

# COLLEGE PLANNING GUIDE

SPRING 2017





Spring 2017

Dear Academy for Academic Excellence Students and Parents:

The Academy for Academic Excellence School Counseling Department has compiled this College Planning Guide as an aide to you in preparing for your high school years and future college endeavors. The emphasis is on our two major systems in California, the UC (University of California) and the CSU (California State University) systems. Meeting the admission requirements of either system will often qualify students for entry into other universities and colleges throughout the state and nation.

We sincerely hope that this guide will be of great benefit to you in making important decisions concerning your future plans. Please ask questions regarding information that may be unclear to you.

On behalf of the Counseling Department

*Brenda S. Day*  
School Counselor

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**Comparison of The Lewis Center for Educational Research /  
Academy for Academic Excellence Graduation Requirements with  
a-g Entrance Requirements for the UC and CSU Systems**

SUBJECT AREA	AAE GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS	ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA (UC) AND CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY (CSU)
a	<b>3 Year-long courses</b> World History 1 year US History 1 year Amer. Government ½ year Economics ½ year	<b>2 years:</b> World History 1 year US History 1 year or World History 1 year US History ½ year Amer. Government ½ year
b	<b>4 year-long courses</b> Intro to Lit World Lit American Lit or AP Eng Lang British Lit , AP Eng Lit, ERWC	<b>4 years:</b> Intro to Lit or Honors World Lit or Honors American Lit or English Language AP British Lit or English Literature AP
c	<b>3 year-long approved courses including:</b>  Integrated Math I  <b>OR</b>  Algebra I and Geometry	<b>3 years:</b> College-preparatory mathematics that includes the topics covered in elementary and advanced algebra and two- and three-dimensional geometry. Approved integrated math courses may be used to fulfill part or all of this requirement  <b>4 years recommended</b>
d	<b>3 year-long approved courses Including:</b>  Integrated Science I, 2, and 3  <b>OR</b>  Three years including: Physical Science 1 year Biological Science 1 year	<b>2 years:</b> 2 years Lab Science  <b>3 years recommended</b>
e	<b>See Fine Arts</b>  Beginning with the class of 2020: 2 years of a language other than English	<b>2 years:</b> Must be same language for both years.  <b>3 years recommended</b>
f	<b>1 year-long course</b> May be met with 1 year of Foreign Language or 1 year of Visual or Performing Art Beginning with the class of 2020: 1 year of UC approved Visual or Performing Art	<b>1 year:</b> Visual and Performing Arts: Art, Drama/Theater, Music or Dance Class
g	<b>7 year-long courses (70 credits in 4 years)</b>	<b>1 year:</b> Any additional courses on the current UC Approved Course list
<b>PHYSICAL EDUCATION</b>	<b>2 years</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>OTHER</b>	<b>Above total = 23 year- long courses</b>	<b>Minimum 15 year-long courses required 18 year-long courses recommended</b>

**COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS**

**UC:** SAT or ACT with writing **CSU:** SAT or ACT *without* writing  
Writing requirement varies for independent colleges. Check websites for specific requirements.

It is strongly recommended that college entrance (SAT Reasoning and ACT) exams be taken by the end of the student's junior year. UC and CSU typically will not take test scores, if dated later than December of their senior year.

- ◆ Please refer to the most recent copy of AAE UC Approved Course list
- ◆ UC and CSU require a "C" or better in all required subjects
- ◆ Always check for additional information. Please ask your counselor for details

## **Academy for Academic Excellence**

ATP/CEEB code: 050126

Apple Valley Unified CDS code: 36 75077 3631207

Wesley Kanawyer, Principal

School Governance: Charter: Apple Valley Unified School District

Mailing Address: 17500 Mana Rd., Apple Valley, CA 92307

Primary School Type: Comprehensive HS

Secondary School Type(s): K-12

Web site: <http://www.lewiscenter.org>

WASC Accreditation Status: Accredited through 2018

## FRESHMAN COLLEGE PLANNING GUIDE/CHECKLIST

Starting high school is an exciting experience of new beginnings, with new responsibilities. Students will be involved in a variety of activities, create new friendships and meet new teachers. Grades will now count toward college entrance and coursework begins to lay the foundation for choosing a career or college major. The high school transcript records the details of a student's academic progress in grades 9-12. This is one of the primary documents a college uses to determine admittance, and it is increasingly requested by potential employers. It includes:

- The year, semester and grade level courses were taken
- Name of course
- Letter grade received, along with grade points which are used to determine Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Credits received
- Cumulative GPA
- Weighted GPA which includes extra points for Honors and Advanced Placement courses
- Rank in Class which shows student standing in relation to other members of their class

An official transcript includes a signature by a school representative verifying authenticity.

### The successful freshman will:

Develop a four-year high school plan with the assistance of the Counseling Department.

- Review the UC Approved Course List to insure a college prep curriculum.
- Inform your counselor that you are college bound.

Start thinking about careers and setting career goals.

- Use the Bridge program for career information. See Homeroom Teacher for more information
- Talk with parents, school staff and others to investigate career fields.
- Utilize online resources (See important web sites, page 24)

Develop good student habits.

#### 1. Time Management

- Use the free time the teacher gives in class to begin homework, ask questions or get help. Never leave class with unanswered questions.
- Have a routine that provides a specific time and place for study each day, equipped with good lighting and necessary tools. Develop a plan to complete long-term assignments.

#### 2. Organization

- Use organizational aids such as a planning book or "To Do" list.
- Consider separate notebooks for each class.
- In the evening, group items together for each class that meets the next day.

#### 3. Prioritize!

- Study for the test tomorrow before preparing for the assignment due next week.

#### 4. Homework

- Have a plan. Many students find it helpful to consider each week in advance, scheduling time to study and complete projects.
- Do all assignments. Their purpose is to help clarify and cement the information presented in class. Additionally, there are points attached to each assignment; missing assignments = lower grades.

