HIGHLAND HIGH SCHOOL

CLASS of 2027

College Planning Guide

Highland High School
College Planning Guide

Important Information

Highland High School/CEEB Code:
332-370

School Counseling Office Phone Number:
845-691-1021
High School Fax Number:
845-691-1043

Address:
Highland High School
320 Pancake Hollow Road
Highland, NY 12528
Website: www.highland-k12.org

Mrs. Heather Laubach (A-E): hlaubach@highland-k12.org
Mrs. Danielle Garcia (F-Q): dgarcia@highland-k12.org
Mrs. Kristin Candia (R-Z) kcandia@highland-k12.org

Naviance Student
www.student.naviance.com/highllhs
Common Application
www.commonapp.org
College Board (SAT Program):
Phone: 610-227-2550
Online: www.collegeboard.org
ACT:
Phone: 319-337-1270
Online: **www.actstudent.org**

HIGHLAND HIGH SCHOOL
COLLEGE PLANNING GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

The college application process can seem overwhelming. However, if you follow the systematic approach that is recommended in this guide and work closely with your counselor, you will easily navigate the entire process one step at a time.

Please keep in mind that ***meeting all deadlines*** is critical to your success throughout the process.

We encourage you to read the book in its entirety prior to beginning the process. It will then be helpful to refer to and consult each section as you approach and complete each step. Of course, your School Counselor is readily available to assist you at any time throughout the process. We look forward to working with you as you begin this new and exciting venture!

Prepared by the Highland High School's School Counseling Office

JUNIOR YEAR COLLEGE TIMELINE

October

- ✓ Take the PSATs

December

- ✓ Review PSAT results
- ✓ Practice for the SAT

January/February/March

- ✓ Attend College Info Day for Juniors- Alumni Panel
- ✓ Start your college search- make a list of abilities, preferences, qualities
- ✓ Meet with counselor for college conference (Junior meeting)
- ✓ Register for a SAT Prep Course (to prep for May test) and/or
- ✓ Register for an ACT Online Prep
- ✓ Register for May SAT/April ACT

April

- ✓ Make a list of 15-20 colleges that interest you (identify your priorities) and add them to "Colleges I'm Thinking About" in Naviance Student
- ✓ Attend Highland High School's College Fair and/or other college fairs in the area (check with School Counseling Office for a listing)
- ✓ Begin visiting colleges
- ✓ Begin working on the Student Survey for Counselor Recommendation on Naviance Student
- ✓ Schedule a follow-up meeting with your counselor re: college search if needed
- ✓ Research your colleges online
- ✓ Register for June SAT
- ✓ Take ACT

May

- ✓ Take SAT
- ✓ Plan summer activities early- volunteer, get an internship, sign up for summer learning programs

June

- ✓ Take SAT or ACT
- ✓ Complete Student Survey for Counselor Recommendation in Naviance Student
- ✓ Register for August SAT
- ✓ If you are an athlete anticipating participating in Division I or II athletics in college, complete your registration with NCAA Eligibility Center (https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/)

Summer

- ✓ Continue visiting colleges- take campus tours, schedule interviews with admission counselors.
- ✓ Check application deadlines for those colleges you are interested in applying to
- ✓ Take SAT &/or ACT
- ✓ Begin to record thoughts for application essays.

SENIOR YEAR COLLEGE TIMELINE

September

- ✓ Register for October or November SAT/ACT
- ✓ Continue visiting colleges
- ✓ Narrow list of potential colleges (4-8). Add them to your application list in Naviance Student
- ✓ Begin looking over college applications/Financial Aid information
- ✓ Register for a SAT Prep Course (to prep for November test)
- ✓ Ask for recommendations from teachers/counselor
- ✓ Write application essay
- ✓ Begin scholarship search (see page 19 for resources and use Naviance Student)

October

- ✓ **Early Decision/Early Action Applications (ED/EA) applicants:** Begin application(s)
- ✓ **Early Decision/Early Action Applications (ED/EA) applicants:** Add college(s) to Application list on Naviance Student
- ✓ **Early Decision/Early Action Applications (ED/EA) applicants:** If using the Common Application, match Common Application to Naviance Student (in Naviance Student) (Step 5 in Manage Applications)
- ✓ **Early Decision/Early Action Applications (ED/EA) applicants:** Request transcripts in Naviance Student
- ✓ Attend College Fairs in the area (check with the School Counseling Office for a listing)
- ✓ Register for December SAT or ACT if needed
- ✓ Attend Financial Aid Night at HHS
- ✓ Apply for Financial Aid- submit the FAFSA as soon as possible. Visit www.fafsa.ed.gov to apply
- ✓ Complete CSS Profile if required by college

November

- ✓ Review final list of 4-8 colleges with Counselor
- ✓ **Regular/Rolling Deadlines Applicants:** Begin applications
- ✓ **Regular/Rolling Deadlines Applicants:** Add college(s) to Application list in Naviance Student
- ✓ **Regular/Rolling Deadlines Applicants:** If using the Common Application, match Common Application to Naviance Student (in Naviance Student) (Step 5 in Manage Applications)
- ✓ **Regular/Rolling Deadlines Applicants:** Request transcripts in Naviance Student

December

- ✓ Send all applications with January 1st & Rolling deadlines before December break
- ✓ Continue working on applications that have a deadline of February 1st or later
- ✓ Request transcripts in Naviance Student for all remaining/additional colleges you are applying to

January-June

- ✓ Continue scholarship searching
- ✓ Complete all financial aid forms required by the colleges you are applying to

April-May

- ✓ Complete all required paperwork for the college you will be attending
- ✓ If you are an athlete anticipating participating in Division I or II athletics in college, complete your registration with NCAA Eligibility Center (https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/)

June

- ✓ If you have taken any dual enrollment courses through SUNY Ulster or New Paltz while in high school, request your college transcript from each college. Have them sent directly to the college you are attending.

COLLEGE APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Prior to Senior year:

- ❑ Review all information in this College Planning Guide.
- ❑ Complete Student Survey for Counselor Letter of Recommendation in "About Me" section of ***Naviance Student***.
- ❑ Ask your parent to complete Parent Survey for Counselor Letter of Recommendation in "About Me" section of ***Naviance Student***.
- ❑ Return the **Authorization for Release of Records**, signed by a parent/guardian, to your counselor
- ❑ Periodically review Junior Timeline to make sure you stay on track.

September – December of Senior year:

- ❑ Review Senior Timeline
- ❑ Add colleges to your list of *"Colleges I'm Applying To"* in ***Naviance Student***.
- ❑ If required, **verbally** request a Letter of Recommendation from your teacher(s) and School Counselor. Give at least four weeks' notice. Remember that your counselor and teachers often have requests from several students at once, and they need time to complete them.
- ❑ Begin completing college applications. If using the Common Application, follow steps in ***Naviance Student*** to "Match" the Common Application to ***Naviance Student*** (Counselor/Teacher documents cannot be uploaded to the Common Application until this step has been completed).
- ❑ Request teacher/counselor Letter(s) of Recommendation through ***Naviance Student***. (Your School Counselor will be happy to keep a copy of your Letters of Recommendation in your file in case you need them mailed somewhere else in the future.) Most colleges allow teachers/school counselors to submit your letter of recommendation electronically. Make sure to check the application procedures with the institution(s) you are applying to. If the teacher must submit your letter by mail be sure to give the teacher a stamped, pre-addressed envelope in which to mail the letter. It is not necessary to do this for the School Counseling Office.
- ❑ Complete a Transcript Request through ***Naviance Student*** for each college you apply to. You will find the Request Transcript link under *"Colleges I'm Applying To"* (in *"Colleges"* section).
- ❑ Contact the official testing agency for SAT/ACT to send your scores to colleges/universities. SAT/ACT scores are <u>not</u> placed on the high school transcript.
- ❑ If your application deadline is before the first marking period is over, request that your first quarter grades be sent once they are available.

<u>After Applications are submitted:</u>

- Your School Counselor will automatically send Mid-year Report and End-of-Year Report (including transcripts).
- Check with the teachers to make sure your Letters of Recommendation are submitted/sent on time.
- You are responsible for making sure the college(s) receive all your materials.
- Please let your counselor know when you have been accepted to a college and where you decide to attend. Also be sure to indicate this information in ***Naviance Student*** for accurate record keeping.

Naviance Student

Naviance Student is a comprehensive website that you can use to make plans about colleges and careers. It is linked with ***Naviance***™, a service that the School Counseling office uses to track and analyze data about our students' college and career plans, so it provides up-to-date information that is specific to our school.

Earlier in high school, we used ***Naviance Student*** with you to complete the Strengths Explorer and to research careers. As juniors and seniors, students will use ***Naviance Student*** to research colleges, manage applications and request transcripts.

To get to ***Naviance Student***, you can go to ClassLink and click on the Naviance Icon. Click on the Student icon and then "continue with Single Sign On" to log in to your account.

