling Center. If military, speak with a recruiter from the different branches, and take the ASVAB (offered 2x a year at GAHS).

11. Prepare yourself to speak with colleges. Some may require an interview. Interview tips and sample questions are included later in this booklet.

12. Create an account on www.commonapp.org during your junior year of high school. Become familiar with the recommender process for college.

13. Use checklists - complete application and financial aid information by required deadlines according to the individual schools.

Junior Year Checklist - 4 Year College

Fall

- Research and consider possible majors and research potential colleges that have that major(s).
- Continue to research colleges through a variety of means (counselor meetings, college websites, social media accounts, virtual tours, etc.)
- Take the PSAT/NMSQT in October at GAHS. Review what the test will be like on Bluebook.
- If appropriate, start gathering materials for your portfolio if interested in majoring in art, music, drama, etc.
- Learn about scholarships and other means of paying for college. Utilize net price calculators. Review information on need-based and merit-based aid. For the most accurate results, utilize the calculator tool found on individual college websites.
- Attend the College & Career Fair at Gettysburg College. A financial aid presentation will occur during the fair.

Winter

- Meet with your school counselor to discuss your senior year course requests, graduation requirements and to gain information specific to your post-secondary plans. Obtain an electronic and hard copy of your transcript at this time.
- If you haven't done so, sign up to take the SAT and/or the ACT at least once in the Spring and then again next August, September or October of senior year.
- Research scholarship opportunities. Bookmark the GAHS Scholarship List.

Spring

- Create an account on www.commonapp.org. Explore sections like the personal information, academics, activities and essays. Identify colleges of interest and look at their unique requirements for the Common App.
- Learn about the recommendation process for colleges and scholarships. Ask 1-2 teachers if they would be willing to write you a letter of recommendation. Provide teachers with information that will be helpful, such as the Common App Brag Sheet.
- Start visiting colleges – visit different types (small, large, public, private) to get a sense of what you are interested in. Complete virtual tours on college websites.
- Continue looking for scholarships. Visit the GAHS Scholarship List.
- 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.
- Review college essay requirements and review best practices for writing your own college essays. Read tips on how to make your Common App Essay more meaningful.

Senior Year Checklist - 4 Year College

August / September

- Continue making progress with your www.commonapp.org. Immediately add your school counselor under one of the colleges you are applying to. Your counselor will upload your official transcript during semester one and your mid-year report in mid-February to the Common App, only after you have added their information in the required section under the Recommends/FERPA section for a college you are applying to.
- Be sure to check if any college you are applying to requires a school counselor letter of recommendation. If so, reach out to your counselor immediately as they will need ample time to write you a letter. Also be sure to add any teacher(s) to the Common App who has already agreed to be a recommender for you.
- Give each teacher a completed Brag Sheet when they've agreed to be your college recommender. Provide each staff member with at least three to four weeks notice. Immediately add other recommenders (including teachers to each college you are applying to on the Common App).
- When applying to a college directly on a college website - students may need to request their official transcript through the Counseling Center website or Counseling Center Canvas page.
- Narrow your list of colleges to 5-8 schools. Plan to visit as many of these schools as possible. If you can not visit in-person, complete a virtual tour.
- Make a list of important dates/deadlines, forms needed, fees due, etc. for each school you plan to apply to.
- Continue your college visits and meet with representatives that visit the Counseling Center.
- Attend Financial Aid Night at GHS - September date TBD.
- Attend the College & Career Fair at Gettysburg College - September date TBD.
- Look for scholarships. Monitor and apply for scholarships using the GAHS Scholarship List.
- Meet with your school counselor for your 1:1 senior meeting. Obtain an electronic and hard copy of your unofficial transcript during this time.
- Finalize college essays required for applications (will vary from school to school).

October

- October 1-15, for Early Decision / Early Action admissions.
- Use online resources and the Common App to determine your application type (Early Decision, Early Action, Early Decision II, Rolling Admission or Regular Decision for each college.
- Complete the FAFSA to apply for financial aid beginning October 1. Complete the PA State Grant application if eligible.
- Complete CSS Profile for financial aid if required.
- Monitor and apply for scholarships using the GAHS Scholarship List. Be sure to look for additional scholarship opportunities.
- Finalize college essays required for applications (will vary from school to school)

November

- November 1-15, for Early Decision / Early Action admissions.
- Request transcripts for non-Common App schools; a google form is available on the Counseling Center Website and Canvas.