5. Attendance

- Students are expected to be in school every day unless ill. When a student misses school, he/she misses lectures, notes, class discussion, homework explanation, assignments, tests and quizzes. Even the best students cannot make-up everything that was missed.
- If a student must be absent, he/she is responsible to arrange for make-up work.

6. In the classroom, student are successful if they follow these guidelines:

- Be on time. It is difficult to connect with the class lesson if you have missed the introduction.
- Be prepared. Make sure you have everything you need before going to class: books, notebooks, paper, pencil, homework.
- Different teachers, different styles – each teacher has their own style and class rules: be adaptable. This is a skill that will have lifelong value.
- Participate in class discussion and activities. It will make the subject more interesting and help to retain the information.
- Take good notes - put the name of the class and the date at the top of the page. Listen for key words such as dates, people, places or events. Make note of any word that is unfamiliar and learn the definition.
- Know how to read a Textbook. Use the section heads for an overview of subject matter. Give extra attention to words that are in **bold print**. Study charts, graphs and lists of vocabulary words.

Scan, Read, Review:

Scan – a quick overview of the material to identify content.

Read – focus on comprehension

Review – go back through the material and briefly restate the purpose or meaning of each section.

7. Testing can often be a troublesome area for students. Develop good test taking skills by:

- Thorough study of the material in advance. Consider finding a study partner
- Read questions and instructions carefully
- Eliminate incorrect answers options
- Read all of the choices before answering
- Look for key words that give clues to appropriate response
- Before solving a math problem, estimate approximately what the answer should be
- Mark difficult questions to return to later

8. Truth, honesty, and integrity are critical components of a person's character and are essential for academic success. Cheating and plagiarism involve failing to cite the source of the academic information; using work from someone else, as if it were your own; and deception about your work. This is a violation of academic standards.

9. Know how to write a paper. The following suggestions may be helpful:

- Start early and work over several days

- Choose a topic of interest
- Gather information on the topic from multiple resources
- Create an outline
- Write a rough draft
- Have someone read the paper and give suggestions
- Write the final draft
- Check for spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors.

10. Take challenging coursework. Colleges look closely at the level of rigor built into a student's high school experience.

11. Manage Stress to maintain a balanced, healthy life. Get enough sleep, eat right and get plenty of exercise. Talk about the things that cause stress to keep it in perspective. Make time in the daily schedule for relaxation.

12. Get involved. Studies show that students who are involved in activities do better academically. This is because it allows time with friends, opportunity to meet new people, leadership development, opportunity to give back, and an outlet for stress.

- Discover and participate in sports and extracurricular clubs/activities.
- Colleges would rather see real involvement in one activity rather than a loose connection to several activities.

Take the PSAT and attend the PSAT Parent Interpretation meeting at AAE.

Strive for an "A" or "B" GPA.

- Form a study group with other college bound friends.
- Select and participate in academic enrichment programs.

Visit community colleges, Cal-State universities, UC's and private colleges.

Create a personal file (portfolio) and update each semester through high school.

- A copy of your report cards
- A list of awards, honors, certificates
- A list of school, sports and community club involvement
- A list of offices and leadership positions held
- A list of jobs (paid or volunteer) and hours spent volunteering with different organizations

Discuss a savings plan for college. Investigate state financial aid programs and 529 plans.

## SOPHOMORE COLLEGE PLANNING GUIDE/CHECKLIST

Students in the second year of high school no longer have the nervousness of the first year; it is replaced with a sense of familiarity and confidence in their role at the school. This second year brings a subtle shift for the student as there are more activities, increased difficulty, and more responsibilities. Students must have good study skills, along with time management and organizational skills, to be successful.

The sophomore year is important as it is the time to identify interests, abilities and aptitudes in preparation for life after high school. Setting goals becomes critical as students look to the future.

### The successful sophomore will:

- Review your class schedule for college prep courses. Refer to the UC Approved Course List.
- Maintain an “A” or “B” GPA; 10<sup>th</sup> grade GPA is especially important.
- Continue to develop good study habits and test taking strategies (see Freshman Planning Guide).
- Take the PSAT and attend the PSAT Parent Interpretation meeting at AAE.
- Take the ASVAB
  - The **ASVAB** is a multiple-aptitude battery that measures developed abilities and helps predict future academic and occupational success
- Participate in clubs, sports and extracurricular activities.
- Participate in academic enrichment programs.
- Continue career exploration.
  - Understanding who you are and how you are equipped will help in identifying the best type of work to pursue.  
Career Exploration is the process of:
    - learning about yourself; personality, gifts and talents
    - examining the world of work,
    - identifying and exploring potentially satisfying occupations, and
    - developing an effective strategy to realize your goals
  - The first step in considering a career is to think carefully about what really drives you; how you enjoy spending your time. By discovering your primary interests and passions, along with your personality type, you may learn about careers that you might not have considered. Once you have this foundation, you can start fine tuning your search.
  - Use the Bridge program for career information. See Homeroom Teacher for more information

- Read books:
  - *Do What you are* by Paul D. Tieger
  - *Now What?* By Nicholas Lore
  - *What color is your Parachute?* By Carol Christen
  
- Check out free websites that offer career information:
  - ▶ California Career Zone offers free online assessment tool to all California residents [www.cacareerzone.org/](http://www.cacareerzone.org/)
  - ▶ Who do you want to be? whodouwant2b.com
  - ▶ Mapping Your Future has career information, including its CareerShip® tool ([mappingyourfuture.org/planyourcareer/careership/](http://mappingyourfuture.org/planyourcareer/careership/))
  - ▶ Each year the government updates the Occupational Outlook Handbook which provides information on over 250 careers with a description of the work, advantages and disadvantages of the field, future outlook, and related careers. It is available at: [www.bls.gov/oco/](http://www.bls.gov/oco/).
  - ▶ The ACT has a Career Planning tool available at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org).
  - ▶ Additional online career assessments: [www.skillcow.com/career\\_quiz](http://www.skillcow.com/career_quiz) and [www.lifescrpt.com](http://www.lifescrpt.com)

Set Goals

- Setting goals help you determine where you want to go in life and how to accomplish this objective. When goals are established, a student can develop a plan of action providing purpose and focus in the educational experience. Goals need to be specific, measurable and attainable. By setting short term goals for the high school years and long term goals for life after high school, you will have greater confidence and success in educational endeavors

Visit colleges during school breaks, vacation, or other family travel opportunities.