Using Naviance Student to Research Colleges

1. Once you have logged in, click on the "Colleges" section
2. Click on "Advanced College Search" or "SuperMatch College Search" located in the Find Your Fit section
3. Select any criteria that will help you narrow down your results, such as Type of School, Location, Major, etc. When you have finished selecting your criteria, click "Show Matches".
4. A list of colleges that match your criteria will appear. Save and title your search to come back to it later.
5. Click on any school name to learn more details about it, such as General Information, Admissions Details, Financial Aid opportunities, and Student Life.
6. If you find colleges that you'd like to save, click on heart next to the name of the college. These colleges will be saved to the "Colleges I'm Thinking About" section.
7. Later, if you decide to apply to any of these colleges, you can move them into the "Colleges I'm Applying To" section by checking the box next to the name of the school and clicking "Move to Application List".

Using Naviance Student to Research Scholarships

1. Once you have logged in, click on the "Colleges" section ("Scholarships and Money" option in the drop-down menu). Click on "Scholarship Search".
2. You will find a list of scholarships that we have received information about. Click on the name of the scholarship to find out what the eligibility requirements and application details are.
3. Either click on the scholarship's website to apply or upload the application directly from the description page.
4. You may also use "National Scholarship Search" in the same drop-down menu and answer the scholarship search questions.

Using Naviance Student to Manage Applications

1. Once you have logged in, click on "Colleges" section.

2. Click on "Colleges I'm Applying To" under Apply to Colleges

3. Add colleges to your application list by clicking on "+" sign

4. Type college name in the box and answer related questions, if you can, and click the "Add Application" button

   -OR-

   Match your Common Application with Naviance Student by following the steps in the **Common App Account Matching** button at the top of your Naviance page. This will automatically add all the colleges you have listed in your Common Application.

5. **TO REQUEST A TRANSCRIPT:** Before you can request that your transcript be sent to any colleges, you must return the **Authorization For Release of Records form** signed by your parent/guardian (given to you at your Junior meeting). Once the Guidance Office has indicated its receipt in the data system, you may request that we send your transcripts out to the colleges. To do this, click on "request transcripts" above your list of colleges. Your counselor will receive your request and will send your transcript either electronically or by mail, as indicated by the colleges.

6. **TO REQUEST TEACHER LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION:** If your school requires one or more recommendation letters**, you must first ask your teachers in person.** Once a teacher has agreed to write you a letter of recommendation, you must add a request through ***Naviance Student***. Go to Colleges and click on "Letters of Recommendation" under the "Apply to Colleges" section. Click on "Add Request". Select each teacher from the drop-down menu. Indicate which college(s) you would like the letter to be sent to. You may add a personal note to the teacher if you wish. Click "Submit Request". The teacher will receive an email indicating that you have sent them a formal request through ***Naviance Student***. Teachers will then be able to either upload their letters and send them to your colleges electronically or mail them, as indicated by the colleges. Important: For Common App schools, your teacher will not be able to send your letter until you sign the FERPA waiver on your Common App.

7. **TO REQUEST A COUNSELOR LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION:** In your senior meeting, your School Counselor will address whether you will need a counselor letter of recommendation. This will depend on the requirements of each college you plan to apply to. If you have not completed the "Survey for Counselor Letter of Recommendation" this should be done as soon as possible. Please also be sure to ask your parent to complete the "Parent Survey for Counselor Recommendation" located in Naviance Student. To do so, click on the "About Me" section. From the drop-down menu, choose "Surveys From Your School". Once your surveys are complete, you should notify your School Counselor in person or via email. Your counselor will then write your letter of recommendation and submit it where required.

College Admission Criteria
(In a nutshell)

Please remember that colleges look at "the whole person" when making their decisions among thousands of applicants. Contrary to popular belief, they do not rely solely on an SAT/ACT score, which is but one factor in the big picture. The criteria that most admissions teams use include the following:

1. Three-year high school average
2. Level of academic difficulty of courses and number of courses taken
3. Senior mid-year grades
4. SAT scores or ACT scores
5. Essay(s) and/or personal statement
6. Recommendations from teachers and school counselor
7. School and community activities
8. Work experience
9. College interview
10. State residency status
11. Alumni or legacy status (i.e., Did a parent attend the school where you are applying?)
12. Portfolio, audio files, or audition (if you have any special talents)

A recent survey of members of the National Association of College Admission Counselors provides the following information:

Admission Factor	Percentage of Colleges Reporting Considerable or Moderate Importance
Grades in all courses	74%
Grades in college prep courses	77%
Strength of curriculum	64%
Admission test scores (SAT/ACT)	5%
Essay/writing sample	19%
Counselor recommendation	12%
Teacher recommendation	11%
Extracurricular Activities	7%
Student's demonstrated interest	16%
Class Rank	5%
Work	2%
AP/IB scores	1%
Interview	4%
Portfolio	5%
State graduation exam scores	2%

Keep in mind that colleges have other priorities that impact student admission such as: students of color, geographical mix, talent mix, athletes, and overall diversity of student body.

Admission Decisions: What Counts?

There is no magic formula when it comes to college admission decisions. A college's statistics, however, should never be taken as rules for admission, though.

You should know that many factors influence admission decisions, including:

- Courses taken
- Grades received
- Class rank
- Standardized test scores
- Personal statements and essays
- Recommendations
- Extracurricular activities
- Interviews

Which factors most affect the admission decision?

Many small, selective colleges pay greater attention to personal statements and essays, teacher and counselor recommendations, leadership experiences and the individual talents of applicants. They typically offer the chance for a face-to-face interview.

Large, public state university systems often use a mathematical formula based on a student's grade point average (GPA) and scores on the SAT or ACT. They tend to favor in-state applicants.

Regardless of the college's evaluation system, you should present a well-rounded picture of your skills, experience, and personal traits. Applications should highlight your ability to succeed at each institution and what you can contribute to student life on campus.

Courses and grades

A student's **grades in college-preparatory classes remain the most significant factor** in college admission decisions.

Highly selective colleges look for students who:

- Complete core academic requirements.
- Take more challenging classes, even though they may have slightly lower grades than they'd achieve in lower-level courses.
- Enroll in several college-prep or college-level courses (such as AP®) and perform well.
- Take four years of a world language, showing evidence of academic discipline and challenge.

Class rank

Although still reviewed by many colleges, class rank has declined in significance as many private and religious schools have eliminated student ranking.

Test scores

Standardized test scores remain important at many colleges. Examinations such as the SAT or the ACT, allow colleges to compare students from across the country. There are many colleges that are test optional. Students are not required to submit standardized tests scores for these schools.

Essays

Personal statements and essays are both a measure of writing ability and a window into each student's background. Admission officers want to hear an original voice in the student's own words. For a successful essay, be sure to get to the point quickly and personalize your writing through specific examples.

Recommendations from counselors and teachers

At selective colleges, strong school support in the form of recommendations from counselors and faculty members has become more important than ever. These **recommendations should be highly specific**, describing not just each student's love of learning, but the ways in which the students have demonstrated that they can

- Add to the classroom experience.
- Challenge themselves.
- Attempt original projects.

Extracurricular activities

Evidence of extracurricular activities is important to the admission process, and **depth of involvement is more impressive than breadth**. Students can achieve this if they

- Focus on a limited number of interests.
- Document long-term involvement with organizations.
- Highlight activities related to a major or career goal.
- Show leadership skills and ability.

Additional factors to consider

Many colleges set aside spaces for students who may not meet traditional criteria but will add to the class diversity. Geographic location, racial or ethnic background, extenuating or unusual life circumstances and experience living or studying overseas may all be influential. Evidence suggests that in some cases applying early decision may also increase the chances of admission.

Resource: CollegeBoard.org

Who Decides Your Fate?

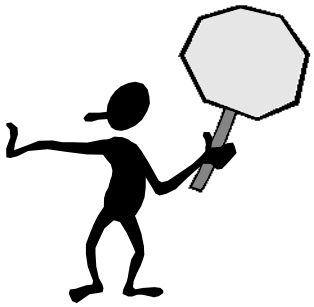
If you have not thought about this question already, you will at some point during the next few months. Many students feel powerless, if not fearful, that complete strangers, called admissions counselors, will determine their future for a fulfilling life. Conversely, some students feel relieved that someone who has never shared homerooms or pretended to know them will be reading their applications. In any case, it may prove generally reassuring to have a sense of who these admission people are.

Admission counselors are humane, thoughtful, and sensitive people who seek to be fair and consistent in their decision- making. Sure, there may be some emotionless number-crunchers and impulsive mavericks, but most admission staffs reflect the very diversity they seek in their freshman classes. Usually, admission staff members come from a variety of interests from athletics to science to the arts.

They understand that the subtlest difference can have a profound impact on a student's "admissibility," and so they make a considerable effort to give each application its due. There is nothing at all mysterious about these decision-makers. They are human like you. Or, to put it another way, there is a reason they are called admission, not rejection, counselors.

Do these real everyday people function as a team or as individuals? That depends on the school. Some colleges make all decisions in a committee (which may include faculty and students), seeking a majority opinion on each candidate. Others assign each candidate to an individual counselor, who makes a decision with only the dean or director serving as a second opinion. Still other schools have individual counselors select the finalists, and then a committee reviews the finalists and determines who wins admission.

