

OAKTON HIGH SCHOOL

JUNIOR HANDBOOK



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Junior Year Planning Guide

Junior year is when the college application process begins. It is the last year complete school year reported on your transcript when it is sent with your college application. This may be the last time for you to fill in any gaps you have in your academic or activity records. An important year, there are a number of suggestions that can help you prepare for senior year, graduation, and future planning.

- Junior year grades are critical; learn how to STUDY
- Take the PSAT seriously in October
- Begin to explore your interests and plans for the future
- Research the various opportunities for life after graduation
- Consider volunteer work or a career shadowing experience to learn more about your career interests
- Plan your classes for senior year; gain a full understanding of the graduation requirements and make sure you will have the required courses and SOLs by the end of your senior year

If you plan on attending college, then the following may be helpful:

- Attend college fairs or a financial aid workshops
- Begin to research colleges and make a list of 15-20 possibilities
- Use Family Connection to register for meetings with college admissions reps when they come to in the fall
- Visit colleges (a good time is during spring break or over the summer)
- Register for the SAT and/or ACT in the spring
- Study for the AP Exams
- Discuss your options with your parents and counselor
- Spend your summer wisely (i.e. summer employment, volunteer work, summer programs at colleges, athletic camps, summer enrichment opportunities)
- Research scholarship opportunities, save money for college
- Stay active in your extracurricular activities
- Begin brainstorming ideas for college essays and research possible college essay prompts
- Seek recommenders for letters of recommendations

Summer Planning Guide

A productive summer can be an asset in the college application process. There are a number of things that you can do to enhance your knowledge and skills, which will ultimately go onto your resume and applications.

There are several things you can do to have meaningful experience that does not cost money:

- Find employment – learn how to be a good employee and gain leadership experience
- Start your own business (i.e. tutoring, coaching, lawn maintenance, web design, etc.)
- Intern – explore a potential career
- Summer camp – work or volunteer at a camp such as a swim camp or sleep away camp
- Community service – check with the local library, hospital, church, shelter, food pantry for ideas or go to www.volunteerfairfax.org or www.volunteermatch.org
- Academic enrichment – many colleges offer free online classes or on-campus enrichment opportunities for a fee. Check with each college for their summer opportunities because several are application based and for a specific field of study.
- College prep – gather all application materials such as transcript, awards, resume or activity list; research college; develop a list with deadlines; tour colleges; write essays; test prep
- Write your own book, blog, create a piece of art, code, research, design your own costume, etc.

In addition to free experiences, there are several opportunities you can participate that have a financial cost:

- Volunteer vacations – take a vacation to a location that involves a service aspect such as going abroad to work with local communities in developing countries or environmental enthusiasts can spend time hiking. Check out www.projects-aboard.org or www.americanhiking.org for ideas.
- On-campus college programs – visit individual college websites for information about summer programs often in specific fields of study such as health care or STEM
- Athletic showcases and/or camps

Senior Year Planning Guide

Senior year is obviously an important year for planning your future. With colleges, they want to see that seniors are continuing to challenge themselves and perform well academically. Colleges will see what courses you are taking when you apply. First semester grades will be reported to colleges as well as final grades are sent your selected college, therefore, you cannot slack off and delve into senioritis. Colleges have the ability to revoke acceptances for a substandard senior year. Plan your courses wisely your junior year because, modifying your senior schedule during the year result in a reversal of a college's decision or result with inadequate preparation for the workforce or military.

September:

- Meet with your counselor in the fall to discuss college/career plans and double-check graduation requirements
- Use Family Connection to meet with college admissions reps; go on college visits
- Speak with military recruiters who come to the school
- Review college materials and begin to finalize your application list
- Register for the SAT or ACT
- Confirm teachers for letters of recommendation
- brainstorm ideas for college essays
- Review college applications
- Stay focused on grades

October:

- Attend college fair/college night programs; visit colleges
- Finalize your list of college choices to a reasonable number
- Schedule interviews or auditions
- Create a file for each of your college choices to keep materials organized
- Create a master schedule of all your application deadlines
- Work on drafts of your college essays
- Start working on college applications
- Follow up with recommenders for letters of recommendations
- If you have a clear first choice, consider Early Action or Early Decision
- Have your SAT or ACT scores sent your colleges
- Stay focused on grades

November:

- Finalize your drafts of college essays
- Continue to work on college applications (Thanksgiving is a good benchmark to start submitting applications)
- Request your official transcripts and follow Oakton's college application procedures
- Stay focused on grades

December:

- If you applied for early decision, expect notification this month
- Pay attention to college deadlines (some of the major Virginia public schools are due in January)
- Keep in mind of winter break; application materials must be requested 15 days prior to break
- Start detailed financial aid search, continue scholarship hunting
- Stay focused on grades

January:

- Get started on preparations for the FAFSA
- Stay focused on grades/mid-terms

February:

- Complete the FAFSA, if possible
- Keep track of your college applications; be sure that all schools have received your materials
- Mid-year transcripts will be mailed out to colleges
- Stay focused on grades

March:

- College decision letters begin arriving
- Celebrate your acceptances, decide about your wait lists and deal positively with your rejections
- Finalize financial aid applications
- Continue searching for scholarships
- Stay focused on grades

April:

- Make your college choice decision
- Submit your tuition deposit (by May 1st)
- Continue searching and applying for scholarships
- Stay focused on grades

May:

- Submit paperwork for room and board
- Take your AP Exams and SOLs
- Stay focused on grades

June:

- Celebrate your high school success
- Send thank you notes to anyone who has helped you
- Start planning for college
- Watch college's summer deadlines (orientations, housing options, registration, etc.) closely

July:

- Register for fall courses at your college
- Begin preparing for your new adventure (i.e. buying all of your dorm room necessities)
- Stay out of trouble!

10 Most Common Senior Year Mistakes

As you can see, your senior year of high school is a busy time. Between taking tests like the SAT and ACT, worrying about your GPA and transcript, doing your college search, sending out your applications and waiting to find out about admissions at your colleges and universities, it's understandable that you would be tempted to put all that school stuff aside and have fun with your friends.

But keep your eyes on the education prize. Balance is key: take breaks to recharge and have fun, but don't let senioritis overtake you and make your college options slip away.