- Helpful college/career websites:
  - ▶ [CaliforniaColleges.edu](http://CaliforniaColleges.edu)
  - ▶ The College Board has two sites for students who have taken the PSAT: [www.collegeboard.com/quickstart](http://www.collegeboard.com/quickstart) and [www.collegeboard.com/myroadeducator](http://www.collegeboard.com/myroadeducator)

Update your personal file (portfolio) at the end of each semester (see Freshman Planning Guide).

- Attend college fairs, talk to college representatives and any guest speakers.
  - College Week Live offers virtual college tours at [www.collegeweeklive.com](http://www.collegeweeklive.com)
  
- Read the AAE Catalog of Classes thoroughly to make wise decisions for your 11<sup>th</sup> grade class schedule.
  
- Consider summer school (VVC or elsewhere) for enrichment or advancement.
  
- Enroll in the SAT prep class at AAE starting in the month of February.
  
- Consider AP or Honors classes for next year.
  
- Continue saving for college.

## JUNIOR COLLEGE PLANNING GUIDE/CHECKLIST

The junior year's academic record will go a long way toward either helping or hurting your chances of gaining admission to your schools of choice. Your junior year is the last complete year that colleges may review, so it's important to maintain good grades. You can make up ground if you've been slacking and you can keep up the hard work you've already exhibited. Now is the time to focus on identifying colleges and searching for scholarships.

### The successful junior will:

- Begin the search for colleges and universities school.
  - Read all college information thoroughly.
  - Attend college fairs and career or college speaking opportunities when available.
  - Create a college file including college search, testing and application data.
  - Develop a list of 10-15 schools that interest you.
  - Research the online application process for these colleges
- Take PSAT in October (11<sup>th</sup> grade PSAT is the entry to the National Merit Scholarship competition) and attend the PSAT Parent Interpretation meeting at AAE.
- Review your previous and current classes to ensure meeting university entrance requirements. Maintain an “A” or “B” GPA. 11<sup>th</sup> grade GPA is especially important.
- Use the Bridge program. See Homeroom Teacher for information.
- Enroll in the SAT Prep class offered at AAE starting in February.
- Register for the SAT and/or the ACT in the spring. Fee waivers are available for students with financial need.
- Take practice ACT or SAT Test offered online and in practice books. The Khan Academy prep program is excellent! A link is available at: [collegeboard.org](http://collegeboard.org).
- Sign up for AP exams in March for May exams if you are taking AP classes.
- Attend the NACAC college fair in Ontario.
- Update your personal file (portfolio) at the end of each semester (see Freshman Planning Guide).
- Read the AAE Catalog of Classes thoroughly to make wise decisions for your 12<sup>th</sup> grade class schedule.
- Consider summer school (VVC or elsewhere) for enrichment, advancement, or to earn college credit.
- Visit colleges over the summer.
- Continue to save for college and investigate financial aid opportunities.

# SENIOR COLLEGE PLANNING GUIDE/CHECKLIST

The senior year is a time to celebrate accomplishments, but it's also a time to work hard to prepare for the future and finalize a college choice. This year is filled with admission applications, scholarship essays, financial aid information and the need to meet deadlines. Throughout the senior year, students should continue to build a resume by achieving academic success, as well as participating in extracurricular activities. Colleges are very interested in well-rounded students.

## The successful senior will:

### August / September

- Use legal name, and be consistent on all documents in preparation for graduation, college and entering the workforce. This is very important – DO NOT use nicknames.
- MEMORIZE social security number. Many documents will require this number. It can be very inconvenient if you do not have it when it is needed.
- Create an email address for college/career correspondence. Be sure to use an appropriate user name!
- Register for Selective Service. This is required for most male students 18 or older. Students must register within 30 days of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Do this online at: [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov).
- Review and compare your course schedule with the UC Approved Course List to ensure a college prep program. Maintain an “A” or “B” GPA (colleges may deny admission, if your grades drop below a “C”).
- Narrow the list of potential colleges to 5-7 choices. Think broadly when it comes to applying. Choose varied colleges that have easy, medium & difficult admissions requirements
  - Read all college information thoroughly. View web sites for application and financial aid information.
- Create a master calendar that includes:
  - Tests, fees, and registration deadlines for any tests (ACT, SAT or SAT Subject Tests) you may still need. The UC system requires testing to be done by December.
  - College application due dates
  - Financial aid forms required and deadlines.
  - Recommendation letters needed and from whom. Give plenty of notice.
- Create a file or folder to keep track of college application documents.
- Request letter of recommendation. Provide recommender with your resume/questionnaire and directions on where to send it: likely a website, but if it is through the mail, include an addressed, stamped, business sized envelope.
- Attend senior fall workshops provided by the counselor

- The UC application window opens on August 1<sup>st</sup> to begin entering information. You will not be able to submit the application until November 1<sup>st</sup>. Be sure to complete and submit application by November 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **October**

- Continue college visits and talk to career/college representatives.
- Continue to do College and Career planning.
- Check My Mentor regularly for Scholarship opportunities.
- Polish your college/scholarship essay.
- Attend College Fairs.
- Work on CSU applications between October 1 and November 30.
- Look for fall preview days and open houses. Colleges often have preview week-ends where you can stay overnight on the campus.
- If you are using the Common Application, create an account this month. Be sure to identify your school counselor by name and include email address under the recommender tab.
- Complete the FAFSA starting October 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **November**

- Submit UC and CSU applications between November 1 and November 30.
- Be aware of early deadlines to impacted programs. Investigate Early Decision admissions.
- Check for scholarship opportunities at the colleges where you apply. Many require separate application.
- Strive to have college applications complete prior to Thanksgiving. Submit all college applications prior to deadlines.
- Take final SAT or ACT exam. Most colleges will not consider tests taken after December of the senior year.