December

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

January

- Continue to research and apply for scholarships.
- Keep in mind, colleges are made aware of any mid-year schedule changes.

March/April

- 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.
- You should start receiving many of your acceptance letters and financial aid award letters by spring. 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.

Summer (post-graduation)

- Submit AP scores from the College Board
- Submit official transcripts from any institution in which you have completed CHS or Dual Enrollment courses.

Chapter 2: Testing Information

Standardized tests including the SAT, ACT and AP scores can help colleges assess how ready you are for college-level coursework. Each college and specific program of study may have varying requirements regarding college entrance exams. Be sure to research each college's website well in advance to determine if standardized test scores are required for applying for admission.

SAT

As of March 2024, the SAT has transitioned to a digital format, introducing several key changes:

- **Test Format:** The SAT is now administered digitally through the Bluebook application.
- **Sections:** The test comprises two main sections:
    - **Reading and Writing:** Two 32-minute modules.
    - **Math:** Two 35-minute modules, with calculator use permitted throughout.
- **Timing:** The total testing time is approximately 2 hours and 14 minutes.
- **Scoring:** Each section is scored on a scale of 200–800, maintaining the total score range of 400–1600.
- **Registration:** Students can register for the SAT at www.mysat.org.
- **Fee Waivers:** Students eligible for free or reduced-price meals should visit the Counseling Center to obtain a fee waiver.
- **Testing Accommodations:** Accommodations are available for students with disabilities. For more information, visit the College Board's Services for Students with Disabilities. Please inform your counselor at least 10 weeks prior to the exam date if you are interested in applying for accommodations.

ACT

Beginning in April 2025, the ACT will undergo significant changes to enhance flexibility and accessibility for students:

- **Test Format:** The ACT will transition to a shorter, computer-based format starting in April 2025 for online testers, with paper-based testers adopting the new format in September 2025.
- **Sections:** The test will include four multiple-choice sections: English, Math, Reading, and an optional Science section. The Writing (essay) section remains optional.
- **Timing:** The total testing time will be reduced, allowing students more time per question. Specific timing details will be provided by ACT, Inc.

- **Scoring:** The composite score will now be based on the English, Math, and Reading sections, each scored on a scale of 1–36. If students opt to take the Science section, they will receive a separate Science score, also on a 1–36 scale, and a STEM score combining Math and Science.

- **Accommodations:** Testing accommodations for students with disabilities will continue to be available. For more information, visit:

- **Fee Waivers:** Students eligible for free or reduced-price meals should consult the Counseling Center to obtain a fee waiver.

For the most current information and updates, please refer to the official ACT website: act.org

Visit www.fairtest.org to learn more and to view test-optional schools.

Chapter 3: Application Process

Some colleges have their own link to apply through their website. Other colleges will participate with Common Application. Students applying to more than one college will benefit from using the Common App.

- Common Application: www.commonapp.org
- 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.
- Individual College Website online applications: You can submit an application online through all college websites directly.

How do I request my official transcript?

- For students who apply to college on the Common App - once you add your school counselor information to the Recommenders/FERPA section under a college you are applying to, your counselor will be prompted to upload your official transcript (mid-year report in February) and other pertinent information throughout your senior year.
- For applications completed outside of the Common App, students should request their official transcript via a google form on the Counseling Center Website or Counseling Center Canvas Page.

Tips for the Application Process

- Start working on your applications as early as you are able to. Most college applications open August 1st, but you can begin completing portions of your Common App as early as junior year (e.g., www.commonapp.org)
- Get organized: Have a binder, folder, app or spreadsheet to organize all application materials.
- Read through all materials before getting started. Work on your applications - students can save and return to their unfinished work at any time so long as deadlines are met.
- Have someone review your applications prior to submission.
- Keep track of deadlines for applications and financial aid forms. Set up a timeline for completing each application (keep holiday breaks in mind).
- Try to complete all applications early. Admissions to programs and financial aid / scholarships are generally more readily available the earlier students apply.
- Give your counselor and teachers three to four weeks notice to complete their portion of the application. Please account for due dates. Counselors and teachers will not be working on applications during school breaks.