Finding a balance between having fun, studying for your courses and planning for your next life step is a great way to start preparing for college, since you will be called upon to do this during your college years.

To help you stay focused, here are 10 of the top mistakes students make during their senior year.

1. **Missing class**—skipping class could mean missing valuable information for tests but also information you may need for your major in college.
2. **Thinking your second semester grades do not count**—admission departments have been known to rescind the acceptance letters of students who drop their tough classes or let their GPA sink dramatically.
3. **Giving in to 'senioritis'**—a bit of restlessness is expected, however, do not let yourself lose motivation or procrastinate because it can make you less prepared for college.
4. **Getting overwhelmed**—juggling everything from your homework to college essays to AP tests to prom to a social life can be difficult but, by making lists and timelines, you can keep track of everything.
5. **Not keeping your priorities straight**—planning for college does not mean you can forget about your current obligations; continue to be a good student in the classroom and continue to participate in extracurricular activities.
6. **Forgetting to study**—keep up with assignments and remind yourself that every good grade gets you closer to finding a college that offers a great program you want.
7. **Underestimating the time needed to get your work done**—be realistic about your current workload and calculate how long you think something will take you and then double it because the pressure of everything may make you work slower and cause distractions.
8. **Daydreaming about your future academic plans**—your mind may wander thinking about college, possible careers and future plans, however, you need to focus on the present.
9. **Blowing off 'less important' work**—everything counts so try not to be fooled by the idea of a second paper or midterm quiz. Even if something is only worth 10% of your grade, take it seriously.
10. **Failing to use the resources that are available to you**—use the help that is out there including speaking with your counselor and teachers. Teachers can be a big help to get through the second half of the year.

What's next after High School?



Graduating high school is one of the most exciting yet anxiety-provoking times of your life. You are experiencing great changes and now you are faced with difficult decisions that will affect the rest of your life. What path will you choose?

- Workforce
- Gap Year
- Apprenticeships
- Military
- Trade School
- 2-year college
- 4-year college

Workforce

Not sure if you want to go directly to college after high school? Are you eager to being working? Do you need time to figure out what you want to do or need to save money? Sometimes starting out with employment is an option. The workforce is comprised of the following types of employment:

- Full-time permanent jobs
- Combination of two or more part-time jobs
- Entrepreneurship (owning a business)
- Contract services on a temporary basis

Where to begin with workforce? It begins with *Job Hunting*. When jobs are scarce, you may have to think creatively and investigate many sources. Here are some places to get started:

- Relatives or friends (networking)
- Help wanted ads (check online and newspapers)
- Civil service, county, state and federal agencies
- Private employment agencies
- Walk-in inquiries
- Job fairs
- Online job bulletin boards

Compete Successfully

- Look for businesses that hire people with your skills and ask for an interview.
- Do not wait for businesses to advertise.
- Do not underestimate smaller businesses.
- Find out what new businesses are opening in your area and when they will begin hiring.
- Target jobs in rapidly expanding fields.
- Be prepared: complete an application, bring a resume, practice interviewing, and dress appropriately



The Job Application

It's oftentimes the first impression you will give to an employer. Keep these things in mind when completing an application:

- **Be neat:** Type or print carefully so that your application can be read easily (use a black or blue ink pen).
- **Read carefully:** Before you begin to fill in the blanks, read everything on the application. After you complete the form, read it again to make sure you have answered every question.
- **Be complete:** If a question does not apply to you, write, "Does not apply."
- **Watch your spelling, grammar, and punctuation.**
- **Describe all your skills and abilities.** List the kinds of computers, software programming, machinery, equipment, and tools you are able to use.
- **Accuracy counts:** Make sure all information is correct. Check employment dates, telephone numbers, and addresses.
- Take a **sample application** form with you when you apply for a job.
- **Be prepared:** Have all the information about yourself ready ahead of time including names, addresses, telephone numbers, FAX numbers, email addresses, dates, and supervisor names.
- **Be honest**

The Resume

A resume is a document that contains a brief description of your previous education, work experience and additional relevant information. A cover letter often accompanies a resume because it communicates to a prospective employer that you are interested in obtaining a position with his or her company. Why is a resume so important? It is your first introduction to an employer; it serves as an example of how you think and express yourself. It catalogues your skills, experience, training and achievements. The resume will help get your foot in the door for an interview. What should be on a resume?

- Name and all contact information (address, phone number, email address)
- Objective (the purpose of the resume)
- Education, certifications, licenses
- Work experience with job description and responsibilities that also includes company name and dates (start with most recent job first)
- Special skills, certifications and training
- Memberships and activities
- Honors, awards or achievements
- References

Resume Tips

As mentioned, a resume is often used, not only to obtain employment, but also with the college admissions. A resume is one of the first impressions you will make to those who will read it so you want it to your reflect your best. Qualities of a good resume are professional, concise, aesthetically appealing, and emphasize key point or expressions using bold of underlined font. There are typically three formats:

1. Chronological
 - a. Organized in logical steps
 - b. Lists experiences from last employer first, then continues backwards
 - c. Includes dates of employment and experience
 - d. Account for gaps in time and experience
2. Functional
 - a. Lists skills and accomplishments
 - b. Highlights skills areas with specific examples
 - c. Great for just entering the workforce or changing fields
3. Combination
 - a. Mixes features of both:
 - i. Work experience in chronological order
 - ii. Skills listed as functional format

Resume Presentation Recommendations:

- Create a scannable resume using white paper, standard fonts and dark type preferably one-page in length
- The most important information is at the top
- Use as few words as necessary
- Creativity is suggested
- Use action verbs such as managed, developed, designed, executed
- Use past tense to describe former jobs and present tense to describe current jobs
- Spell everything out, no abbreviations or acronyms
- Tailor the resume to the position you are seeking
- Use a cover letter
- Ask someone to proofread it

The Cover Letter

What is a cover letter? A cover letter communicates to a prospective employer that you are interested in obtaining a position with his/her company. It is an introduction to your resume and it is recommended that no resume should be sent without one. Created separately and individually for each position you express an interest, the cover letter is an extension of your resume and reflects your knowledge of the employer's needs.

Your cover letter should introduce yourself to an organization, demonstrate your interest in the company or a specific vacancy, draw attention to your resume and motivate the reader to interview you. The letter is often the first point of contact to a prospective employer.