### **December / January**

- Continue to update personal file (see Freshman Planning Guide).
- Keep a copy in your college file of all college, scholarship and financial aid applications that you submit.
- Refer to financial aid/scholarship planning checklists.
- Request copy from school registrar of seventh semester transcript if needed by college. Don't send this transcript unless it is requested.

## February / March / April

- No senioritis please! Colleges look at second semester grades and may resend acceptance if final grades are unacceptable.
- Cal Grant GPA verification will be submitted by school registrar.
- Notify all colleges to which you have applied, if you make a schedule change.
- To receive a Cal Grant, the deadline to submit FAFSA is March 2. You will receive the Student Aid Report (SAR) 4 weeks after filing.
- Apply for EOP at CSU campuses by April 1.
- This is the time frame for colleges to send out acceptance letters and financial aid information. Watch for an email, or a letter in the mail.
- Thoroughly investigate housing options and financial aid packages for each school to which you've been accepted.
- Do not feel pressured to make a non-refundable deposit before you have heard from all colleges; you have the right to wait until May 1 to make your final choice regarding admission and financial aid.
- Compare schools to which you have been admitted; notify each school of your acceptance or regret/decline to enroll.
- Participate in the incoming freshman orientation days at your selected colleges.

## May / June

- Plan to send a deposit to your college of choice by May 1.
- Continue communicating with college of choice regarding necessary paperwork, fees, etc.
- Send thank you notes to those who helped you through your senior year.
- Check the dates for any college placement exams you may need to take.
- Depending on the college, you may need to register for an orientation session.
- Request final transcripts for the college of choice from the school registrar.
- Celebrate!! You're done!**

# Educational Options in California

The following is a description of ways to pursue a post-high school 4-year college education in California.

## University of California (UC)

Facts about the University of California system:

UC is designed as a four-year public institution.

The University of California is one of the finest research university systems in the world.

There are 10 campuses in the UC system. There are 9 undergraduate campuses. There is also 1 graduate campus devoted to the health sciences (UC San Francisco).

The 10 campuses offer more than 700 majors.

You must earn a C or better in any UC approved high school course. Only these courses count toward the UC college admission.

The SAT or ACT college admission exam is required for admission to a UC college.

You must take a minimum of 15 yearlong UC approved courses during the four years of high school.

The UC website is: [www.universityofcalifornia.edu](http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu)

Locations of the University of California campuses:

UC Berkeley	f) UC Riverside
UC Davis	g) UC San Diego
UC Irvine	h) UC San Francisco
UC Los Angeles	i) UC Santa Barbara
UC Merced	j) UC Santa Cruz

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If you are in the top 9 percent of California high school graduates and aren't admitted to any of the UC campuses you apply to, you'll be offered a spot at another campus if space is available. UC uses a formula — called an admissions index — to determine if you fall in that group. For more information, please visit:

- <http://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/freshman/california-residents/admissions-index/>

## California State University (CSU)

Facts about the California State University system:

There are 23 campuses in the CSU system.

CSU system is also a four-year public institution.

You must earn a C or better in any UC/CSU approved high school course. Only these courses count toward the CSU college admission.

The SAT or ACT college admission exam is required for admission to a CSU. The SAT Subject Tests are not required.

The tuition cost for CSU schools is generally less expensive than for the UC schools.

The website for the CSU schools: [www.calstate.edu/apply](http://www.calstate.edu/apply)

Locations of the California State University campuses:

Cal Maritime Academy	Cal Poly Pomona	Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
CSU Bakersfield	CSU Channel Islands	CSU Chico
CSU Dominguez Hills	CSU East Bay	CSU Fresno
CSU Fullerton	CSU Long Beach	CSU Monterey Bay
CSU Northridge	CSU Sacramento	CSU San Bernardino
CSU San Marcos	CSU Stanislaus	Humboldt State University
San Diego State University	San Francisco State University	
San Jose State University	Sonoma State University	

## California Independent Colleges

Facts about the California Independent Colleges:

They include private 2-year and 4-year colleges.

There are 76 colleges in this category in California.

Helpful websites: [accu.edu](http://accu.edu) [CaliforniaColleges.edu](http://CaliforniaColleges.edu) [UCAN-network.org](http://UCAN-network.org)

## Transferring from a Community College

Students may choose to attend a community college and take the first two years of general education courses, then transfer to a 4-year college. Completion of 60 units of course credit is necessary to be considered an upper division transfer student.

The UC and CSU colleges give priority admittance to CA community college transfer students.

A student does not need to take the SAT or ACT for admittance into a community college. If a 4-year college allows lower division transfer (transferring with less than 60 units of course credit), an ACT or SAT may be necessary. Check the college admission requirements.

Assist ([www.assist.org](http://www.assist.org)) provides statewide student transfer information for students planning to a transfer from California community colleges to a UC or CSU.

It is important to have a plan! It is helpful for students to choose in advance the 4-year university in which to complete their degree. It is important to discuss this with both the counselor at the community college as well as to contact the admissions counselor of the university. This will maximize appropriate coursework necessary to complete the desired degree.

**You can research all California 2-year and 4-year colleges at:**  
[www.californiacolleges.edu](http://www.californiacolleges.edu)

# College Entrance Exams (PSAT / SAT / ACT / SAT Subject Tests)

**Most colleges and universities will accept ACT or SAT exams!**

## PSAT- (Preliminary SAT)

College bound eighth through tenth grade students are encouraged to take the PSAT exam. There are three parts: Critical Reading, Math (problem solving skills), and Writing Skills. Taking the test gives you an opportunity to:

- Practice for the SAT.
- Enter scholarship competitions in 11<sup>th</sup> grade (National Merit Scholarship).
- Receive information from colleges.
- Receive valuable information about current academic skills for student/counselor.