Before You Begin…
The Most Important Step



Some Food for Thought

"Picking a college is an important decision because the experience can greatly affect the quality of one's future. It can be the most exciting four years of your life. On the other hand, you can plod through largely untouched and unaffected. Many teenagers give more thought to learning to drive than to picking a college. Confront yourself honestly. Why, really, are you going…for fun or for some other reason? What are your abilities and strengths? What are your weaknesses? What do you want out of life, or in life, something tangible or intangible? Are you supremely confident or hesitantly unsure of yourself? Do you want to give or to get? Are you a self-starter or in need of nurture and structure? Are you socially self-sufficient, marching to your own drummer, or do you need warm, familial support? Do you live in the fast track? And so on. If the student doesn't look to him/herself, s/he is vulnerable to herd thinking – one of the principle causes of bad decisions. It takes both clarity and courage to look at oneself probingly and then to make decisions based on what one sees there and not be influenced by friends or classmates. After you have questioned yourself you can effectively choose a college; but only after you have examined it, too."

-Lauren Pope (Author of Looking Beyond the Ivy League and Colleges that Change Lives)

"Most people think of college as preparation for a profession, a job, or graduate school. But it is also a chunk of life – six percent of our days and years. Here we make lifelong friends. We discover intellectual strengths. We begin to forge a philosophy. It can be a peak experience, exciting and enjoyable. Finding the right college is a project in itself and is not one to be taken lightly. Since it is you who will attend, and not some statistical average, you must spend time determining your needs. What, for example, do you want out of college? What kind of person are you? What are your likes and dislikes, hopes and ambitions? Are you gregarious or solitary? Have you decided on a career, or are you still searching?

Often students pick a college more or less at random, on the chance recommendation of a friend or because of a well-known name. They commit themselves to spending four crucial years in an environment chosen by accident. It's four years of your life. With planning and forethought, you can make them the best."

-Dr. John Brooks Slaughter (President, Occidental College)

College Board
SAT Test Dates
Collegeboard.org

TEST DATE:	REGISTRATION DEADLINE:
Mar 14, 2026	February 27, 2026
May 2, 2026	April 17, 2026
June 6, 2026	May 22, 2026

Anticipated SAT Test Dates for 2026-27

August 15, 2026

September 12, 2026

November 7, 2026

December 5, 2026

The Digital SAT

The SAT is a standardized test. Standardized tests help college admissions officers make fair and informed decisions about which student they accept. They test the subject matter that students have learned in high school and how well they apply that knowledge. The SAT assesses a student's problem-solving skills.
There are **TWO** required Sections on the SAT: Reading and Writing and Math. Each section is out of 800 points. Students have 64 minutes to complete the Reading and Writing section and 70 minutes to complete the Math section for a total of 2 hours and 14 minutes.

Each section is divided into 2 equal length modules, and there is a 10-minute break between the Reading and Writing section and the Math section. The first module of each section contains a broad mix of easy, medium, and hard questions. Based on how students perform on the first module, the second module of questions will either be more difficult or less difficult.

The Reading and Writing Section

- This section focuses on vocabulary you'll come across often in college classes. They always appear as part of a text passage, so you can put your problem-solving skills to work figuring out what they mean.
- This section asks you to interpret, synthesize, and use evidence in real-world sources from history, social sciences, and science.

The Math Section

- This section tests essential areas of math, like data analysis and algebra. It's the math you will need no matter what major or career you choose.

Please remember the SAT is one factor out of many. The transcript is the most important piece of the college application. You can find more information on the SAT by speaking with your school counselor or visiting the College Board website (www.collegeboard.org).

The BEST way to prepare for the SAT is to focus on what you are doing in school, read extensively, take the PSAT, if you can take an SAT prep course, and use the free practice resources at the following website:
www.sat.collegeboard.org/practice.
https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/digital/digital-practice-preparation/practice-tests/bluebook
www.khanacademy.org

Everything about the new Digital SAT can be found at the link below.
https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/digital

You can register online for the SAT at www.sat.collegeboard.org.

Adapted from the College Board

The ACT

What is ACT?

The ACT assessment, or A-C-T as it is more commonly known, is a national college admission examination that consists of tests in English, Math, Reading, and Science Reasoning. An optional writing test is also available. Scores range from 0-36.

Many students choose to take the ACT instead of the SAT, and ACT results are accepted by virtually all U. S. colleges and universities. Last year, almost 2 million students took the ACT.

The ACT consists of 215 multiple-choice questions and takes approximately four hours to complete, including breaks. The optional writing test adds another 30 minutes to the overall test.

In the U. S., the ACT is given on 6 national test dates in September, October, February, April, June and July.

Why should I take the ACT?

There are at least four reasons to consider taking the ACT:

- The ACT tests are universally accepted for college admission. The ACT is now accepted by virtually all colleges and universities in the U.S., including all the Ivy League schools.
- The ACT assessment test is curriculum based. It is not an aptitude or IQ test. Instead, the questions on the ACT are directly related to what you have learned in your high school courses in English, Math, and Science. Because the ACT is based on what is taught in the high school curriculum, students are generally more comfortable with the ACT than they are with the traditional aptitude tests or tests with narrower content.
- The ACT is a good value. As a private, nonprofit organization governed by educators, ACT is committed to providing services at the lowest possible cost.
- The ACT is more than a test. It also provides test takers with a unique interest inventory that provides valuable information for career and educational planning.

The BEST way to prepare for the ACT is to focus on what you are doing in school, read extensively, if you can sign up for the ACT online prep course, and use the free practice resources at the following website: www.actstudent.org.

You can register online for the ACT at www.actstudent.org.

2026 Test Dates:	Registration Deadlines:
Feb 14	Jan 9
April 11	Mar 6
June 13	May 8
July 11	June 5

A GUIDE TO APPLY TO A TEST-OPTIONAL COLLEGE

More than 1,200 U.S. colleges are test-optional, meaning the college doesn't require test scores, at least not from most students.

Because many SAT and ACT testing dates have been cancelled or postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some colleges have adopted test-optional or test-flexible policies or plan to de-emphasize standardized test scores when reviewing undergraduate applications this fall. These colleges include the entire University of California system, Williams College, USC, and Tufts University, to name a few. The shift to test-optional admissions may be permanent at some colleges and temporary at others.

If you are not a great test-taker or think your test scores don't accurately reflect your abilities as a student, you might consider applying to test-optional schools. Here are four things to know before you take that step.

1. THERE ARE DIFFERENT TYPES OF TEST-OPTIONAL SCHOOLS

A test-optional college lets students decide whether they want to submit test scores with their application. Most test-optional schools will consider SAT and ACT scores if they are submitted but focus on other factors, they believe are stronger predictors of a student's potential to succeed in college. These schools look at a student's essays, recommendations, grades, and coursework just as (or more) closely than your test scores.

A test-flexible college lets students submit other test scores in place of the SAT or ACT, such as one or more SAT Subject Tests, an International Baccalaureate exam, or Advanced Placement test.

A test-blind college will not consider test scores, even if you submit them.

2. TEST-OPTIONAL POLICIES DIFFER FROM COLLEGE TO COLLEGE

Some test-optional policies come with restrictions. For example:

Some colleges require test scores for out-of-state or international students, or for students pursuing certain majors.

Some test-optional schools may determine your test-optional eligibility using an index calculated from your GPA, test scores, and class rank.

Some schools may ask you to submit test scores for placement in the freshman class or to take a placement exam.

Some may ask for additional materials instead of test scores, such as samples of your academic work, scientific research, or additional recommendation letters.

Due to COVID-19, many colleges have changed or lifted some of these restrictions, so be sure to check with the college to confirm how it will use test scores in the admissions process.

3. OTHER PARTS OF YOUR APPLICATION WILL BE CLOSELY SCRUTINIZED

Colleges want as much information about you as possible. So, without test scores, it's likely that other parts of your application -- your grades and grade trends, essays, extracurricular activities, and achievements -- must be strong enough to make the college want to admit you.

4. TEST SCORES MIGHT BE REQUIRED FOR MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS

Many test-optional colleges look at test scores when awarding merit scholarships, so not submitting them might put you at a disadvantage. Be sure to confirm all scholarship requirements before applying.

HOW TO FIND OUT WHICH COLLEGES ARE TEST-OPTIONAL

Go to Fair Test for an up-to-date list of accredited colleges and universities that do not use or de-emphasize ACT/SAT scores in their college admissions process. You'll see a number of well-known and selective colleges and universities on this list, such as Bates, Bowdoin, Wake Forest, Wesleyan, Bucknell, University of Chicago, and Mount Holyoke. In fact, entire university systems have gone test-optional, such as the California State University and University of Texas systems.

Learning About & Visiting Different Colleges

- Resources Available
- College Information on the Internet
- General Advice on Planning a College Visit
- The Admissions Interview

Resources

There is a wealth of information available to teach you about the unique aspects of each college or university. As you spend time reading and researching, you will begin to narrow your list of colleges to the four to eight to which you will apply.