The cover letter typically consists of three parts: Introduction, Body and Closing. This is where you must state why you are interested in the organization, why they should be interested in you, and when and how you will contact them to follow up on your letter and schedule an appointment.

Introduction: This paragraph should capture the employer's interest, identify the position in which you are applying, mention your source of info (like a newspaper ad), and describe your interest in that particular opening.

Body: The body should show that you understand the nature of the position by explaining how your qualifications relate to it. Provide examples of the skills and qualities from your resume that make you a strong candidate. Do not repeat your resume. This is an opportunity to illustrate more specifically how you think your experience can contribute to the organization. You may want to do some research about the company and relate it to your abilities as well.

Closing: The objective is to secure an interview, therefore, you want to suggest what you would like the reader to do or what action you plan to take to maintain contact. This may be a request for an interview and/or your intent to follow up with a phone call. Respectfully is a great way to close your letter and do not forget to sign it.

Tips:

- Ask someone to proofread it for errors
- Keep the letter to one page
- Include your contact info
- Address your letter to a specific person within the company
- Make the opening sentence an attention getter
- Avoid over-using the word "I"
- Be confident and enthusiastic
- Keep a copy of everything you send out
- Follow up with a phone call

The Interview

Once you complete an application and resume, you may be requested to complete the dreaded interview. An interview allows the employer to meet you and gives you an opportunity to expand upon your application and resume. There are many things to consider for an interview from what you should wear to how you should prepare to what to do afterwards. Here are some pointers:

- Research the organization
- Dress professionally (make a good first impression)
- Be punctual, arrive early
- Remember your interviewer's name
- Shake hands firmly and use good eye contact
- Listen intently
- Demonstrate your enthusiasm and energy for the job
- Remain honest and sincere and do not speak negatively about a prior work experience
- Provide examples of your accomplishments
- Be prepared for the interviewer to allow you to ask questions
- Leave personal concerns at home
- Provide references (with contact information)
- Relax
- Leave a on a positive note and thank the interviewer
- Promptly follow-up with a thank you card after the interview
- Place a follow-up phone call

Possible Questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- What do you perceive to be your greatest strength?
- What are your career goals?
- How do you cope with stressful situations?
- How do you see yourself working with others on the job?
- What are the things that motivate you?
- Why would you like to work for us?

Possible Questions for the Interviewer

- What are the long-term goals for the company?
- What are the positive aspects of working for this company?
- What challenges would I face within this position?
- Be sure to know what the next steps are after the interview. When will you be contacted?
- Do NOT ask about salary in the first interview.

The Gap Year

A gap year, which is also known as year abroad, year off or deferred year, typically is the year after high school when a student can take time off to explore his or her interests. After the gap year is over, the student will begin his/her college career. Common in Europe and Australia, there are numerous activities available for students but they do require research and a serious commitment.

Examples of Gap Year activities:

- Traveling
- International volunteering
- Faith-based services
- Global education programs
- Working
- Internships
- Athletic Training/Sports

Benefits:

- Explore interests before deciding on a major
- Gain knowledge in a subject that can help in a classroom
- May discover something not considered studying
- Gain a new perspective and a greater appreciation for college education

Resources:

- AmeriCorps State and National www.americorps.org
- Idealist www.idealists.org
- Center for Interim Programs www.interimprograms.com
- Teach for America www.teachforamerica.org
- Peace Corps www.peacecorps.gov
- Global Service Corps www.globalservicecorps.org
- United Planet www.unitedplanet.org
- Student Government Jobs www.studentjobs.gov
- Cool Works (outdoor jobs) www.coolworks.com
- Back Door Jobs www.backdoorjobs.com

Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a certified, structured, well defined program of training that combines supervised on the job training skills with related instruction training in the classroom. **Over 300 employers sponsor more than 1,200 apprentices in Northern Virginia each year.**

Examples of Apprenticeship Programs:

Barbering	Machinist
Carpentry	Nail Technician
Cosmetology	Office Administrative Support Specialist
Cook	Optician
Electricity	Plumbing
Firefighter	Surveying
Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning	Tattoo Artist

Apprenticeship Terms/Definitions:

Apprenticeship Agreement

- Voluntary signed document between employer (sponsor) and the apprentice that establishes their commitment and responsibilities.

Certification Card

- Wallet-size identification card issued by Virginia Department of Labor & Industry (VADOLI), certifying that you are a registered apprentice.

Licensing

- Upon completion of apprenticeships the apprentice will receive an application at graduation or in the mail to take the exam.

Program Sponsor/Sponsor

- A "registered program sponsor" is an individual employer, association, or joint apprenticeship committee with a VA address who has adopted VA Apprenticeship Standards with VADOLI. Also, there must be a structured, registered, OJT training program, including specific work assignments, wage scales and the requirement to attend related instruction classes.

Registered Apprentice

- A person is a registered apprentice only if he/she has signed an apprenticeship agreement with a registered program sponsor who is his/her employer and has been certified by VADOLI.

Virginia Department of Labor & Industry (VADOLI)

- Agency responsible for supervising and certifying of OJT, registering apprentices, certifying and registering employers and issuing state certificates.

For more info:

Apprenticeship Information in the Washington D.C. Area:

Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training

200 Constitution Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20001

PHONE: 202-698-5099

Virginia Department of Labor and Industry

http://www.doli.virginia.gov/apprenticeship/sponsors_occupations.html

Construction Workforce Development Coalition

www.futureforcenow.com

The Military

Enlisting in the military service right after high school can be a smart option. The military provides job training and a college education. The services can also help you build a college fund. The five services include:

The Army: www.army.mil

The Navy: www.navy.mil

The Air Force: www.af.mil

The Marine Corps: www.marines.mil

The Coast Guard: www.uscg.mil

The National Guard consists of two components: the Army National Guard (ARNG) and the Air National Guard (ANG). Its mission is to service the state in times of natural disaster or civil disturbance, and the nation in time of war. Flexible scheduling allows for you to combine service in the National Guard with work or school. The Guard meets one weekend per month and two weeks in the summer.

Each service sets its own enlistment qualifications. Please contact our local recruiters for information or visit their websites.