## SAT

This college entrance exam is used by the University of California, California State University system and many private and public universities and colleges to meet entrance requirement.

## THE NEW SAT launched March 2016!

### Format Changes:

- The SAT is now scored with a total of 1600 points.
- The Reading and Writing sections on the current SAT have been combined into a single section in the new SAT, with a maximum score of 800. Writing is now known as "Writing and Language."
- The Math section is still scored on scale of 200-800.
- The Essay is optional and has changed dramatically.
- Instead of 5 answer choices for each question, there will be only 4.
- There is no penalty for guessing.

### The new SAT Measures:

- Critical Reading
  - All Reading Test questions are multiple choice and based on passages.
  - Some passages are paired with other passages.
  - Informational graphics, such as tables, graphs, and charts, accompany some passages— but no math is required. Students must interpret data.
  - The subject matter of passages are pre-determined. There's 1 passage concerning US and World Literature, 2 for History/Social Studies, and 2 for Science.
  - **Greater emphasis on:** vocabulary in context; command of evidence; constructing logical arguments; scientific reasoning.
  - **Lesser emphasis on:** difficult vocabulary and vocabulary in isolation.
  - New Reading question types:
    - Evidence Support Question
    - Data Reasoning Questions – with figures that show data.

- Reading questions you'll never see again: sentence completions
- This test is 65 minutes, with 52 questions
- Writing and Language Section
  - This is the new name for the current Writing section. It still tests grammar and writing logic. It's combined with the Reading section for a total of 200-800 points.
  - All questions are now multiple choice, passage-based instead of individual questions.
  - The subject matter of all 4 passages is predetermined
  - The test measures: command of evidence, words in context, analysis in History and science, and expression of ideas.
  - **Greater emphasis on:** Logic and expression of ideas, higher-level writing skills, punctuation rules.
  - **Less emphasis on:** Grammatical rules tested in isolation, "Gotcha" questions like faulty modifiers, subject/verb agreement.
  - **Questions you'll never see again:** sentence error and improving sentences questions
  - This test is 35 minutes, with 44 questions.
- Mathematics
  - There are now multi-step problems that ask the student to take multiple mathematical steps.
  - There is one section that bans the calculator. This doesn't change the difficulty, since these problems are inappropriate for calculators anyway.
  - Basic trigonometry is now on the test, but there are very few questions that test this.
  - **Greater emphasis on:** data interpretation and graphs; algebra and solving equations; realistic scenarios as prompts for questions.
  - **Lesser emphasis on:** geometry and shapes (like triangles and circles); abstract logic questions.
  - This test is 80 minutes, with 58 questions.
  - Score between 200 - 800
- Optional Essay
  - Gives a passage written by an author who is taking a stance on an issue. The student's job is to analyze how the author builds the argument.
  - The essay is scored on a scale of 2-8 based on student' demonstrated comprehension, analysis, and composition skills. The three scores for the Essay -- Reading, Analysis, and Writing—will not be incorporated into any other scores reported from the test. It is not combined with the Reading and Writing section score of 800.
  - **Greater emphasis on:** analyzing an argument; understanding how evidence and rhetorical devices contribute to an argument.
  - **Lesser emphasis on:** answering a theoretical prompt; coming up with your own evidence to support your thesis.
  - **Time for the Essay is 50 minutes, with 1 question.**

## SAT Subject Tests

The SAT Subject Test are one-hour, multiple-choice tests in specific subject areas. Only a few select colleges require the Subject Tests. The University of California no longer requires this exam.

- Some colleges who require subject tests specify the tests they require for admission or placement; others allow applicants to choose which tests to take. *Subject Tests fall into five general subject areas: English, History and Social Studies, Mathematics, Science and Languages*
- SAT and SAT Subject test cannot be taken on the same day.
- Subject tests may be used in some cases to meet course requirements for college admissions.

## ACT- (American College Test)

The University of California system, the California State Universities, and many private and public universities and colleges will accept the ACT to meet entrance requirement.

The ACT assesses high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work.

- The three hour multiple-choice test covers four skill areas:
  - English
    - 45 minutes
    - Punctuation, grammar and usage, sentence structure, rhetorical skills
  - Mathematics
    - 60 minutes
    - Pre-Algebra, Algebra I & II, Geometry, Trigonometry
  - Reading
    - 35 minutes
    - Reading selections from four areas: social studies, natural sciences, prose fiction and humanities
  - Science.
    - 35 minutes
    - Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Earth / Space sciences
- Each area is scored on a 1-36 scale with a composite score given on the same scale based on all four sections.
- The Writing Test, *which is optional*,
  - Measures skill in planning and writing a short essay.
    - 40 minutes
    - Ability to make judgments, develop a position, maintain a focus, organize ideas, communicate clearly
    - Subscore: 2-12 scale

PLEASE NOTE: We have made every effort to represent the ACT and SAT information as accurately as possible based on material received from the SAT and ACT organizations. For more complete and current information, please visit the following websites:

PSAT or SAT: [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

ACT: [www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

## Which one should I take???

**Should I take one test or both?** Most colleges and universities will not process an application without College Entrance Exam scores. Almost all four-year colleges and universities in the nation accept either the ACT or SAT scores equally. Research indicates that many students perform quite differently on the ACT and SAT, it may benefit you to take both tests; colleges will usually use the higher score. The option is yours! Listed below are some basic differences between the ACT and SAT that can be used as a guide in deciding which test you should take for college admissions.

<b>ACT</b>	<b>SAT</b>
Achievement test- measuring what a student has learned in school	Aptitude test- measures students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills, vocabulary in context, and constructing logical arguments.
4 components- English, Mathematics, Science and Reading. Optional Writing	3 components- Reading, Writing and Language, Math, Optional Essay
Students can choose which schools will receive their scores and which scores the schools will see	Score report will be sent to specific colleges, the report will include the scores the student received on every SAT taken
Content based	Measures skills and Knowledge with Evidence-Based Reading and Writing.