- **Viewbooks** – Every college publishes a viewbook, which is a magazine-type publication that provides a general overview of the college, including pictures, and answers most frequently asked questions. You can request a viewbook directly from the college.
- **College Website** – Explore each college's website, which includes detailed information such as tuition and all fees, academic calendar, requirements for every major offered, course descriptions, campus policies, etc.
- **Internet Search sites**– A great way to research colleges. There are many different search engines to use to help in the college search process. Highland High School uses Naviance Student (https://student.naviance.com/highlhs). More search sites follow on the next page.

Bookstores offer many publications about the college admissions process, the application essay, SAT preparation, etc.

College visits – Every fall many colleges send representatives to Highland High School so that students can meet with them in small groups to learn of the different offerings and requirements at each college. Dates and times are announced and advertised in the Counseling Office and on Naviance Student. Students are strongly encouraged to attend these brief but informative meetings. It is also a great way to make a "connection" with someone at a college that may interest you. You can register to meet with college reps when they visit our school on Naviance. A complete list of college visits can be found on your Colleges Home page under College Visits.

College Open Houses – During the fall, and sometimes in the spring, many colleges host an open house at their campus, during which time you and your family may meet with different college representatives, take a tour of the campus, talk with students, and attend brief information sessions.

College fairs – Hundreds of colleges send representatives who will answer questions, put you on their mailing lists, and provide you with viewbooks, catalogs, and other free information. Please stop by to find out when and where these fairs will be held.

Helpful College Information Websites

The Internet has several sites available for learning about the college application process, different schools, financial aid, SATs, etc. *Please note below just a few of the many websites available.*

https://student.naviance.com/highlhs - Each HHS student has an account in order to search for colleges, careers, and scholarships. Students can also build their own resume and save everything to their profile.

www.fairtest.org – Find a list of the 1,800+ colleges/universities that do not require SAT/ACT scores.

www.collegeboard.org - Lots of useful information about campus visits, interviews, SATs, scholarships and other parts of the college search process.

www.petersons.com - Peterson's free online service to all students. College searches, grad school searches, scholarship searches, test prep

www.princetonreview.com - A search engine with several variables including location, academics, sports, student life, and housing.

www.collegeXpress.com **-** Great information on thousands of colleges, "ask the expert", and lots of advice on the transition to college.

www.khanacademy.org - Offers practice exercises, instructional videos, and a personalized learning dashboard that empower learners to study at their own pace in and outside of the classroom. They focus on subjects such as math, science, and SAT prep.

www.kaplan.com – Extensive test prep.

www.fastweb.com - The Internet's largest free scholarship search; thorough and extensive site regarding everything relating to financial aid and scholarships. Also includes a college search section and career planning section.

www.finaid.org - The most complete financial aid site available.

www.college-scholarships.com – There are more than 40 free on-line search sites listing thousands of scholarships and financial aid awards worth billions of dollars.

www.usnews.com - College rankings, advice from high school counselors and financial aid experts, a comprehensive college search engine, and college links galore.

https://hesc.ny.gov – A guide to understanding financial aid. Also prepare for college with
step-by-step planning tips to help you stay on track. Learn everything from taking the right classes, finding the right college, writing your college essay, and submitting your applications on time.

https://www.niche.com – College & Scholarship Search website.

www.suny.edu – A resource for the SUNY system to find the right SUNY campus for you of the 64 different institutions.

General Advice on Planning A College Visit

1. **Visit colleges starting as early as April of your junior year**. In the fall, return to those colleges that interest you most for a day of visiting classes, talking with students, staying overnight, etc.

2. **We recommend that you limit yourself to no more than two campus visits a day.** In order to get a sense of the unique qualities of a campus, it is important for you to be relaxed and spend several hours touring the campus and talking with members of the college community. If you feel rushed and worried about timing, your visit will be less effective. Reserving an entire day and even scheduling an overnight stay on campus will give you the maximum opportunity to thoroughly explore campus life. Make sure to take a drive around the surrounding community too!

3. **Schedule your college visit using the college's freshman admission webpage**. Try to schedule your visit well in advance of your desired arrival date. Many states are popular summer vacation sites, and it can be difficult to make lodging reservations without at least one month's notice. Scheduling interviews should also be done at least one month in advance.

4. **Make a trip out of it**. See the sites while you are there and be sure to explore the surrounding area.

Strategies for Visiting Colleges

Begin your visit at the Admissions Office. You may receive the following:

- ✓ Map of the campus
- ✓ List of the day's activities
- ✓ A school newspaper
- ✓ A campus tour schedule
- ✓ Information session timetable

Speak to students on campus about:

- ✓ Their likes and dislikes
- ✓ Quality of professors
- ✓ Social life
- ✓ Academic pressure
- ✓ Type of food
- ✓ Dorm life
- ✓ Campus security
- ✓ Key campus issues
- ✓ Extra-curricular activities

Take good notes after each visit (see following worksheet).

Campus Visit Notes Worksheet

Name of College:_____**Date of Visit:**_____

General Impressions:

Best thing about this college was:

Academic Offerings:
How is the curriculum structured? What are the strongest programs? Are there rigid requirements? What are the offerings in your field of interest?

Campus Facilities:
What was the appearance of the campus? Are the facilities modern and accessible? Where has the college spent its money (on classrooms, athletic facilities, dormitories, library)?

Location:
What are the plusses and minuses of the college's location?

Social Life:
What is the overall social environment on campus? Does it tend to be Greek-oriented, centered on athletics, intellectually and culturally alive?

Student Body:
If you visit in the summer, be sure not to judge a college by just one tour guide. If you visit when classes are in session, what impressions did the students leave you with? Are they outgoing and friendly or exclusive and snobby?

Overall Impressions:

_____

_____

_____

Questions that still need to be answered:

_____

_____

_____

The Admissions Interview

Each college has its own interview procedure, which varies from school to school. Some require an interview on campus; some require an interview with a college representative and/or an alumnus; some grant group interviews; others do not require any interview. It is wise, however, to have an interview whenever possible. While it is better to visit and have an interview at a college when there are students on the campus, this is not always possible. Before doing so, be sure to call the college for specific information regarding its policy on interviews and to schedule one in advanced if appropriate.

Why an Interview

This is your opportunity to personalize the process. Interviews do not usually make or break admissions decisions, but you should try to interview at those schools that are of real interest to you and are realistic choices. It gives you a chance to learn first-hand whether a school is a good match and allows you to show that you are very interested in a school.

Arranging an Interview

If you are prepared, plan your interviews as part of your campus visits. Don't schedule your first interview at your first-choice school; you'll do better after you've had some experience in an interview situation. Also, try to avoid making your first-choice school your last interview, as you want to remain fresh and spontaneous in your responses.

Practice interviews are helpful to some students. Ask your school counselor to *conduct a mock interview* with you or have a family friend role-play with you.

Schedule all interviews well in advance by calling the admissions office. And, if you cannot attend an interview appointment, be sure to call and cancel. A cancellation will not be held against you, but a missed appointment probably will be.

Preparing for an Interview

Be punctual. Know the time and location of the interview, and plan to arrive early. Be sure to look at the school's website and write down a list of questions that you want to ask. Take time to think about your strengths and weaknesses and be prepared to speak about them in a positive way. College interviews are not the time for modesty and one-word answers. At the same time, you do not want to appear boastful and arrogant. You may want to bring a copy of your transcript and an activities résumé to your interview.

Take stock of the extracurricular activities in which you have participated: your hobbies, volunteer work, and other ways that you spend your time. If there are special circumstances that have affected your academic record, you may want to bring them up at an interview. For instance, if you missed a great deal of school because your family went through a particularly grueling year, with divorce, unemployment, or sickness, you may want to talk about it with your interviewer. Take care not to sound as though you are making excuses for yourself, but rather adding to the college's understanding of who you are.

What to Wear

We recommend that you dress neatly and comfortable, while being yourself. A jacket and tie or skirt/dress are fine, as are a sweater and pants if you prefer (no jeans, caps, sweats, sneakers, shorts, etc.)

Dos and Don'ts of an Interview

Some things to do on an interview are:

- ✓ Establish eye-contact
- ✓ Show enthusiasm
- ✓ Use your natural conversational style
- ✓ Show interest in the interviewer and listen attentively
- ✓ Exhibit a positive attitude
- ✓ Be open and honest
- ✓ Ask questions
- ✓ Be specific and give concise responses
- ✓ Be Yourself!

Some things not to do on an interview are:

- ✓ Chew gum
- ✓ Complain or make excuses
- ✓ Swear or use language that is too colloquial
- ✓ Exhibit a negative attitude (bored, arrogant, etc.)
- ✓ Answer in monosyllables or one-sentence answers
- ✓ Ask questions if you have no interest in the response
- ✓ Discuss other colleges or make comparisons
- ✓ Twitch, fidget, or slump in your seat
- ✓ Pretend to be someone you are not.