General Enlistment Qualifications:

Age: Must be at least 17 and not yet 35 years old, parent or legal guardian consent required if 17

Citizenship Status: Must be either (1) U.S. citizen, or (2) an immigrant alien legally admitted to the U.S. for permanent residence and possessing immigration and naturalization documents

Physical Conditions: Must meet minimum physical standards

Weight: There are minimum and maximum weights, based on percentage of body fat

Vision: There are minimum correctable vision standards

Overall Health: Must be in good health and pass a medical exam. Certain diseases or conditions may exclude persons from enlistment (such as severe allergies, alcoholism, drug addiction, epilepsy, diabetes)

Education: High school graduation is desired by all services

Aptitude: The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) must be taken and requires a minimum entry score which varies by service and occupation

Moral Character: Must meet standards designed to screen out persons likely to become disciplinary problems (standards include arrests, drug use, court convictions)

Marital Status and Dependents: May be either single or married, some services limit number of dependents (children)

The Military continued

Interested in the military? Please do your research of each branch. Go to www.military.com. Also, sign up to take the **ASVAB** test the fall of your senior year. The test not only provides an entrance score required for the military branches but also provides you insightful information as to which career may be best for you. It's a free three hour test that will help you navigate your future. For more information about it, speak with your counselor or go to www.asvabprogram.com.

Need money for college? Consider participating in the **Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC)** program while you are in college. It provides you the opportunity to attend a civilian college while studying military leadership as part of a total undergraduate program. ROTC is a college elective, which requires about four hours a week. Applications for the program are available upon request from college ROTC units.

www.armyrotc.com - Army ROTC

www.afrotc.com - Air Force ROTC

www.nrotc.navy.mil - Navy ROTC

The program is divided into two parts, the basic course and the advanced course. The basic course is normally attended during your first two years of college with no military commitment. After completing this course, students may enroll in the advanced course. At this time, they will incur a military obligation.

In addition to taking leadership courses, you will also participate in leadership labs, physical training, and field training exercises. You will learn what it takes to lead others, motivate groups and conduct missions as an officer. Upon ROTC graduation, you will earn a specific ranking and be commissioned into military service.



Trade Schools

A vocational, technical or trade school focuses on providing graduates with marketable skills and, after graduating, you will be certified and eligible to take any state administered tests. You also will be able to immediately enter the job market with your skills, and be able to receive a high rate of compensation.

Most US trade schools offer certificate programs and do not offer standard college degrees. Some programs do end with an Associate's Degree but this may be unusual. Quality of trade schools can vary significantly, therefore, it is important to research the reputation of the school, cost to attend, appropriate local and national accreditation, and the way the school is regarded by the trade in which you are interested in pursuing.

Most trade school curriculum requires a minimum of two years, but sometimes longer.

Employers across the trades are beginning to experience a shortage of skilled workers in fields ranging from auto mechanics and HVAC to steam fitting and welding. Just like with apprenticeships, skilled craftsperson areas will be in demand. Trade school may be an option for you, particularly if you are interested in areas such as:

Acupuncture

Fashion Buying

Animal care

Flight Attendant

Automotive Technology

Golf Management

Barber

Hair Design

Bridal Consulting

Landscape Design

Culinary Arts

Marine and Watercraft

Dental Hygienist

Massage Therapy

Diesel Mechanic

Medical Lab Technician

Diving Instructor

Paralegal

Dog Obedience

Real Estate

For more info, visit:

www.best-technical-schools.com

www.khake.com/index.html

2-Year College

Two-year colleges, also known as community colleges or junior colleges, provide access to higher education with an open-door admissions policy (admissions open to individuals with a high school diploma or GED). Students can enroll full-time; however, many students elect to enroll part-time so that they can address family obligations or employment.

Community colleges typically offer five facets of education:

1. **Career Education**—traditional two-year degree, which is an Associate's Degree, that focuses on providing education for a specific career or degree
2. **Developmental Education**—remedial education for high school graduates who are not academically ready to enroll in college-level courses
3. **Continuing Education**—non-credit courses offered to the community for personal development and interest (such as photography or cake decorating)
4. **Industry Training**—contracted training and education wherein a local company pays the college to provide specific training or courses for their employees
5. **Transfer Education**—traditional two-year degree but will then transfer to a four-year institution to pursue a Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Art Degree

Features of a community college education:

- **Cost effective**—the cost of tuition is significantly less than a four-year college, room and board as well as transportation fees may not be exist because students can live at home and not usually commute far to go to school
- **Nurturing environment**—a supportive atmosphere may be required for students who need extra assistance either academically or personally before transitioning to a four-year college
- **Offers specialized courses of study**—opportunities to earn certificates for an intensive program (such as automotive technology or day care assistant)
- **Convenience and size**—schools are often located within a local urban environment convenient to surrounding communities and class sizes tend to be small, providing more one-to-one opportunities with faculty
- **Flexible scheduling**—students schedule their classes at a time that is convenient for them (online classes often available as well as day, evening and weekend classes)
- **Professors or teaching faculty focus on teaching**—instructors tend to focus on teaching students rather than research or publishing
- **Exploration**—students have the opportunity to explore various career paths before committing to a program
- **Dual Enrollment**—high school students do have the opportunity to earn college credits, some of which may be both for high school and college credit

2-Year College Transfer Info

If you are interested in attending a community college intending to one day transfer to a four-year college, then it is important that you understand the credit transfer requirements of the specific four-year college. Many two-year colleges have established “articulation agreements,” which clearly describe which credits transfer, with certain public four-year colleges or universities. Four-year colleges will accept transfer credits only from schools that are formally recognized by a regional, national or professional educational agency. This accreditation signifies that an institution meets or exceeds a minimum level of educational quality.

When considering a transfer, advance planning is required by you. You will have to find the answers to several questions. What courses does a student need in order to transfer? What are the transfer admissions requirements for your selected college? How many students transfer? What classes should I take so that my credits will transfer? What GPA do I need to have? For these answers, you must, not only speak with an academic advisor at the community college, but also with a transfer officer in admissions of the four-year college.

For more information on the transfer agreements between Virginia community colleges and Virginia public colleges visit: <http://www.myfuture.vccs.edu/transfer>

Steps to take before selecting a 2-year college

- Visit the campus and take a tour
- Talk to current students about classes, programs, and satisfaction with the school
- Research the school’s programs and classes offered
- Inquire about **placement tests**
- Visit the financial aid office and research scholarship opportunities
- Speak with admissions representatives, academic advisors and career center personnel
- Find out the deadline for applying
- Read the school catalog before registering for classes

Did you know the following got their start at a community college?