	The ACT	The SAT
Scoring System:	Graded on a scale between 1 and 36 composite point scale with 1 being the lowest score and 36 being the highest.	Graded on a 1600 point system with a minimum score of 400 and a maximum of 1600.
Grading:	A correct answer receives a point which is totaled and used to form a composite score. A wrong answer receives no credit, but no penalty as well, which encourages educated guessing.	A correct answer receives a point which is totaled and used to form a composite score. A wrong answer receives no credit, but no penalty as well, which encourages educated guessing.
Subjects:	English (1 test), Math (1 test), Reading (1 test), Science (1 test), Writing (1 test) *Tests more advanced math concepts with a wider variety of math skills (basic arithmetic through trigonometry).	Reading (52 questions/tasks) Writing and Language (44 questions/tasks), Math includes basic algebra (linear equations and systems) through trigonometry (58 questions/tasks), Optional Essay (1 question/task)
Test dates:	Six times per year	Seven times per year
Test structure:	Four test plus Optional writing essay	Three tests, plus Optional writing essay
Test time: *does not include mandatory breaks	About 2 hours, 55 minutes	About 3 hours
Essay:	<u>Optional:</u> 40 minutes: not included in the composite score.	<u>Optional:</u> 50 minutes: not included in the composite score.
Question type:	Tend to be more straightforward and easier to understand at first read. Measures content knowledge.	Emphasis on logic and expression of ideas.
Skill testing:	Benefits those who can answer questions fast and accurately	Benefits those who second read questions and read all answers before ruling out an answer
Secondary tests:	None offered	SAT II/ Subject tests: <i>English, History and Social Studies, Mathematics, Science and Languages.</i> (20 tests offered)
Test Contact Information	ACT inc. (319)337-1000 <a href="http://www.ACT.org">www.ACT.org</a>	College Board 1-866-756-7346 <a href="http://www.collegeboard.com">www.collegeboard.com</a>

## Important Websites

1. Academy for Academic Excellence: <http://www.lewiscenter.org/>

## Colleges and Universities

2. University of California Pathways: [www.ucop.edu/pathways/](http://www.ucop.edu/pathways/)
3. California State University Mentor: [www.csumentor.edu](http://www.csumentor.edu)
4. California Colleges: [www.californiacolleges.edu](http://www.californiacolleges.edu)
5. National Association of Colleges Admissions Counseling: [www.nacacnet.org](http://www.nacacnet.org)
6. College Week Live; [collegeweeklive.com](http://collegeweeklive.com)
7. California Community Colleges: <http://www.cccco.edu/find/alphabetical.htm>
8. California Independent Colleges & Universities: [www.aiccu.edu](http://www.aiccu.edu)
9. Colleges/Universities in USA.: <http://www.clas.ufl.edu/CLAS/american-universities.html>
10. International Universities: [www.findaschool.org](http://www.findaschool.org)
11. University of California / Cal State University a-g Course approved list for AAE: <https://doorways.ucop.edu/list/>

## Financial Aid/Scholarships

12. California Student Aid Commission: [www.csac.ca.gov](http://www.csac.ca.gov)
13. Cal Grant information: [www.calgrants.org](http://www.calgrants.org)
14. Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA): [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)
15. Federal Student Aid on the Web: [www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov)
16. EdFund: [www.edfund.org](http://www.edfund.org)
17. FINAID: [www.finaid.org/fafsa](http://www.finaid.org/fafsa)
18. FASTWEB: [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)
19. Scholarshare: [www.scholarshare.com](http://www.scholarshare.com)
20. Project Scholarship Scam: <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/consumer.shtm>
21. Best Schools: <http://www.bestschools.com/fafsa/>
22. Get Schooled [www.getschooled.com](http://www.getschooled.com)

## Testing Information

23. Collegeboard: (PSAT / SAT / SAT Subject Tests): [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)
24. ACT: [www.act.org](http://www.act.org)
25. Princeton Review: [www.princetonreview.com/testprep](http://www.princetonreview.com/testprep)
26. AP Central: <http://apcentral.collegeboard.com>
27. My College Options: <http://www.mycollegeoptions.org/>

## Career Information

28. Bridge: <http://k16bridge.org/>
29. College View: [www.collegeview.com](http://www.collegeview.com)
30. Who do you want to be? [www.whodouwant2b.com](http://www.whodouwant2b.com)
31. California Career Zone: [www.cacareerzone.org](http://www.cacareerzone.org)
32. Occupational Outlook Handbook: [www.bls.gov/oco](http://www.bls.gov/oco)
33. Bureau of Labor Statistics: [www.stats.bls.gov](http://www.stats.bls.gov)
34. Monster (Job Search): [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com)
35. CareerShip® tool: [mappingyourfuture.org/planyourcareer/careership/](http://mappingyourfuture.org/planyourcareer/careership/)
36. ACT Career Planning tool: [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)
37. [www.skillcow.com/career\\_quiz](http://www.skillcow.com/career_quiz) and [www.lifescrypt.com](http://www.lifescrypt.com)

**These websites are current and appropriate to the best of our knowledge. As always, use discernment when gathering information.**

# Assessing your list of colleges

As you develop a list (mental or otherwise) of colleges that interest you, be sure you can answer these questions about them.

## The basics

- Where is the college? Can you locate it on a map? Is it too close to home? Is it too far? Is it too cold or too hot there?
- Have you taken the course work the college requires for admission?
- What size is the college? How many students are undergraduates?
- What is the college's selectivity ratio (what proportion of applications was admitted last year)?
- Does the college offer majors that interest you?
- Is the college coed or single sex?
- What percentage of students live off campus?
- How many of the students graduate in four years? Five years? Six years?
- How many first-year students return for their sophomore year?
- How much does the program cost? What is the total per-year expense?
- What type of financial aid is available?