Typical Interview Questions

Every interview has his or her favorite questions, but there are some common areas that are covered in most interviews. These include:

- ✓ Your high school experience
- ✓ Your personal traits, relationships with others, and your family background
- ✓ Your interests outside the classroom – hobbies, extracurricular activities, summer vacations, movies you've seen, etc.
- ✓ Your values and goals, and how you view the world around you
- ✓ Your impressions of the college you are visiting
- ✓ Special circumstances that may have affected your grades

You might anticipate questions like these:

- ✓ Tell me about your high school. How long have you attended? What are the students like? Do you like your high school? What would you preserve or change about it?
- ✓ Which courses have you liked most? Which have you liked the least? Which have been the most challenging?
- ✓ How well do you think your school has prepared you for your future study?
- ✓ How would you describe yourself as a student?
- ✓ Do you know what you want to major it?
- ✓ What has been your most stimulating intellectual experience?
- ✓ What extracurricular activity have you been involved in most? How much time do you devote to it?

Applying to Colleges

- **Application Types**
  - **Common Application**
  - **The SUNY Application**
  - **Independent Online Applications**

- **The Essay or Personal Statement**

- **Understanding "Early Decision" and "Early Action"**

The Application

Once you have narrowed your list of four to eight colleges, it is time to apply. Most college applications are similar in their appearance and content, however, it is important to thoroughly read each application, as there will undoubtedly be differences among them. Ordinarily, an application will consist of three main parts:

The Student's part requests some basic biographic information, and usually includes one or more essay questions or personal statement. (In pages that follow the essay will be addressed in greater detail). Be sure to be very thorough in following directions and answering all questions. We recommend that you make a review your application before submitting it. This way, you can correct any errors. You could also have your School Counselor review it before you submit it.

The Teacher's part is often called the "Teacher Recommendation: or "Teacher Evaluation". Many colleges will require you to submit 1 or more recommendations from teachers. Choose teachers who know you well and can attest to your best qualities and character.

The School Counselor's part is usually called the "School Report". This part requires that your counselor provide some basic information about you and usually requests a counselor's written recommendation.

Transcript: Your **School Counselor** is responsible for sending your transcript to each college. In order to do this, you must submit the **Transcript Release**, signed by your parent, and a **Transcript Request** for each school through Naviance Student.

When colleges begin receiving any of the parts, they simply create a file for you and continually add information as it arrives until your file is complete.

Please be aware of application deadlines. *It is important that your counselor receive your recommendation request one month prior to your first application deadline, and your transcript requests one week prior to your deadline.*

Application Methods

College applications are predominantly completed electronically. Colleges will direct you to these electronic applications through their admissions webpage. This electronic application could be school-specific or one that can be used for multiple colleges, such as the Common Application or the SUNY Application. Some colleges make paper applications available as well, which can be printed and mailed to admissions offices.

Please remember that, while there are many different options to choose from when applying to colleges, the value of your application is not diminished by the format you use, provided that you prepare it carefully. What is most important is all of the things that will portray your strengths and uniqueness (i.e., your transcript, essays, recommendations, extracurricular activities, special talents, etc.) arrive in the admissions office by the college deadline.

The Common Application

Completing applications for several schools can be quite tedious. Colleges have joined forces to provide a single application that can be completed once and transmitted to multiple colleges. The Common Application is accepted at many – but not all – colleges and universities. The website includes a list of all schools that will accept the Common Application.

If more than one of the schools to which you are applying does accept the Common Application and you choose to use it, this means that you will complete your part only once. You can complete the application online at www.commonapp.org. The colleges you have applied to using the Common Application can then access your information right on the website.

The final pieces of your Common Application are the School Report and Teacher Recommendations. Because Highland High School uses Naviance as an application tool, your requests for teacher recommendations, counselor recommendation, and the completion of the School Report will be made through Naviance Student. Please refer to Naviance Student instructions at the beginning of this booklet.

The SUNY Application

If you plan on applying to any of the State University of New York (SUNY) schools, the online application can be accessed at www.suny.edu/student. The online application makes it very easy to apply to multiple SUNY campuses using one application. The first time you use the online application, you will be required to create a login. You must supply a valid email address and password in order to return to work on your application over many sessions.

Once you have completed the application online, make sure to submit your transcript request through Naviance Student for each of the colleges you decided to apply to.

Your counselor will send your transcript electronically as well as your letter of recommendation if you have requested her to write you one. Please be sure to give your counselor enough lead time to have everything completed for you (at least four weeks).

Your teacher will upload your letter of recommendation to Naviance, and it will be sent through e docs to your institution.

Writing Your College Essay

Introduction

If you are like most students, you see the college essay as another hurdle that you must jump on the way to being accepted at the college of your choice. In fact, the essay is not a hurdle but a rare opportunity. It is a chance for you to talk directly to the college's admissions committee and to help them "see" you as thinking and feeling person rather than simply a set of impersonal statistics. Except for the interview, it is your only chance to share your thoughts, insights, and opinions; to highlight your accomplishments; and to convey your maturity and outlook on life. If you see the college essay in this way—as an opportunity—then it is clearly worth the effort to put some extra time, thought, and energy into writing it.

Purpose of the Essay

The college essay is extremely important for two major reasons:

1. It enables the college admissions office to evaluate your communication skills. Through your essay they can assess the clarity of your thinking and your ability to convey your thoughts in written form.
2. It enables the admissions office to learn more about you as a person, beyond what grades and SAT scores can convey. A well-written essay can speak worlds about your attitudes, feelings, personal qualities, imagination, and creativity. For the admissions staff, it adds another important piece to the puzzle because it distinguishes you as an individual, different from any other student who is applying.

Choosing A Topic

Many colleges and university will either give you a topic to write about or present several rather specific topics from which you must choose. Other colleges may simply "suggest" broad general topics or give you total freedom to write about something that interests you or concerns you. Regardless of whether you must respond to a prescribed topic or come up with one of your own, here are a few general hints about the most effective way to approach your topic.

- Narrow your topic and try to be as specific and illustrative as possible
- The easiest topic to write about is you. One important purpose of the essay is self-revelation; it is no place to be shy or modest, although you should not exaggerate. If you choose to write about yourself, remember that little incidents and facts are often the most revealing of character and outlook.
- Do not be afraid to write about something you think is a little different. A unique topic or approach is often refreshing to a college admissions officer who has been reading applications all day. Further, an unusual or off-beat essay is an excellent way to show your creativity.

Preparing to Write

Before actually sitting down to write a first draft of your essay, spend some time organizing your thoughts. Develop a framework for your essay so it will have a smooth and logical progression from one incident to the next. Consider your purpose in writing, what you want to convey, and the tone that you think is most appropriate for the topic. Decide on a style that is comfortable for you, not one that you think the college admissions committee prefers. Finally, remember that organizing your thoughts and deciding on a framework does not mean you must be overly rigid at the start; leave room for flexibility and creativity as you begin writing.

Writing the Essay

You do not have to get it right the first time! Instead, write the first draft of your essay with the main focus on content, communicating your thoughts. Then set it aside for a day or two, reread it with a fresh perspective, and make any necessary changes. This is also the point at which you should consider matters of organization, style, grammar, spelling, and tone. Once you have rewritten your first draft, you may wish to try it out on your family, friends, English teacher, or school counselor. While the final product and final "voice" should be yours, they may be able to offer helpful suggestions for technical or other improvements.

Your college essay, along with your high school record, standardized test scores, and extracurricular involvement, will provide the bases upon which the college makes its admissions decision. A thoughtful, well-written essay can affect in a very positive way that final decision. Keep this in mind and take full advantage of the opportunity that the college essay affords you.

Dos and Don'ts of Writing Your College Essay

DO start early. Leave plenty of time to revise, reword, and rewrite. You can always improve.

DO read the directions carefully. Answer the question as directly as possible. Express yourself as succinctly and clearly as you can.

DO tell the truth about yourself.

DO show your best side. You might have overcome some adversity, worked through a difficult project, or profited from a specific incident. A specific focus is more interesting than generalizations.

DO feel comfortable in expressing anxieties. Everybody has them, and it's good to know that an applicant can see them and face them.

DO tie yourself to the college. Be specific about what this particular school can do for you, and what you will bring to their student body. Your essay can have different slants for different colleges.

DO speak positively. Negatives tend to turn people off.

DO reveal yourself in your writing and write about your greatest assets and achievements. You should be proud of them.

DO write in your own "voice" and style.

BUT…

DON'T repeat information given elsewhere on your application. The committee has already seen it and it may look as though you have nothing else to say.

DON'T write on general, impersonal topics like global warming or the importance of good management in business. The college wants to know about you.

DON'T exaggerate or write to impress.

DON'T use the personal statement to excuse your shortcomings. It would only draw attention to them.

DON'T use clichés or a flowery, inflated, or pretentious style.

DON'T go to extremes—too witty, too opinionated, or too "intellectual".

REMEMBER…

The personal statement is yours. If it looks like Madison Avenue, the admissions committee will probably assume that it is your mother's or father's work.

A "gimmick" essay rarely goes anywhere. The committee may be amused, but unimpressed.

Write a serious essay, from the bottom of your heart, in the most mature manner possible.

Understanding Early Decision & Early Action

One of the most talked about topics in college admissions is the early application plan offered by many colleges. In order to decide whether you should apply under one of the early plans, it is important to understand them. The answers below to some of the frequently asked questions will help you decide if early decision is right for you.