Tom Hanks (actor)
John Cougar Melloncamp (musician)
H. Ross Perot (1992 Presidential Candidate)
Calvin Klein (fashion designer)
Pete Rozelle (NFL Commissioner)
Walt Disney (founder of Disney World)
Melvin Salvesson (creator of Mastercard)

James Sinegal (CEO of Costco)
Clint Eastwood (actor and director)
Arthur Goldberg (Supreme Court Justice)
Fred Haise (Apollo 13 Astronaut)
John Walsh (*America’s Most Wanted* host)
Gwendolyn Brooks (Pulitzer prize-winning poet)

Typical Admissions Process for a 2-Year College

1. Complete application for admission—usually around spring time of senior year for Fall admission.
2. Determine what tests you need to take—some colleges will waive the placement tests if your score on the SAT meets a specific requirement. Also, for students whose first language is not English, an English proficiency test may be required.
3. Schedule a meeting with an academic advisor—if you plan on transferring, you must tell your advisor.
4. Apply for student financial aid—be sure to complete the FAFSA.
5. Select classes—class schedules are usually available two months before the start of each semester.
6. Register for classes—register early for the best selection. The schedule of classes includes instructions and forms necessary for registration.
7. Pay tuition—tuition payment is usually due at the time of registration.
8. Review your course schedule—check your schedule for errors.
9. Get your ID card
10. Purchase your textbooks and parking pass

For more information on community colleges, check out:

www.communitycollegereview.com

www.communitycollegetimes.com

www.achievingthedream.org

American Association of Community Colleges

One Dupont Circle, NW Suite 410

Washington, DC 20036

202-728-0200

www.aacc.nche.edu

2015 Community College Fast Facts, according to the American Association of Community Colleges:

- Over 1,000 community colleges exist
- 12.4 million students are enrolled
- 39% of students are full-time, 61% of students are part-time
- Average age is 28 with 37% of students 21 or younger
- 36% are first-generation college students
- Of all US undergraduates, 46% attend a community college
- Average annual tuition and fees (2014-2015):
 - Community college (public, in district) - \$3,347
 - 4-year college (public, in state) - \$9,739

Developing a Potential College List

Most students apply to at least three colleges; five or six would give you all the options you need. As you narrow down your choices, you consider the criteria listed below and have at least one college from each of the following categories:

Reach Schools—those that are a ‘reach’ for you either academically or financially

Probable Schools—those that will meet all your needs and will likely accept you

Safe Schools—those which will make you happy and will be sure to accept you

Think about what criteria are most important to you when selecting a college. They might include:

Cost	Special programs (ESL, study abroad, ROTC, learning disability programs)
Size	Type of school
Academic competitiveness	Athletics
Location	Campus facilities
Setting (urban, suburban, rural)	Student life
Academic programs	

Identify Priorities - Ask yourself the following questions as you try to decide where to apply.

Academic Programs and Curriculum

Does the college have the major you are considering?

What is the reputation of the program you are considering?

How many courses or credits are needed to earn the degree you want?

Do you need a school that offers pre-professional programs such as pre-med?

Would you like the option to self-design a major?

Do you think you will need a school that offers strong academic support?

Academic Competitiveness

How your academic credentials compare to the freshmen profile?

What is the average SAT, ACT or GPA of freshmen entering that college?

What is the graduation rate?

Location

How close to home do you want to stay?

How well do you adapt to new situations?

Is there an area where you always wanted to go to school?

Do you want to be able to commute to school?

What are the transportation costs?

How is the weather and climate where your school is located?

Setting

Are looking for the excitement of a big city?

Would you prefer a school in the mountains or a wooded area that provides outdoor activities?

Do you want the small college town feel?

Size

Do you want to attend a school smaller than Oakton?
Do you want to attend a school that has 40,000 students?
Do you learn better in a small class environment or a larger classroom?
Have you thought about starting a small school and later transferring to a larger one?
Will a small school offer you the variety of courses and majors you need?

Type of School

Have you considered a single sex school?
Do you prefer a liberal arts college or a research university?
Do you want to go to a public or private school?
Would you be interested in a historically black college or a religiously affiliated school?

Student Life

Do you plan on joining a fraternity or sorority?
Do you want to continue the activities you participated in high school?
Does the school offer community service?
What is there to do on the weekends?
Is the school a suitcase campus?
What special services are available such as health care, tutoring or counseling?
Do graduates obtain employment regularly?
What percentage of students return as sophomores?

Housing/Campus Facilities

Do you want to live in a dorm?
Are you guaranteed housing all four years?
Are there apartment facilities located on campus?
Can freshmen have cars?
What are the food plan options?
How important is the quality of food?
Will you require a special food diet like kosher meals or vegetarian?
Do you require handicapped accessibility?

Athletics

Do you intend to play a sport in college?
Will you be recruited for Division I or Division II sports?
Are you looking for intramural or club teams?
Do you want to attend a school that has an active, school spirit atmosphere?

Cost

Have you and your family discussed how much you can afford to spend on college?
Will you be living at home?
Is there financial aid available?
Would you be willing to work on campus to help pay for expenses

ADDITIONAL FACTORS IN THE COLLEGE SEARCH TO CONSIDER:

- Retention and graduation rates for your demographic
- Career services available
- Academic services available
- Average debt upon graduation
- Safety
- Alumni network

In order to help you keep everything organized, consider keeping a chart that lists your criteria and possible schools (see Appendix A for an example of a college comparison worksheet). When you first begin the college search process, list 15-20 colleges to research.

Where do you start the research process?

- Your preliminary research will start with each college's website where you can obtain your first glimpse to the college's student life, entrance requirements, application procedures, accreditation, course offerings, and cost
- If you are interested in a particular college, request more information
- Reference materials are available that provide more in-depth information (i.e. course catalogs, videos, view books, websites, admission books)
- Family Connection is the college lifeline Oakton uses; each student and parent has access to their own site
- Contact admissions offices directly
- Meet with college representatives when they visit Oakton (typically in the fall)
- Attend college fairs
- The career center
- College visits allow you to gain first-hand perspective of colleges
- Discuss your college options with your family
- Meet with your counselor
- Speak with current students at colleges

What do College Admissions Committees Look for?