## Where would you fit in?

- What are the middle 50 percent scores for SAT® verbal and math or for ACT? Where does that place you?
- What was the high school GPA of most of the freshmen last year?
- Are freshmen guaranteed on-campus housing? If not, where do they live?
- Are there extracurricular activities that interest you?

## Visit the colleges' web sites, read the guidebooks, and look at their literature

- What are their strong academic programs? (Ask a college representative, students, graduates, and teachers.)
- What courses are required for graduation?
- Are the courses you need/want available each semester? At convenient times?
- Are there special programs that interest you (study abroad, internships, etc.)?
- What is the social life like? What percentages of students join fraternities or sororities?
- Do the pictures and the language the college uses to describe itself attract you?
- What is your general impression of the college?
- Is the school accredited?
- If professional certification is required for employment in the field that interests you, how many students enrolled in the school's program pass the certification exam?

## Admissions process

- When are applications due?
- Does the college accept the Common Application? If so, does it require supplemental forms?
- What does the application contain? Are essays required?
- Is an interview suggested or required? Is an interview available from staff or alumni?
- When may you visit the college? What is its policy regarding campus visits?
- What are the financial aid deadlines? What financial aid forms are required?

## Now answer these questions

- Am I a strong candidate for admission to this college?
- If I am not a strong candidate, what are my chances?
- Do I want to visit this college?
- What additional information do I need?

# Tips for parents on finding a college match

How can your child find colleges that match his or her needs? First, identify priorities. Next, carefully research the characteristics of a range of schools. Finally, match the two. Here are some college characteristics to consider.

## Size of student body

Size will affect many of your child's opportunities and experiences:

- Range of academic majors offered
- Extracurricular possibilities
- Amount of personal attention your child will receive
- Number of academic resources (e.g., books in the library)

In considering size, your child should look beyond the raw number of students attending. For example, perhaps she's considering a small department within a large school. She should investigate not just the number of faculty members, but also their accessibility to students.

## Location

Does your child want to visit home frequently, or is this a time to experience a new part of the country? Perhaps he would like an urban environment with access to museums, ethnic food or major league ball games. Or maybe he hopes for easy access to the outdoors or the serenity of a small town.

## Academic programs

If your child knows what she wants to study, she can research the reputations of academic departments by talking to people in the fields that interest her. If your child is undecided, as many students are, she may want to choose an academically balanced institution that offers a range of majors and programs. Students normally don't pick a major until their sophomore year, and those students who know their major before they go to college are very likely to change their minds. Most colleges offer counseling to help students find a focus. In considering academic programs, your child should look for special opportunities and pick a school that offers a number of possibilities.

## Campus life

Your child should consider what college life will be like beyond the classroom. Students have to maintain a balance between academics, activities, and social life. Before choosing a college, your child should learn the answers to these questions.

- What extracurricular activities, athletics, clubs, and organizations are available?
- Does the community around the college offer interesting outlets for students?
- Are students welcomed by the community?
- Is there an ethnic or religious group in which to take part?
- How do fraternities and sororities influence campus life?
- Is housing guaranteed?
- How are dorms assigned?

## Cost

In considering cost, look beyond the price tag. For most students, today's college costs make finances an important consideration. At the same time, most colleges work to ensure that academically qualified students from every economic circumstance can find financial aid that allows them to attend.

## Diversity

Your child should explore what she might gain from a diverse student body. The geographic, ethnic, racial, and religious diversity of the students can help students learn more about the world. Investigate which student organizations or other groups with ethnic or religious foundations are active and visible on campus.

## Retention and graduation rates

One of the best ways to measure a school's quality and the satisfaction of its students is to learn the percentage of students who return after the first year and the percentage of entering students who go on to graduate. Comparatively good retention and graduation rates indicate that responsible academic, social, and financial support systems exist for most students.

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Handout 3L

## COLLEGE COMPARISON WORKSHEET

<b>COLLEGE NAME</b>			
<b>LOCATION</b> ‣ Distance from home			
<b>SIZE</b> ‣ Enrollment ‣ Physical size of campus			
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b> ‣ Type of school (2yr, 4yr) ‣ School setting (urban, rural) ‣ Location & size of nearest city ‣ Co-ed, male, female ‣ Religious affiliation			
<b>ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS</b> ‣ Deadline ‣ Tests required ‣ Average test scores, GPA, rank ‣ Notification			
<b>ACADEMICS</b> ‣ Your major offered ‣ Special requirements ‣ Accreditation ‣ Student-facility ratio ‣ Typical class size			
<b>COLLEGE EXPENSES</b> ‣ Tuition, room & board ‣ Estimated total budget ‣ Application fee, deposits			
<b>FINANCIAL AID</b> ‣ Deadline ‣ Required forms ‣ % Receiving ‣ Scholarships			
<b>HOUSING</b> ‣ Residence hall requirement ‣ Food plan			
<b>FACILITIES</b> ‣ Academic ‣ Recreational ‣ Other			
<b>ACTIVITIES</b> ‣ Clubs, organizations ‣ Athletics, intramurals ‣ Other			
<b>CAMPUS VISITS</b> ‣ When ‣ Special opportunities			

## HINTS FOR A CAMPUS VISIT

A campus visit is highly recommended. Before you visit the campus, consider some of the options below. It is also important to develop a list of questions and plan specific activities in order to accomplish your goals.

- ▶ Meet with an admission officer.
- ▶ Verify admission requirements (tests and high school preparation).
- ▶ Discuss your chances for success.
- ▶ Obtain a school calendar and a catalog; if you don't already have them.
- ▶ Determine college costs.
- ▶ Ask about financial aid opportunities, as well as deadlines, forms required, etc.
- ▶ Meet with faculty in the academic area of interest to you.
- ▶ Ask questions about academic requirements/offerings.
- ▶ Attend a class to get an idea of typical size, teaching style, academic atmosphere.
- ▶ Ask about the placement records for graduates in the field you might study.
- ▶ Identify career-planning services for undergraduates.
- ▶ Tour the campus. (Be sure to check out the dorms, dining hall, library, etc.)
- ▶ Talk to students about the general academic environment and the study commitment necessary for success.
- ▶ Find out what student activities (clubs, organizations, intramurals, etc.) are available.
- ▶ Inquire about campus life and social activities.
- ▶ Investigate transportation options.