What is Early Decision? An early decision (ED) plan allows you to apply early, usually in early to mid-November, and get an admission decision from the college by mid-December/January. However, early decision is binding, meaning if you are accepted, you must attend that college. The Student, Parent, & Counselor are required to sign a contract at the time of application that indicates if accepted, the student is obligated to attend.

Can I apply to other schools if I apply for early decision? Yes. Although you can apply to only one college under early decision, you may apply to other colleges under their regular admission plans. If you are accepted to your ED college, you must withdraw all other applications.

What is early action? Early action (EA) is similar to early decision in terms of application and decision time frames; however, it is not binding, meaning you do not have to commit to attend if you are accepted. You may apply to other schools and make a final decision in the spring. Be sure to carefully read each college's guidelines before applying under an EA plan. Some colleges may not allow you to apply to other schools, and some may want you to decide before the spring whether you will attend.

How do I know if I should apply early? You should apply ED only if you are very sure of the college you want to attend. Early decision makes a lot of sense if one college is your clear preference and if your profile closely matches that of students at the college. Your counselor will help you decide if it's a good fit. Although EA is not binding, by applying early action to a college, you are telling them that you have a very strong interest in their school.

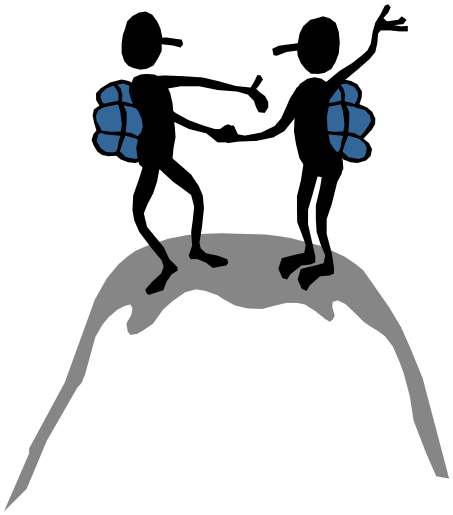
You should not apply ED if you plan to weigh offers and financial aid packages from several colleges in which you are interested. Also, if you need to "boost" your application by demonstrating improved senior year grades, it may be to your advantage to apply "regular" admission instead of early. This way, colleges will look at first and second quarter grades of your senior year before they make a decision.

What are the advantages to applying early? Students accepted in December are spared the anxiety of waiting until spring to hear from the college. It remains unclear whether there is an advantage to applying early in general, and it varies from college to college. Your counselor will help you understand the potential advantage when you discuss specific colleges. In early action, students appear to have the best of both worlds: they know early where they stand with their preferred school, and still have the luxury of applying to other schools and waiting until all acceptance letters are in before making a decision.

Are there any disadvantages? Keep in mind that approximately 50% of ED/EA applicants are accepted. That means that the other half are deferred or rejected. A deferral or rejection right before the holidays can be upsetting to some students. If you are not accepted, you will have to prepare "back-up" applications in time for other colleges' regular decision deadlines.
Also, early acceptances sometimes foster an early onset of "senioritis" in which seniors take on a more laid-back attitude toward schoolwork as early as December. These poor study habits and weakening self-discipline can carry over into a student's freshman year in college. Recently, some colleges have rescinded admission offers to students who did not maintain their grades throughout senior year.

What is a deferral? Students whose applications are neither accepted nor rejected are deferred for a second review in the spring. That means your application will now be placed in the regular decision pool with all of those applicants. Some students will be accepted from the deferred pool, but many will not.

How does all of this affect financial aid? Early applicants generally do not receive as generous a financial aid package as regular applicants. Since early action is not binding, students can compare the financial packages of several schools before making a decision. In early decision, the student is obligated to attend the school upon acceptance, leaving less incentive for the college to offer more money. However, if the aid package offered by the college or university is insufficient for the family to afford the school, the student is not obligated to attend the school.



NCAA ELIGIBILITY FOR DIVISION I & II

WHAT IS THE NCAA?

The NCAA, or National Collegiate Athletic Association, was established in 1906 and serves as the athletics governing body for more than 1200 colleges, universities, conferences, and organizations. The National Office is in Indianapolis, IN but the member colleges and universities develop the rules and guidelines for athletics eligibility and athletics competition for each of the three NCAA Divisions. The NCAA is committed to the student athlete and to governing competition in a fair, safe, inclusive, and sportsmanlike manner.

WHAT IS THE NCAA ELIGIBILITY CENTER?

The NCAA Eligibility Center certifies the academic and amateur credentials of all college-bound student-athletes who wish to compete in NCAA Division I or II athletics.

To assist with this process, the NCAA Eligibility Center staff is eager to foster a cooperative environment of education and partnership with high schools, high school coaches, and college-bound student-athletes. Ultimately, the individual student-athlete is responsible for achieving and protecting his/her eligibility status.

In order to participate in Division I or II athletics in college, you MUST register with the NCAA Eligibility Center at **www.web3.ncaa.org**. It is important that you review your academic credentials with your School Counselor by the end of your Junior year to ensure you are meeting the requirements to be academically eligible to participate in Division I or II athletics.

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 the following requirements:

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

EARLY ACADEMIC QUALIFIER

If you meet **specific criteria** after six semesters of high school, you may be deemed an early academic qualifier for Division I 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.

ACADEMIC REDSHIRT

You may practice during your first regular academic term and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment but may NOT compete during your first year of full-time enrollment. You must pass either eight quarter or nine semester hours to practice in the next term.

NONQUALIFIER

You will not be able to practice, compete or receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

GRADE 9 REGISTER

» If you haven't yet, **register** for a free Profile Page account at **eligibilitycenter.org** for information on NCAA initial-eligibility requirements.

» Use NCAA Research's **interactive map** to help locate NCAA schools you're interested in attending.

» Find your high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses at **eligibilitycenter.org/courselist** to ensure you're taking the right courses, and earn the best grades possible!

GRADE 10 PLAN

» If you're being actively recruited by an NCAA school and have a Profile Page account, **transition** it to the required **certification account**.

» Monitor the **task list** in your NCAA Eligibility Center account for next steps.

» At the end of the school year, ask your high school counselor from each school you attend to upload an official transcript to your Eligibility Center account.

» If you fall behind academically, ask your high school counselor for help finding **approved courses** you can take.

GRADE 11 STUDY

» Ensure your **sports participation** information is correct in your Eligibility Center account.

» Check with your high school counselor to make sure you're on track to complete the required number of NCAA-approved **core courses** and graduate on time with your class.

» Share your **NCAA ID** with NCAA schools recruiting you so each school can place you on its **institutional request list**.

» At the end of the school year, ask your high school counselor from each school you attend to upload an official transcript to your Eligibility Center account.

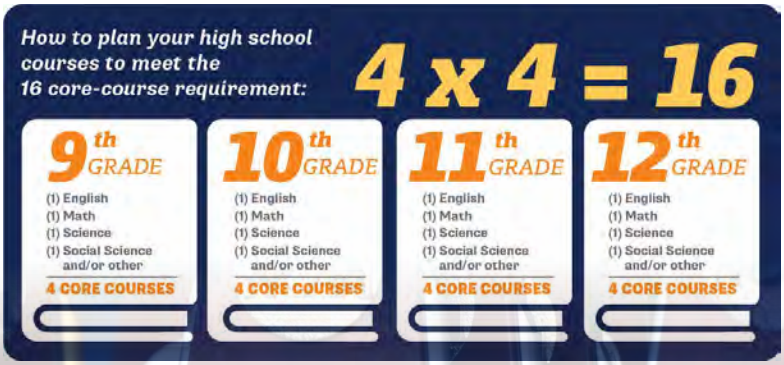
GRADE 12 GRADUATE

» **Request your final amateurism certification** beginning April 1 (fall enrollees) or Oct. 1 (winter/spring enrollees) in your Eligibility Center account at **eligibilitycenter.org**.

» Apply and be accepted to the NCAA school you plan to attend.

» Complete your final NCAA-approved **core courses** as you prepare for graduation.

» After you graduate, ask your high school counselor to upload your final **official transcript** with proof of graduation to your Eligibility Center account.



CONTACT THE NCAA ELIGIBILITY CENTER

U.S. and Canada (except Quebec):
877-262-1492 (toll free), Monday-Friday
9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern time

International (including Quebec):
on.ncaa.com/IntlContact

@ncaaec @ncaaec @ncaaec @playcollegesports

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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 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.

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.

GRADE 9 REGISTER

- If you haven't yet, **register** for a free Profile Page account at **eligibilitycenter.org** for information on NCAA initial-eligibility requirements.
- Use NCAA Research's **interactive map** to help locate NCAA schools you're interested in attending.
- Find your high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses at **eligibilitycenter.org/courselist** to ensure you're taking the right courses, and earn the best grades possible!