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. Use the teacher brag sheet as necessary. You'll need to add your teachers as recommenders under each college you are applying to on the Common App.

Requesting Recommendations

It is important to understand the recommender process. 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 three to four 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.
-

Application Types

EARLY DECISION plans are BINDING — a student who is accepted as an ED applicant must attend the college.The majority of **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. Some colleges offer a nonbinding option called **SINGLE CHOICE EARLY ACTION** or **EARLY ACTION - RESTRICTIVE**, under which applicants may not apply ED or EA to any other college. Reference this chart for general information on application types. Your best source of information on application types will be specific college websites and www.commonapp.org.

Early Decision Applicants

- Apply early (usually by October/November) to first-choice college. Some application types have mid-October deadlines.
- 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 other application decisions.
- Withdraw all other applications if accepted by ED.
- Send a nonrefundable deposit well in advance of May 1.

Early Action Applicants

- Apply early (usually by October/November) to first-choice college. Some application types have mid-October deadlines.
- 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.

Dos

- Be Authentic and Personal: Share genuine stories and experiences that reflect your true self, allowing readers to connect with your narrative.

- Demonstrate Growth and Self-Awareness: Highlight personal development, lessons learned, and how you've overcome challenges, showcasing your maturity and resilience.

- Tailor Your Essays to Each Institution: Research each college's values and programs, and align your essays to demonstrate your fit and enthusiasm for that particular school.

- Engage Readers with Compelling Openings: Start with intriguing anecdotes or insights to capture attention and set the tone for your essay.

- Use Clear and Concise Language: Communicate your ideas effectively by avoiding unnecessary jargon and overly complex sentences.

- Proofread and Revise Thoroughly: Ensure your essay is free from grammatical errors and flows smoothly by reviewing and editing multiple times.

Don'ts

- Avoid Clichés and Overused Topics: Steer clear of common themes that lack originality, such as generic stories or vague generalizations.

- Don’t Rehash Your Resume: Your essay should complement your application, not repeat information found elsewhere. Focus on depth rather than breadth.

- Refrain from Using Generative AI Tools for Drafting: While AI can assist with technical checks, rely on your own voice and ideas to maintain authenticity.

- Avoid Overemphasizing Controversial Topics: Be cautious when addressing sensitive subjects; ensure your approach is thoughtful and balanced.

- Don’t Use Unprofessional Language or Tone: Maintain a respectful and mature tone, avoiding slang, text speak, or humor that may not translate well.

- Don’t Ignore Word Limits: Adhere to specific word counts, demonstrating your ability to communicate effectively within given constraints.