## Financial Aid Information

Financial aid programs provide support for students to help meet the costs of obtaining a college education. Funding for financial aid programs is provided by the federal government, state governments, colleges and schools, and a variety of other public and private sources.

There are two main categories of aid, differentiated primarily by the basis upon which they are awarded:

Achievement-based aid is awarded to students who have a special characteristic, skill, talent, or ability. Typically achievement-based aid is in the form of scholarships.

Need-based aid is provided to students who demonstrate financial need. Most financial aid, particularly public-funded aid, is awarded on the basis of financial need determined through the application process and in accordance with a prescribed federal formula.

Financial aid is available in four basic types of programs.

**Scholarships** are "gift aid" which does not have to be repaid. Scholarships typically include criteria such as academic performance or special talents.

**Grants** are "gift aid" and generally do not include criteria other than financial need.

**Work-study** is a "self-help" program in the form of part-time employment during the student's college career.

**Loans** are a form of "self-help" since they represent borrowed money that must to be paid back over a period of time, typically after the student leaves school.

*Register with the Selective Service - All 18-year-old men, including non-citizen immigrant males 18-25 who reside in the US, are required by law to register within 30 days of their 18th birthday. Those who fail to register cannot qualify for federal student grants or loans for college. Register at: [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov)*

## Financial aid checklist for students and parents/guardians

Use this sheet as a personal record and as a reminder of the steps to take to obtain financial aid. Check off each step as you complete it.

### For you and your parents or guardian

- If you are in doubt as to whether or not to apply for aid, apply!
- Obtain a social security number if you do not have one.
- Do not wait for college acceptance letters before filing for aid. The FAFSA is now available for completion in October of the senior year. Complete and submit this document as early as possible.
- Consider completing the FAFSA outline at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). Filing online is much faster than by mail and the Web site has prompts that help you avoid making mistakes. Additionally, you will be provided a link to the IRS which will auto populate several fields in the form.
- If you are applying to colleges that require PROFILE, try to file the form in late November or early December—as soon as you know the colleges to which you plan to apply. If you are applying under an Early Decision plan, complete your PROFILE in October or early November.
- Inform each college about your interest in applying for aid. Make a list of the financial aid priority dates and deadlines at the colleges to which you are applying. Ask each college if it requires supplemental forms, and obtain them as needed.

- If mailing in the FAFSA, do not enclose any supplementary letters or information in the envelope with the form. These materials will be discarded. If you have information about special financial need in your family, write a letter and send it directly to the financial aid office of each college to which you are applying for aid.
- Apply for federal and state funds by completing the appropriate questions of the FAFSA.
- Check for scholarships for which you might be eligible:
  - Each college/postsecondary institution (your best source)
  - Those posted in the counseling office
  - Local and state scholarships
- Begin your Stafford student loan application by checking appropriate boxes on the FAFSA.
- File the Cal Grant GPA verification form by March 2<sup>nd</sup>. See school registrar.

### Details to remember

- In all written communications to financial aid offices, identify yourself on every page.
- Keep your financial aid worksheets. Always make photocopies for your records.
- If you have questions about an item, do not guess. See your counselor or an accountant, or speak with the college financial aid officer directly.
- Do not leave blank spaces on the forms. Use zeros instead.
- Proofread! And again, make copies of everything.

### After you've filed the forms

- If you properly complete the financial aid forms, you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) in approximately four to six weeks (online applications are processed in two weeks). It will give you your eligibility index for federal and state aid.
- If there are errors or incorrect information on the SAR, you can make corrections online (if you filed online). Or check with the financial aid office of the college you plan to attend, it may be able to submit all necessary corrections for you.
- Financial aid offers are sent by colleges either with, or shortly after you receive, a letter of acceptance. You will be asked to sign an acceptance of the amount received, and the money will be sent to the college/postsecondary institution.
- Ask your counselor for assistance if you have general questions. Specific questions should be directed to the college financial aid officers.

**Sources:** *Glenbrook High School, Illinois, and Amherst Regional High School, Massachusetts.*

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Handout 8D

## FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS

**Federal Direct Loans:** Loans made by the federal government directly to qualifying students and parents through participating colleges.

**Federal Pell Grant:** Financial assistance awarded by the federal government on the basis of need and designed to provide the “floor” of an aid package for post-secondary education. The grant may be used for tuition, room and board, books, or other educational costs, and requires no repayment.

**Federal PLUS (Parent Loans for Undergraduate Students) Program:** Provides low-interest federal loans to credit-approved parents of eligible undergraduate students. Repayment begins 60 days after loan funds are disbursed. Loans are available from participating banks, lending institutions, and participating Direct Landing schools.

**Federal Perkins Loan Program:** Loans funded by the federal government and awarded by the institution. The loans feature low interest rates and are repayable over an extended period of time.

**Federal Stafford Loan Program:** Provides low-interest, federal loans to eligible students through banks and lending institutions. The interest is paid by the federal government for qualifying students while they are enrolled at least half-time. Students who do not qualify for these interest subsidies are responsible for the interest while they are enrolled. Repayment begins after the student leaves school.

**Federal Work-Study:** A government-supported financial aid program coordinated through financial aid offices whereby an eligible student (based on need) may work part time while attending class at least half time, generally in career-related jobs.

The passage of **California Dream Acts** — AB 130 and AB 131 — extend eligibility for certain types of institutional and state aid to undocumented students. In order to be eligible, students must also qualify for benefits under another California law — AB 540 — which exempts students from paying non-resident supplemental tuition.

The Middle Class Scholarship (MCS) is a new program beginning in the 2014-15 academic year that provides undergraduate students with family incomes up to \$150,000 a scholarship to attend University of California (UC) or California State University (CSU) campuses.

**Information is subject to change without notice.**