Colleges and universities are becoming more selective each year and often have more applicants than space available. Yet, certain admissions criteria have been established; college admissions officers are looking for well-rounded students who will be academically successful at their institutions. While the following criteria may be the same from school to school, their order of importance will vary. No single factor will determine acceptance or rejection.

- Strength of Curriculum (rigorous course schedule)
- Grade Point Average (G.P.A.) and class rank
- College entrance exams (SAT and/or ACT scores)
- School activities
- Community and volunteer activities
- Letters of recommendation
- College Essays
- Resume
- Special interests or talents
- Diversity
- Internships and jobs
- College interview
- Technical certifications
- Portfolio (especially for art work or writing samples)
- Athletic ability
- Audition
- Demonstrated interest
- Hooks (what sets a student apart from the other applicants)

Schools take into account all of these factors, however, they desire to see that you have selected challenging courses in high school that will help you grow academically. They want to know about your interests, accomplishments and future goals. Students who are able to demonstrate initiative and a love of learning are preferred among applicants.

The more selective the college, the more rigorous course load is expected. Keep in mind the more competitive colleges will expect students to take advantage of the most competitive curriculum offered at Oakton. However, you should take courses that are appropriate for you. Many colleges review a student's record to determine if the college works best for an individual's interests and abilities. The smaller the school, the more likely it will look at the 'whole' student.

College Admissions 101

As a senior, the college application process falls into three stages:

1. **Applying**—this step usually occurs during the first semester of senior year and involves finishing up college visits, speaking with admissions reps, completing research and compiling a list of possible colleges, taking college entrance exams for a last time, completing applications and meeting deadlines.
2. **Waiting**—once all the applications have been sent, the replies will come in either on a rolling basis or by an early April date depending on the particular college. During this time, continue to work hard and earn good grades, which will help for mid-year transcripts sent out to all of your colleges.
3. **Deciding**—this decision will be one of the most difficult you will have to make. Speak with your parents, revisit colleges, and compare financial aid packages. You will most likely have to notify your schools by a strict May 1st deadline.

Application Checklist: Learn it, Live it, Love it

The first step for the actual application process is to visit each college's website that details undergraduate admissions requirements. Follow each step and check it off as you go. The following are the parts of your college application for each school.

- Admissions application
- College essays or personal statements are typically required but may be optional (may copy and paste from Word)
- Application fees
- SAT/ACT scores directly to each college
- Secondary School Reports
- Official Transcripts
- School Profile
- Letter of Recommendation(s)

The College Application

One of the first impressions you give to a college is through your application. It is important to highlight your achievements but you must do it honestly and accurately. The actual application cannot be submitted until the fall of your senior year but you can get an early start on the application by preparing with the necessary materials and starting on the essays. Here are some guidelines to get started:

- Get the applications—go to the college website
- Save your login information when you create your application accounts
- Organize your personal records such as a resume or activities sheet
- Make a draft of all required essays (this will be the most time-consuming part of the application)
- Read the directions thoroughly and obey the instructions
- Pay specific attention to the application deadlines
- Start with the easier applications and save the most important one for last
- Answer all questions (use N/A if the question does not apply)
- Be prepared with your parents information such as their employment information
- Remember the required application fees (can be paid by credit card online)
- Check to see how you will be notified that the college receives the online application
- Print a copy of each application for your records and maintain a file

The Common Application

In its fourth decade, the Common Application currently provides both online and print versions of its first-year and transfer applications. It was created to provide a common, standardized first-year application form for use at any member institution. Nearly 500 US public and private, large and small, highly selective and modestly selective colleges and universities use the common application. To see if one of your potential colleges uses the common app, check out www.commonapp.org. This website allows you to complete one application but apply to more than one college simultaneously, however, be careful because some colleges also have supplemental applications.

The Common Application becomes available August 1st.

College Entrance Exams

Most colleges require some form of testing to determine your readiness for college-level work. Generally, they require either the SAT I or ACT. It is your responsibility to find out what tests are required by your colleges. Both tests do charge a fee and offer registration online. When you register for these tests, you are given the option to have your scores sent to four colleges for free. If you not have your scores sent when you register, then you will be charged a fee to send scores at a later date per school. Also, learn more about the SAT's score choice option through College Board. You would have to do this on your own; Oakton is not responsible for sending official SAT or ACT scores to colleges.

See Appendix B for College Board's SAT vs. ACT Comparison Chart

SAT- The Redesigned Version (March 2016)

- Register for the test through College Board, www.collegeboard.org
- College Board offers valuable information regarding colleges and you will be asked to create an account where you will select your academic achievements and interests
- Recommend to take the SAT I in the spring of the junior year and again in the fall of senior year
- Administered 7 times a year (October, November, December, January, March, May and June)
- Scored on the basis of 200 (low) to 800 (high) for each section: reading and math with a new scale of 1600
- College Board offers free test prep through Khan Academy and an SAT app to download

The new test focuses on the classroom skills and knowledge that colleges want most:

- Everyday words that features vocabulary found in college curriculum
- Essential math such as algebra and data analysis
- Everyday context using history, social sciences and science to solve problems
- Optional essay that requires reading a passage and explaining how the author builds an argument to persuade an audience

American College Testing Assessment (ACT)

- Register for the test through ACT, www.act.org
- Recommended to take the ACT in the spring of the junior year or again in the fall of senior year
- Administered 6 times a year (September, October, December, February, April and June)
- Scored on a scale of 0 (low) to 36 (high) for all sections: English, math, reading, science and optional writing

SAT Subject Tests

- Register through College Board, www.collegeboard.org
- Students can take one, two, or three tests on a single testing date
- All tests are one hour in length and multiple-choice with some unique features
- Designed to test the level of knowledge in a particular academic discipline
- 20 Subject Tests are available:
 - Literature
 - United States History
 - World History
 - Mathematics Level 1
 - Mathematics Level 2
 - Biology E/M
 - Chemistry
 - Physics
 - Spanish
 - Latin
 - German
 - Italian
 - French
 - Modern Hebrew
 - Chinese with Listening
 - French with Listening
 - German with Listening
 - Japanese with Listening
 - Korean with Listening
 - Spanish with Listening
- Administered 6 times a year (October, November, December, January, May and June)
- Scored on a scale of 200 (low) to 800 (high)
- Best taken in the spring of junior year by students completing studies in advanced foreign language courses or AP-level courses
- Recommended for students who may be applying to the most selective colleges that require two tests or for students applying to selective colleges that highly encourage them
- Recommended for students who may be applying early decision or early action
- Scores are sometimes used for placement in freshman classes

