

# College Planning Guide for Sophomores

Sophomore year is all about **exploration**. This is your chance to start learning more about yourself—what you enjoy, what motivates you, and what kinds of colleges *might* be a good fit for you down the road. No pressure to have it all figured out yet! Think of this year as laying the groundwork—brick by brick—for the exciting decisions ahead. The most important thing you can do right now is stay curious, stay open, and start paying attention to what lights you up.

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## Start Thinking About

These aren't questions you need to answer perfectly right now. They're conversation starters—with yourself, your family, your friends, and your counselor. Grab a journal, talk it out over dinner, or just let them sit in the back of your mind as you move through sophomore year. The goal is simply to begin noticing patterns in what excites you and what feels right.



### Passions & Interests

What classes, activities, or experiences do you actually enjoy? When do you feel most engaged or energized—at school or outside of it? Pay attention to the moments when time flies by. Those clues matter more than you think.



### College Environment

What kind of college environment sounds appealing to you? Big or small? Urban or rural? Close to home or farther away? There's no right answer—only *your* answer. Start imagining what daily life might look and feel like in different settings.



### Personal & Academic Goals

What are some goals you have for yourself—academically and personally? Maybe you want to challenge yourself with a new AP course, develop a leadership role in a club, or explore a creative passion. Write them down and revisit them throughout the year.



### Cost & Financial Conversations

Talk with your parents or guardians about how cost and finances may play a role in college planning. It might feel awkward, but having this conversation early helps everyone plan together. Scholarships, financial aid, and savings all factor in—and it's never too soon to start thinking about them.

# Planning Tools & Resources

SCOIR is your central hub for college research and long-term planning. Think of it as your personal college command center—everything you need is in one place. The more you put into it now, the more useful it becomes junior and senior year when decisions start getting real.

1

## Explore & Compare Colleges

Browse schools by size, location, majors, and more. Start a **"Following" list** of schools that catch your eye—no commitment, just curiosity. You can always add or remove schools as your interests evolve.

2

## Update Activities & Achievements

As you add clubs, sports, jobs, community service, and awards throughout the year, log them in SCOIR. This running list will be incredibly valuable when you start building your college applications. Don't wait—add things as they happen!

3

## Take the Assessments

Complete the **Quick Career Interest Assessment** to explore possible career paths you may not have considered. Then try the **PrinciplesYou Character Assessment** to learn more about your personality, tendencies, and strengths.

## Additional Ways to Explore

### On Campus Opportunities

- **Attend the both the Career and College fairs** hosted at Nerinx Hall
- **Talk with college representatives** when they visit campus—ask questions, grab brochures, and learn about schools you've never heard of
- **Start driving through campuses!** It's never too early to see what a campus looks like. Start close to home and visit SLU

### Online Resources

- Check out the **Nerinx Hall College Counseling website** for helpful resources, timelines, and more
- **Explore** by doing virtual college tours and info sessions from schools across the country
- **Follow** colleges on social media to get a feel for campus culture and student life



**Remember:** Sophomore year is about exploration, not decisions. Stay curious, stay open, and enjoy the process of discovering what excites you. You've got this—and the Nerinx Hall College Counseling team is here to help every step of the way!