Common College Application Mistakes

Missing Application Deadlines: Ensure you are aware of and adhere to all application deadlines, including those for financial aid and scholarships.
Submitting Generic Essays: Tailor your personal statement and supplemental essays to each institution, reflecting genuine interest and alignment with the school's values.
Overlooking Supplemental Essays: Many colleges require additional essays; failing to complete them can harm your application.
Under-emphasizing Extracurricular Activities: Highlight meaningful extracurriculars that showcase your passions and leadership, providing specific details about your involvement.
Neglecting to Proofread: Carefully review all application materials to eliminate errors and ensure clarity.
Providing Inaccurate or Incomplete Information: Double-check that all personal and academic information is correct and complete.
Using Unprofessional Email Addresses: Use a simple, professional email address for all application correspondence.
Missing Recommendation Deadlines: Request letters of recommendation well in advance and provide recommenders with ample time.
Failing to Research Colleges Thoroughly: Understand each institution's culture, programs, and values to ensure a good fit and to tailor your application effectively.
Submitting Low-Quality Recommendation Letters: Choose recommenders who know you well and can provide detailed, positive letters.
Overloading on Extracurriculars: Focus on depth rather than breadth; meaningful involvement is more impactful than a long list of activities.
Neglecting to Prepare for College Interviews: If interviews are part of the process, practice and prepare to discuss your interests and fit for the school.
Misunderstanding Financial Aid Requirements: Be aware of all financial aid forms and deadlines, and understand the aid packages offered.
Applying to an Unbalanced List of Colleges: Ensure your list includes a mix of reach, match, and safety schools to optimize your chances.
Focusing Only on Prestigious Schools: Consider a range of institutions that align with your goals and values, not just those with the highest rankings.
Using Acronyms Without Explanation: Spell out all terms and acronyms to ensure clarity for all readers.
Leaving Out Job Experiences: Include all relevant work experiences, as they demonstrate responsibility and time management skills.
Submitting the Wrong Essay: Ensure that the essay you submit aligns with the prompt and is intended for the correct institution.
Not Sending Updated Test Scores: If you retake standardized tests and achieve higher scores, ensure that updated scores are sent to all schools.
Having Parents Complete the Application: The application should reflect your voice and experiences; parental over-involvement can be detrimental.
Misspelling Intended Majors or Other Details: Double-check all entries for accuracy to avoid appearing careless.
Leaving Out Important Details: Include all relevant information that showcases your qualifications and fit for the institution.
Sending the Wrong Essay: Verify submission of the correct version of your essay for each application.
Not Sending Updated Test Scores: Ensure all schools receive your most recent and highest test

scores.
Using Unprofessional Email Addresses: Create and use an email address that is appropriate for professional correspondence.

Procrastination: Starting applications late can lead to rushed work; create a timeline to manage tasks effectively.

By avoiding these common mistakes, you can strengthen your college applications and enhance your chances of admission.

Making the Most of a College Interview

The college interview serves as a mutual exchange: it allows you to learn about the institution and enables the interviewer to understand more about you. While the interview is typically not a decisive factor in admissions decisions, it can provide valuable insights to inform your college selection.

Types of Interviews

- **Evaluative vs. Informational**: Determine whether the interview will influence admission decisions (evaluative) or is primarily for your benefit to learn about the college (informational). This knowledge will guide your preparation.

- **Interviewer Profiles**: Understand who will be conducting the interview—be it an admissions counselor, alumnus, student, or another professional—as each may offer different perspectives.

Preparation Strategies

- **Research the Institution**: Familiarize yourself with the college's programs, culture, and values. Prepare thoughtful questions about aspects like internships, study abroad opportunities, career counseling, campus activities, and housing.

- **Self-Assessment**: Reflect on your strengths, weaknesses, learning style, academic achievements, areas of interest, and career aspirations. If undecided, express your openness to exploring various fields.

- **Authenticity**: Be genuine in sharing your experiences, interests, and motivations. Admissions officers value sincerity and a true representation of who you are.

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.

Campus Visit Checklist

Campus Visit Tips

- Plan a full day; overnight visits are ideal.
- Visit when classes are in session.
- Sit in on a class in your intended major.
- Arrange an interview with admissions.
- Take a campus tour and focus on your major's area.
- Talk to students and faculty.
- Check dorms, dining, and student life.
- Observe how students spend their time.

Athlete-Specific Questions

- What clubs/intramural sports are offered?
- Is there athlete-specific housing?
- Is the school Division I, II, III, or NAIA?
- Will sports schedules affect academics?
- What is the athlete graduation rate?
- Are tutors available for athletes?

Music/Art/Theater-Specific Questions

- When are auditions?
- What is the timeline for portfolio submissions?

Housing/Dining

- How many students live on campus?
- Is housing guaranteed for all four years?
- Can you stay in dorms beyond freshman year?
- How does the dining plan work?

Financial Aid/Scholarships/Tuition

- What is the average financial aid package?
- What merit scholarships are available?
- What extra fees are added to tuition?

- When is the financial aid deadline?

Academic/Career

- Is there a language requirement?
- What academic advising is provided?
- Do you offer career services and placement?
- What is the 4-year graduation rate?
- Is there an honors college?