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

- Register at by phone or visit www.toefl.org
- Once you register, a test date, time and location is then assigned (centers fill up quickly, make appointment early)
- A computerized test designed for students whom English is not a native language and whose scores on the SAT I verbal would be affected by the language difference
- Minimum acceptable scores are established by the individual colleges

Advanced Placement Tests (AP)

- Required of all students taking an AP course; registration is automatic if you are enrolled in the course and, at this time, the county is paying the test fees
- Designed for students who have completed college level work in high school
- Used to earn possible college credit; take them seriously
- Administered in May (national dates)
- Scored on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high)
- Minimum acceptable scores established by individual colleges

College Essays

Writing your college essay is one of the most time-consuming, difficult yet personal and revealing aspect of your application. Colleges ask you for an essay for two reasons: they want to see how well you write and they want to see you. To get to know you, they want to read your personal thoughts. Some schools will require that you write on a specific topic; others will request essays about personal goals. The essay may describe family responsibilities, financial needs, travel experiences, and special circumstances that should be considered in admissions. Furthermore, some colleges require you to write more than one essay or no essay at all. Some colleges often put a word limit on your personal statements, which requires you to be succinct and concise but showing your personality and why you would be an asset on their campus.

Do

- Try to put the main idea in one sentence before writing
- Write clearly, avoid being vague
- Use words you are comfortable using
- Express, not impress
- Edit and rewrite until your essay says what you mean
- Check all spelling and grammar
- Be specific and use details and examples
- Avoid clichés
- Let the first draft sit a while without reading it
- Ask for help and consider letting someone proofread it such as your English teacher, parents, counselor or friends

Do Not

- Be redundant
- Use slang
- Do not force the use of humor
- Use words you cannot define
- Begin your essay with “My name is...”
- Write past the word limit
- Be too general

Examples of college essay prompts:

What is your favorite word and why?

Discuss briefly the one or two extracurricular, work or community activities that have meant the most to you.

What idea has most influence your life? Explain.

Letters of Recommendation

Letters of recommendation are a way for admissions committees to gain a perspective from someone who knows you rather well. Some colleges may require a specific amount of letters of recommendation while others do not require them. It is your responsibility to determine what letters, IF ANY, are required. Colleges may specify that recommendations come from:

- Teachers in academic subjects who can speak to your academic strengths
- Coaches and teachers who can attest to your athletic, artistic or leadership talent
- Counselors who can address your personal strengths, accomplishments and special circumstances which might impact on an admission decision
- Others such as club sponsors, religious leaders, mentors, community members, who can provide evidence of your character and leadership ability
- Employers may write about your work ethic, skills or on the job training

Consider a person who knows you well enough to write a letter of recommendation that will cite your strengths and abilities. Request letter(s) well in advance of the due date (at least three weeks) so that you provide enough time for the writers to write a favorable letter. You could begin to ask towards the end of your junior year.

If you would like your counselor to write you a letter of recommendation, please contact him/her. You will be expected to complete the senior profile. Also, some teachers will request that you provide them additional information such as a resume or activity sheet. It is appropriate to send a thank-you note to anyone writing a letter of recommendation.

The College Interview

A college interview is a chance to show that you're more than just test scores and grades; it allows you to find out what is unique and distinct about a college as well. It's an exchange of information—you learn about the college and the college learns about you. It can last 30-60 minutes.

The increasingly large applicant pools have resulted in colleges moving away from required interviews and many colleges do not offer them. Interviews vary depending on the school, student and particular situation. You be interviewing with an admissions officer, a student or alumnus. Other, less formal, interview situations include group information sessions with admissions staff and current students, and high school and local college fairs.

There are three types of interviews:

Alumni Interviews

Many colleges enlist their alumni to help recruit candidates. Interviews may be held in the homes of alumni or alumni may visit Oakton. If you are interested in an alumni interview, you can contact the admissions office. Following the interview, the alumni representative will send an evaluation report to the admissions office for consideration.

Group Interviews

Group interviews for students and parents are often conducted college visits. You will get a brief overview of the college's history, curriculum and activities and then prospective applicants will ask questions. These are designed as information-giving sessions rather than evaluations.

Personal Interviews

Conducted by admissions, personal interviews are designed to evaluate a candidate rather than provide information about the college. The importance of personal interviews in the final decision varies but a strong interview can increase your chances of acceptance.

Interview Tips:

Be your own advocate
Explain your special
circumstances (such as
why your grades slipped)
Ask questions about the
college
Don't be late

Don't lie
Be nice to the receptionist
or other staff members
Don't memorize speeches
Don't swear
Don't chew gum
Watch your social media
accounts

Don't tell the school it's
your safety
Don't bring a parent to
the interview
Respond with more than
'yes' or 'no' answers
Don't refuse an interview

The College Visit

The timing of your college visit is important—spring of the junior year and over the summer may be best. Senior year fall visits may also be a great way to see campus.

- ❖ Prior to your visit, gather all pertinent information about the college (school closings, tour dates, etc.)
- ❖ Do not schedule two tours on one day
- ❖ Dress comfortably and appropriately
- ❖ Take a campus tour led by a current student
- ❖ Attend a group information session
- ❖ Fill out a visitor card at the admissions office and pick up any college materials
- ❖ Have lunch in the student union
- ❖ Browse the bookstore
- ❖ Pick up a copy of the student newspaper
- ❖ Walk through the library. Does it look like a comfortable place to study?
- ❖ Check out the recreational facilities that interest you
- ❖ Sit in on a class (with permission)
- ❖ Stay overnight in a dorm with a current student (requires prior arrangements)
- ❖ Have a formal interview
- ❖ Meet with a coach or faculty member in your area of interest (requires prior arrangements)
- ❖ Ask students you meet what they like best about the campus and what they would change if they could
- ❖ Explore the nearest town and transportation options
- ❖ Sit on a bench and watch students walk by, can you imagine yourself happily among them?