GRADE 10 PLAN

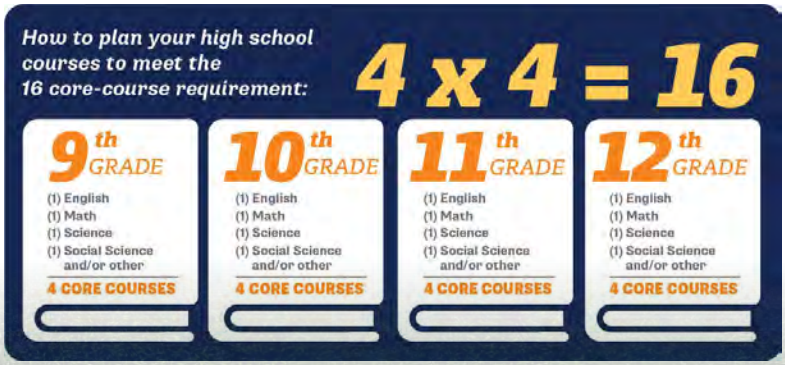
- If you're being actively recruited by an NCAA school and have a Profile Page account, **transition** it to the required **certification account**.
- Monitor the **task list** in your NCAA Eligibility Center account for next steps.
- At the end of the school year, ask your high school counselor from each school you attend to upload an official transcript to your Eligibility Center account.
- If you fall behind academically, ask your high school counselor for help finding **approved courses** you can take.

GRADE 11 STUDY

- Ensure your **sports participation** information is correct in your Eligibility Center account.
- Check with your high school counselor to make sure you're on track to complete the required number of NCAA-approved **core courses**.
- Share your **NCAA ID** with NCAA schools recruiting you so each school can place you on its **institutional request list**.
- At the end of the school year, ask your high school counselor from each school you attend to upload an official transcript to your Eligibility Center account.

GRADE 12 GRADUATE

- **Request your final amateurism certification** beginning April 1 (fall enrollees) or Oct. 1 (winter/spring enrollees) in your Eligibility Center account at **eligibilitycenter.org**.
- Apply and be accepted to the NCAA school you plan to attend.
- Complete your final NCAA-approved **core courses** as you prepare for graduation.
- After you graduate, ask your high school counselor to upload your final **official transcript** with proof of graduation to your Eligibility Center account.



CONTACT THE NCAA ELIGIBILITY CENTER

U.S. and Canada (except Quebec):
877-262-1492 (toll free), Monday-Friday
9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern time
International (including Quebec):
on.ncaa.com/IntlContact

@ncaaec **@ncaaec** **@ncaaec** **@playcollegesports**

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Division III Amateurism Standards

International college-bound student-athletes (first-year enrollees and transfers) who initially enroll full time at an NCAA **Division III** school on or after Aug. 1, 2023, must have their **amateur status** certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center. (Academic documents may be requested to establish your official graduation timeline for amateurism certification purposes.)

NCAA DIVISION III
DISCOVER | DEVELOP | DEDICATE

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

You must be on a Division III school's **institutional request list** before your certification will be started.

Three Easy Steps

1 Create Your Account

International student-athletes (first-year enrollees and transfers) planning to study and compete at a Division III school are required to complete an **Amateurism-Only Certification account** with the **Eligibility Center**.

2 Enter Your Information

When you register for an Amateurism-Only Certification account with the Eligibility Center, you will be asked a series of questions about your **sports participation** to determine your amateur status. In some instances, the Eligibility Center may need to gather additional information to evaluate your amateur status.

3 Request Your Final Amateurism Certification

You must **request your final amateurism certification** through your Eligibility Center account; the Eligibility Center cannot finalize your amateurism certification without your request. You can request your final amateurism certification even if other tasks are still open in your account. When you can request your final amateurism certification depends on when you are initially enrolling full time at a Division III school:

Fall Enrollment: If you are initially enrolling at a Division III school in the fall semester, you may request a final amateurism certification on or after April 1 prior to enrollment.

Winter/Spring Enrollment: If you are initially enrolling at a Division III school in the spring semester, you may request a final amateurism certification on or after Oct. 1 prior to enrollment.

CONTACT THE NCAA ELIGIBILITY CENTER

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Glossary of Terms Used in College Counseling & Admissions

The following terms are commonly used by secondary school counselors and admissions personnel when working with college-bound students in admissions, choice of testing, and in discussing college life.

Admit – A student is offered admission to a college or a university to which the student has applied.

Admit/Deny – A student is offered admission to an institution but denied financial aid.

Accelerated Study – A college program of study completed in less time than is usually required, most often by attending classes in the summer and/or by taking extra courses during the regular academic terms. Completion of a bachelor's degree program in three years is an example of accelerated study.

Accreditation – Recognition by an organization or agency that a college meets certain acceptable standards in its educational programs, services, and facilities. Regional accreditation applies to a college as a whole and not to any particular programs or courses of study at the college. Specialized accreditation of specific types of schools, any also be determined by a national organization. Institutional accreditation by regional accrediting associations and by national accrediting organizations is included in the *Handbook's* description of colleges. Information about the accreditation of specialized programs within a college by organizations such as American Chemical Society, American Dietetic Association, etc., is given in Accredited Institutions of Postsecondary Education published for the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation by the American Council on Education. See "Accrediting Associations" and "Other Institutional Accreditation" at the end of the Glossary.

Advanced Placement (AP) Program – A service of the College Board that provides high schools with course descriptions in college subjects and Advanced Placement examinations in these subjects. High schools implement the course and administer the examinations to interested students, who are then eligible for advanced placement, college credit, or both, on the basis of earning satisfactory scores.

American College Testing Program Assessment (ACT) – The ACT includes tests in English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. The ACT composite score referred to in some colleges' descriptions is the average of the students' scores on these four tests.

Associate Degree – A degree granted by a college or university after the satisfactory completion of a two-year full-time program of study or its part-time equivalent. In general, the associate of arts (AA) or associate of science (AS) degree is granted after students complete a program of study similar to the first two years of a four-year college curriculum. The associate in applied science (AAS) is awarded by many colleges upon completion of technological or vocational programs of study.

Bachelors or Baccalaureate Degree – A degree received after the satisfactory completion of a four or five-year, full-time program of study (or its part-time equivalent) at a college or university. The Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Science (BS) are the most common baccalaureates.

Branch Campus – A small campus connected to, or part of, a large institution. Generally, students spend the first two (2) years at a branch campus and then transfer to the main campus to complete a baccalaureate

degree. A branch campus provides students with a smaller and more personal environment, which can help the student mature personally and academically before moving to a larger atmosphere.

Candidates Reply Date Agreement (CRDA) – A college subscribing to this agreement will not require any applicants offered admission as freshmen to notify the college of their decision to attend (or to accept an offer of financial aid) before May 1 of the year the applicant applies. The purpose of the agreement is to give applicants time to hear from all of the colleges to which they have applied before having to make a commitment to any of them.

College –Level Examination Program (CLEP) – A program of examinations in undergraduate college courses that provides students and adults the opportunity to demonstrate college-level achievement. The examinations are used by colleges to award credit to entering freshman and adults completing their education. They are also used by business, industry, government, and professional groups to satisfy educational requirements for advancement, licensing, and admission to training programs.

College-Preparatory Subjects – A term used to describe subjects required for admission to or recommended as preparation for college. It is usually understood to mean subject form the fields of English, history, and social studies, foreign languages, mathematics, science, and the arts.

College Scholarship Service (CSS) – A service of the College Board that assists postsecondary institutions, state scholarship programs and other organizations in the equitable distribution of student financial aid funds by measuring a family's financial; strength and analyzing its ability to contribute to college costs. CSS provides the Profile Form with which students may apply for nonfederal aid at some private colleges.

Combined Bachelor's/Graduate Degree – A program to which students are accepted for study at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The programs usually can be completed in less time that two individual programs.

Control – A college or a university can be under public or private control. Publicly controlled colleges are dependent on state legislative funding, and their policies are frequently influenced by the federal, state, or local (community) rules and regulations. Privately controlled colleges are responsible to a board of directors or trustees. They usually have a higher tuition to protect the institution's endowment.

Cooperative Education – A college program in which a student alternates between periods of full-time study and full-time employment in a related field. Students are paid for their work at the prevailing rate. Typically, five years are required to complete a bachelor's degree under the cooperative plan, but graduates have the advantage of about a year's practical work experience in addition to their studies. Some colleges refer to this sort of program as work-study, but it should not be confused with the federally sponsored Work-Study Program.

Course Load – The number of course credit hours a student is enrolled in each semester. Twelve credit hours is a minimum to be considered a full-time student. The average course load per semester is fifteen credit hours.

Credit Hours – The number of hours per week that courses meet are counted as equivalent credits for financial aid and to determine a student's status as full-time or part-time. Upon successful completion of a course credit hours are applied to graduation requirements.

Cross-Registration – The practice, through agreements between colleges, of permitting students enrolled at one college or university to enroll in courses at another institution without formally applying for admission to the second institution.

Cumulative Grade Point Average – A grade point average that is based on all previously completed work (see Grade Point Average).

Deferred Admission – The practice of postponing enrollment for one year after acceptance to the college.

Double Major – Any program of study in which a student completes the requirements of two majors concurrently.

Early Action – A student applies to an institution early in the senior year and requests an early notification of his/her admission to the institution. If the student is accepted, he/she is not obligated to attend that institution.