Other

- What's nearby off-campus (restaurants, job opportunities)?
- Are there fraternities/sororities?
- Can freshmen have cars?
- How safe is the campus? Is there campus security?
- What is the student-to-teacher ratio?
- Are there ROTC opportunities?

Chapter 5 : NCAA Information

Initial Eligibility

To practice, compete, and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year at a Division I or II school, you must be certified as eligible by the NCAA Eligibility Center, which assesses both academic and amateurism status. Students targeting Division III are not required to obtain certification from the Eligibility Center.

Test Scores

As of January 2023, NCAA Divisions I and II have removed standardized test scores (SAT/ACT) from initial eligibility requirements. However, individual schools may still require these scores for admission or scholarship considerations.

Grade-Point Average (GPA)

The NCAA calculates your core-course GPA based on NCAA-approved core courses, which may differ from your high school transcript GPA. This calculation uses a 4.0 scale, assigning quality points to each grade (e.g., A = 4, B = 3). Weighted accelerated, college in the high school or advanced placement courses can enhance your core-course GPA if your high school reports them accordingly. In pass/fail scenarios, the Eligibility Center typically assigns the lowest passing grade, often a D, for "Pass" grades.

Core-Course Requirements

To be eligible for Division I sports, you must complete 16 core courses in high school, distributed as follows:

- 4 years of English
- 3 years of mathematics (Algebra I or higher)
- 2 years of natural or physical science (including one lab course)
- 1 additional year of English, math, or science
- 2 years of social science
- 4 years of additional courses (from any category above or foreign language, comparative religion, or philosophy)

For Division II, the requirements are similar, with slight variations in distribution.

NCAA Eligibility FAQs Review GAHS NCAA Approved Course List - CEEB Code: 391510

NCAA DI & DII Fillable Worksheet

2024-2025 Guide for the College-bound student-athletes

For more information, please visit www.ncaa.org

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	✓
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

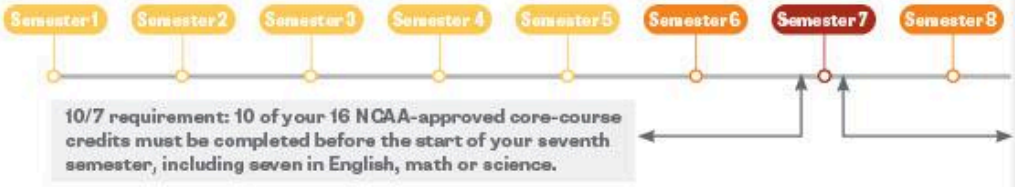
Division I schools require you to meet academic standards. To be eligible to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship in your first year of full-time enrollment, you must meet all the following requirements:

NCAA DIVISION I

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)
4 years	3 years	2 years	1 year	2 years	4 years

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.



The Eligibility Center will use the best combination of core courses to meet the 10/7 requirement. Courses can be repeated or replaced if they are not needed to meet the 10/7 requirement.

» Students with solely international academic credentials (including Canada) are not required to meet the 10/7 requirement.

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 x 4 = 16

9th GRADE	10th GRADE	11th GRADE	12th GRADE
(1) English (1) Math (1) Science (1) Social Science and/or other	(1) English (1) Math (1) Science (1) Social Science and/or other	(1) English (1) Math (1) Science (1) Social Science and/or other	(1) English (1) Math (1) Science (1) Social Science and/or other
4 CORE COURSES	4 CORE COURSES	4 CORE COURSES	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: Common College Terms

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

Early Action: Non-binding application with a typically November deadline; accepted students aren't required to attend.

Early Decision: Binding application for students absolutely sure about their top-choice college; accepted students must attend.

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid): Vital for applying for federal grants, work-study, and loans; used to determine SAI.

Grant/Scholarship: Financial aid that doesn't need to be repaid.

Merit Aid: Financial aid based on high school GPA, SAT scores, or leadership/community involvement; does not require repayment.

Net Price: Remaining cost of college after factoring in the SAI and any grants or scholarships.

Need-Based Aid: Financial aid based on the difference between college costs and the SAI; includes grants, scholarships, or loans.

Regular Decision: Standard application deadline.