Early Admission – The practice of admitting certain students who have not completed high school, usually students of exceptional ability who have completed their junior year to attend college. These students are then enrolled full-time at the college and eliminate the senior year of high school. Colleges usually award a high school diploma to the early-admitted students after they have completed a certain number of college level courses.

Early Decision Plan – A student applies to an institution early in the senior year and requests an early notification of his/her admission status. It is a contract between the student and the institution. If the student is accepted, he/she is obligated to attend that institution.

English Language Learners – Limited English proficient studies who speak English as a second language and who wish to take college –level courses need to demonstrate proficiency in English. TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) exam is a commonly used test to determine the level of English language proficiency.

ENL – English as a new language program offers a variety of courses and schedules to meet the needs of a diverse population with limited English proficiency.

External Degree Program – A system of study whereby a student earns credit toward a degree through independent study, college courses, proficiency examinations, and personal experience. External degree colleges generally have no campus or classroom facilities many are referred to as a "college without walls."

Federal Pell Grant Program - A federally sponsored and administered program that provides grants based on need to undergraduate students. Congress annually sets the dollar range.

Federal Perkins Loan Program – (Formerly called the National Direct Student Loan Program or NDSL.) A federally funded program based on need, and administered by colleges, that provides low-interest loans. Repayment need not begin until completion of the student's education or after limited periods of service in the military. Peace Corps or attendance at an approved comparable program.

Federal Stafford Loan – A federal program based on need allows students to borrow money for educational expenses directly from banks and other lending institutions (sometimes from the colleges themselves). The amounts that may be borrowed depend on the student's year in school.

Federal Work Study Program – An arrangement by which a student combines employment and college study. The employment may be an integral part of the academic program (as in cooperative education or internships) or simply a means of paying for college.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) - All students must file the federally sponsored Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to apply for the federal financial aid programs. Please visit the FAFSA website at www.fafsa.ed.gov to file electronically. For many colleges, this may be the only need analysis form students will need to file. For other schools, particularly private colleges and some state schools, the CSS PROFILE may also be required. To apply for state financial aid programs, the FAFSA may be all that is needed, but students should check with the state agency to learn if any other application forms need to be submitted.

Gapping – The difference between what a student's financial aid needs are, and the amount of the financial aid package offered by the institution.

Grade-Point Average (GPA) – A system used by many schools for evaluating the overall scholastic performance of students. It is found by first determining the number of grade points a student has earned in each course completed and then dividing the sum of all grade points by the number of hours of coursework carried. Grade points are found by multiplying the number of hours of course work carried. Grade points are found by multiplying the number of hours given for a course by the student's grade in the course. The most common system of numerical values for grades is A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, and E or F=0.

Grants/Scholarships – Are general terms that describe the outright gift of a sum of money to a student. Most grants or scholarships are controlled by the financial aid office at the institution. While they are generally based on need, many institutions reserve some funds to award to students based on academic, leadership, or athletic excellence. The availability of these funds vary from college to college.

Greek Life – The influence of sororities and fraternities on the campus life of an institution.

HEOP/EOP – The Higher Educational Opportunity program is for students who need academic and financial support in order to compete successfully in college. These programs provide counseling, remedial instruction, tutorial services, and a financial aid stipend for educational expenses.

Honors Program – Any special program for very able students that offers the opportunity for educational enrichment, independent study, acceleration, or some combination of these characteristics.

Independent Study – An arrangement that allows students to complete some of their college program by studying independently and completing group assignments instead of attending scheduled classes. Typically, students plan programs of study in consultation with a faculty advisor or committee, to whom they may report periodically and submit a final report for evaluation and/or a grade.

Interdisciplinary – Programs or courses that use the knowledge from a number of academic disciplines, such as a combination of biology and physical science, or of engineering and business.

International Baccalaureate (IB) – A comprehensive and rigorous two-year curriculum (usually taken in the final two years of high school) that is similar to the final year of secondary school in Europe. More than 100 high schools in the United States have an IB program. Some colleges award credit or advanced placement to students who have completed an IB program.]

Internships – Short-term, supervised work experiences, usually related to a student's major field, for which the student earns academic credit. The work can be full or part time, on or off campus, paid or unpaid. Student teaching and apprenticeships are examples of internships.

Major – A major is determined by the number, concentration, or credit hours in a particular subject area.

Matriculation – A point in college admission when a student is formally admitted into a curriculum, under standard college procedures. A student must be matriculated in order to apply for financial aid and/or try out for intercollegiate athletic programs.

Merit Award of Merit Based Scholarships – Money awarded to students based on academic performance, SAT tests and other designated criteria. These scholarships are not based on financial need, and do not have to be repaid. The money must be used to cover college costs.

Need Award - Financial aid requested by a student is considered when making an admission decision.

Need Blind – Admission decisions are made regardless of a student's financial aid request. Actually, financial need is not considered (or even known) when making an admission decision.

Non-Matriculated – A student has either not been formally admitted into a curriculum or has been academically dismissed. This classification excludes a student from financial aid and/or intercollegiate athletics.

Open Admissions – The college admissions policy of admitting high school graduates and other adults generally without regard to conventional academic qualifications, such as high school subjects, high school grades, and admission tests scores. Virtually all applicants with high school diplomas or their equivalents are accepted when an institution adheres to the open admissions policy.

Quarter – An academic calendar period of about 11 weeks. Four quarters make up an academic year, but at colleges using the quarter system, students make normal academic progress by attending three quarters each year. In some colleges, students can accelerate their programs by attending all four quarters in one or more years and completing a college program early.

Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) – Programs conducted by certain colleges in cooperation with the United States Air Force, Army, and Navy. Local recruiting offices of the services themselves can supply detailed information about these programs, as can participating colleges.

Residency Requirements – Most colleges and universities require that a student spend a minimum number of terms taking courses on campus (as opposed to independent study or transfer credits from other colleges) to be eligible for graduation. Also, residency requirements can refer to the minimum amount of time a student is required to have lived in a state in order to be eligible for in-state tuition at a public (state-controlled) college or university.

Retention Rate – The number and percentage of returning students at a given college.

Rolling Admissions – An admissions procedure by which the college considers each student's application as soon as all required credentials, such as school records and test scores, have been received. The college usually notifies applicants of its decision without delay.

SAT Program – A program of the College Board that provides college entrance tests and services for students planning to go to college.

Semester – A period of about 17 or 18 weeks that makes up half of the usual academic year in colleges using this type of calendar.

Stafford Loan (unsubsidized) – A low interest loan that is available to all students regardless of need. Interest on loan is payable while the student is attending college. All other features are the same as for the Stafford Loan – subsidized.

Stafford Loan (subsidized) – A federally subsidized, low interest loan made by a bank, credit union, or savings and loan institution. Borrowers must show need through the FAFSA.

Student Search Service – A College Board program designed to help colleges identify potential applicants with the particular academic or personal characteristics they are seeking. The service also provides students with an opportunity to learn about colleges with programs and characteristics they want. Information is gathered about students who wish to participate through the Students Descriptive Questionnaire of the SAT program and the biographical section of the PSAT/NMSQT answer sheet. The College Board then supplies each participating college with the names and addresses of the students who have the particular characteristics they specify. The service is free to students. Colleges can also identify students who participated in the Advanced Placement (AP) Program through the AP Program Search.

Study Abroad – Any arrangement by which a student completes part of the college program –typically the junior year but sometimes only a semester or a summer – studying in another country. A college may operate a campus abroad, or it may have a cooperative agreement with some other

TAP – Tuition Assistance Program of New York State. It is a financial aid program based on an established formula.

Teacher Preparation – A college program designed to prepare students to meet the requirements for certification as teachers in elementary and secondary schools.

Terminal Program – An education program in a two-year college (or a four-year college that offers associate degrees) primarily for students who plan to continue their studies in a four-year college or university. Students do not have to earn an associate degree to qualify for transfer.

Transfer Student – A student who has attended another college for any period, which may be defined by various colleges as anytime from a single term up to three years. A transfer student may receive credit for all or some of the courses successfully completed before the transfer.

Trimester – An academic calendar period of about 15 weeks. Three trimesters make up one year. Students normally progress by attending two of the three trimesters each year, and in some colleges can accelerate their programs by attending all three trimesters in one or more years and thus be able to graduate early.

Two-Year Upper Division College – A college offering bachelor's degree program that begins with junior year. Entering students must have completed the freshman and sophomore years at other colleges.

Upper Division – The junior and senior years of study. Some colleges offer only upper-division study. Students must have completed the freshman and sophomore years (lower division) at other institutions before entering the upper-division institution to earn their bachelor's degree.

Visiting/Exchange Student Program – Any arrangement between a student and a college that permits study for a semester or more at another college.

Wait List – A student is not offered admission but is placed on a waiting list should an opening occur. If an opening becomes available, the student is admitted. After a certain time, if an opening is not available, the student receives a rejection notice.

Work Study – An arrangement by which a student combines employment and college study. The employment may be an integral part of the academic program (as in cooperative education and internships) or simply a means of paying for college (as in Federal Work-Study Program).

Yield – The percentage of accepted students who will actually matriculate at an institution.