Rolling Admission: Applications reviewed as received, with a typically faster review process (4-6 weeks).

Self-Reported Academic Record (SRAR): System for students to self-report high school courses and grades, often used for initial college applications.

Student Aid Index (SAI): Eligibility number used to determine federal student aid, based on information in the FAFSA.

Superscore: Use of the best scores from each section of the SAT or ACT if taken multiple times.

Test-Optional: Colleges that may not require standardized test scores, but may require them for Merit Aid or other scholarships.

Unsubsidized Loan: Loan where interest accrues while the student is in school; the government does not pay interest.

Wait List: Applicants who may be admitted if space becomes available after initial acceptances.

Work-Study: Financial aid given in exchange for campus work; requires completing the FAFSA.

Subsidized Loan: Loan where the government pays interest while the student is in school.

Chapter 7: Financial Aid/Scholarships

All colleges ask you to fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). It is important to also submit the PA State Grant if eligible.

Some colleges require the CSS/Financial Aid Profile - https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/.

Other resources: https://tuitionfit.org/how-it-works/

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

- Attend the Gettysburg College - College & Career Fair (there will be a financial aid presentation in a side room during this event) - date TBD.
- Attend the GAHS Financial Aid Night with PHEAA - date TBD.
- FAFSA is available on Oct 1. Start your application at www.fafsa.gov.
- After completing the FAFSA, complete the PA State Grant application. https://www.pheaa.org/grants/state-grant-program/apply-renew.shtml
- Look for the following:
  - federal financial aid sources
  - private scholarships
  - state and local programs
  - scholarships, including merit and departmental scholarships, offered by colleges
  - Use net price calculators to estimate your family's potential college costs

Winter

- Make sure you know when the college's deadlines are for financial aid applications.
- 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.
- Use online tools to help you understand and compare your aid packages

Spring

- Compare college costs using a personalized spreadsheet
- 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, do not have to be repaid and can reduce the cost of college.

Check the Counseling Center Website and Counseling Center 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 8: Vocational, Trade, and Technical Programs

Application Process for Vocational, Trade and Technical Programs:

- Individual college websites online applications.
- Visit the schools you are interested in attending.
- Request official high school transcripts to be sent to the schools.
- Meet with an advisor.
- Attend new student orientation

List of Vocational / Trade/ Technical Opportunities in the area (this list is to serve as starting point - there are additional programs not shown here):

Academy for Media Production - AMP

Adult & Continuing Education Center at York County School of Technology

Carroll Community College

Central Penn College

Champ's Barber School

Empire Beauty Schools

Franklin County Career & Tech Center

Hagerstown Community College

Harrisburg Area Community College - HACC

Independent Electrical Contractors of PA

Pennsylvania College of Art & Design

Pennsylvania College of Health Sciences

Pennsylvania College of Technology - a Penn State Affiliate

Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics - PIA

Sage School - Truck Driving - CDL

Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology

Universal Technical Institute

Walnut Hill College

WORLD A CUTS Barber Institute

York Electrical Institute

York Technical Institute

Welding & Fabrication Technology, Chambersburg (Lackawanna College)

Other programs and graduate options: Keystone Job Corps, Gap or Service Year

Resources: PA in demand jobs, PA High Priority Occupation List

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

The U.S. Coast Guard does not have an ROTC program, but it offers the College Student Pre-Commissioning Initiative (CSPI), a scholarship and leadership program similar to ROTC.

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.

Military Recruiting Offices -

Army National Guard
1200 Fairfield Rd
Gettysburg, PA 17325
717-885-3646

Air National Guard
76 Constellation Court
Middletown, PA 17057
717-948-2200

US Air Force/US Space Force
1000 Carlisle St.
Hanover, PA 17331
717-632-9663

US Coast Guard
Forty West Plaza, 3904
6499 Baltimore National Pike
Catonsville, MD 21228
206-815-6105

US Army Recruiting Center
1000 Carlisle St.
Hanover, PA 17331
717-637-2769

US Marine Corps
1000 Carlisle St.
Hanover, PA 17331
717-637-3115

US Navy

Chapter 10: Joining the Workforce

Develop a Career Plan: Identify your career goals and research the necessary training, education, and skills.

Assess Your Skills and Interests: Consider what you enjoy, what you're good at, and what work environment suits you (e.g., indoor vs. outdoor, structured vs. flexible hours).

Research Occupations: Learn about job roles, salary expectations, education requirements, working conditions, and job outlook.

Learn Job-Hunting Strategies: Explore where to find job listings, network with community contacts, and use job search engines.

Prepare Your Resume & Practice Interviews: Create a polished resume and practice answering common interview questions.

Utilize PA CareerLink: Connect with a representative for job assistance, career counseling, and training opportunities.

Gain Experience: Look for internships, apprenticeships, part-time jobs, or volunteer opportunities to build relevant experience.

Understand Employment Basics: Learn about workers' rights, benefits, taxes, and professional etiquette.

Develop Soft Skills: Employers value communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability.

Online Resources:

https://www.pacareerzone.org/ - Learn about careers that fit you and the steps to reach your goals

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

https://www.apprenticeship.gov/ - Trades / Apprenticeship

https://www.careeronestop.org/ - *Excellent Resource for Career Exploration*

https://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip - Career Exploration (simplified version of O*Net online)

https://www.onetonline.org/ - Career Exploration

https://www.bls.gov/ooh/ - Occupational Outlook Handbook

www.educationplanner.org - PHEAA EdPlanner

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

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

Our current roster of available HACC CHS courses:

- 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 Anatomy and Physiology (4 HACC credits, BIOL 121)
- HACC CHS Intro to Software for Business (3 HACC credits, CIS 105)
- HACC CHS Business 101 (3 HACC credits, BUSI 101)

Our current roster of available Carlow University CHS courses:

- Carlow CHS Accounting I
- Carlow CHS Accounting II

Our current roster of available Harrisburg University CHS courses:

- Biology (This is an optional course when taking AP Biology, refer to Course Guide)
- Environmental Science
- Introduction to Drone Technology and Applications

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 Human Geography
- AP US History
- AP World History
- AP US Government & Politics
- AP Psychology
- AP Biology
- AP Chemistry I & II
- AP Physics C: Mechanics
- AP Calculus AB
- AP Calculus BC
- AP Statistics
- AP Seminar 10 ELA
- AP English 11 Language
- AP English 12 Literature
- AP Spanish
- AP Art (2D, 3D, & Drawing)

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 (2024-2025 cost).

**IMPORTANT: To ensure your college earned credits are reviewed by the college/university you plan to attend, you must contact the college directly to request your official transcript. Though your HACC, Carlow and HU CHS courses will show on your GAHS transcript, the college/university will only accept an official college/university 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: College Information for Students with Disabilities

- 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

Online resources:

https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html - Students with Disabilities Preparing for Post-Secondary Educaiton

http://dreampartnership.org/options-for-college/ - for students with intellectual disabilities

GETTYSBURG AREA HIGH SCHOOL
PLANNING GUIDE

Name:	**Post Secondary Goal:** ____ **4-Year College/University** ____ **2-Year College Technical/Trade/Community College** ____ **Military** ____ **Full Time Employment**
Career Goal:	

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

Additional Resources

11th Grade Planning Timeline

11th Grade Family Action Plan

https://studentaid.gov/- Free Applications for Federal Student Aid - FAFSA

https://www.pheaa.org/grants/state-grant-program/ - PA State Grant

https://goingmerry.com/ - scholarship search engine

http://www.fastweb.com/ - scholarship search engine

https://www.scholarships.com/ - scholarship search engine

https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/bigfuture-scholarships - scholarship search engine

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

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

https://collegewise.com/resources - free webinars for college-bound students and parents

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.

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.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

https://www.apprenticeship.gov/ - Trades / Apprenticeship

https://www.careeronestop.org/ - *Excellent Resource for Career Exploration*

https://www.mynextmove.org/explore/ip - Career Exploration (simplified version of O*Net online)

https://www.onetonline.org/ - Career Exploration

https://www.bls.gov/ooh/ - Occupational Outlook Handbook

www.educationplanner.org - PHEAA EdPlanner