Top Questions to Ask on College Visits

What are the general education requirements?

Are there peer tutors, peer reviewers, or other academic support options?

What kinds of career services are available?

Is there help to find internships? Is there a mandatory internship program?

How widely used are teaching assistants?

What are the most popular majors? What is the school known for?

How many students return after their freshman year?

What is the graduation rate?

What is the average debt upon graduation?

What are my study abroad options?

Will my Advanced Placement or community college credits be accepted?

Where do students typically study?

Are there job recruitment fairs on campus?

Military Service Academies

The United States maintains five service academies: the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York; the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland; the United States Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs, Colorado; the United States Coast Guard Academy at New London, Connecticut; and the United States Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York. The mission of the service academies is to provide instruction and experience necessary to produce graduates with knowledge, character, and leadership abilities to become career military officers and earn a college degree.

Ranked among the best in the nation, the military academies provide a rigorous academic curriculum, extensive hands-on training and an opportunity to participate in varsity and intramural sports, music groups and clubs. Students must live under a strict, regimented personal and ethical code to develop discipline. Undergraduates are considered members of the U.S. Armed Forces and engage in regular military training.

Appointment to a service academy is extremely competitive. Interested candidates must start the process in the spring of their junior year. Military academies award full scholarships to students accepted for admission which covers tuition, room and board, and each student receives a monthly stipend for books, supplies and clothing.

Service Academy Admissions Process

1. Determine the basic requirements and qualifications. Each candidate must:
 - a. Be 17 but not yet 22
 - b. Be a U.S. citizen at the time of enrollment
 - c. Be unmarried with no dependents
 - d. Have an above average high school record
 - e. Be in good physical health
 - f. Have above average strength, endurance, and agility
2. Apply for nomination. Each of the service academies, with the exception of the Coast Guard Academy, requires a political nomination from appointment. The nomination process is highly selective so it's best to start early. As a minimum, you should apply to your two United States senators, your congressional representative, and the Vice President. Some members of Congress will not accept applications after a specific date. In addition to the letter, the nomination process may include a questionnaire or interview.
3. Start a file at an academy. Send a letter to the admissions offices requesting a pre-candidate questionnaire.
4. File out academy forms. These forms will be sent to you after an evaluation of your pre-candidate questionnaire.
5. Take the SAT I or ACT. Send your scores to the academies.
6. Pass the medical exam from the Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DOD MERB) and the Physical Aptitude Exam (PAE).
7. Review notification of the evaluation and status of your application. This may arrive as early as November for outstanding candidates; final decisions are made in April.

www.usafa.edu - U.S. Air Force Academy

www.cga.edu - U.S. Coast Guard Academy

www.usmma.edu - U.S. Merchant Marine Academy

www.usma.edu - U.S. Military Academy

www.usna.edu - U.S. Naval Academy

Is Early Decision Right for You?

- I have a clear first-choice college and am completely confident that it is a very good fit for me.
- I have done careful research about the college that supports my choice
- I will probably be comfortable with the financial aid that is offered to me and won't have to compare financial aid offers.
- My grades from first semester senior year will not be significantly better than the rest of my record.
- I have taken (or will take) my standardized tests so that the scores will reach my early decision college in time for early review.
- My overall record places me within the admissible range for this college.
- I will be able to prepare and submit my application by the early decision deadline, including letters of recommendation from my teachers and counselor.
- I would like to know for sure where I will be going to college as early as possible.
- I will do careful research on the rest of my college list and prepare applications to them in case I am deferred or denied in early decision.
- Although my early decision college is my clear first choice, I realize that I may not be accepted and that I will also be very happy with a fine education at other college.

Application Check List

- Keep track of all deadlines—they vary at each college
- Use Family Connection
- Be sure to spell your name exactly the same way on all application materials, SAT or ACT registration, and any correspondence
- Make sure your e-mail address reflects your maturity
- Keep a copy of everything you send in, including online applications and other written and e-mail correspondence
- Give everyone who is writing a letter a recommendation everything they need
- File financial aid forms promptly
- Request College Board or ACT to send scores to the colleges of your choice
- Check the status of your application about three to four weeks after everything was sent

NCAA Division I and II Athletics

If you are interested in playing for NCAA Division I or Division II sports in college, then you must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center to be eligible to play. Athletes playing in NCAA Division III do not have to register. The differences between the divisions depend on several things such as the number of sports a school has overall; how many sports are available for both men and women; how many athletes or teams the school has in each sport; and the number of contests the school plays against in its division. Each college and university regulated by the NCAA has established rules on eligibility, recruiting and financial aid; the NCAA is the governing body of many intercollegiate sports.

What is the NCAA Eligibility Center?

The NCAA Eligibility Center is the organization that determines whether prospective college athletes are eligible to play sports at NCAA Division I or Division II institutions. It does this by reviewing the student athlete's academic record, SAT or ACT scores, and amateur status to ensure conformity with NCAA rules.

When should students register?

The NCAA recommends that student athletes register with the clearinghouse at the beginning of their junior year in high school, but many students register after their junior year. There is no registration deadline, but students must be cleared before they receive athletic scholarships or compete at a Division I or Division II institution.

How do students register?

Students can register online at the Eligibility Center www.eligibilitycenter.org. They will have to enter personal information, answer questions about their athletic participation, and pay a registration fee. The website will then prompt them to have their high school transcript and ACT or SAT scores sent to the clearinghouse.

What are the NCAA academic eligibility requirements?

To play sports at an NCAA Division I or Division II institution, the student must:

- Complete a certain number of high school core courses
- Earn a certain minimum grade point average in these core courses
- Earn a certain minimum score on the SAT or ACT (for Division I, this is scaled according to the student's core-course GPA)
- Graduate from high school

For more information, see the NCAA's *Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete*, available at the NCAA website. You can also view the following NCAA Quick Reference Sheet for more details (see Appendix C).

Steps to Being Recruited—A Brief Overview

1. It starts with talent; work hard and have fun
2. Take the right classes to make sure you fulfill the NCAA's eligibility standards
3. Register with the NCAA
4. Make a list of potential schools and research them
5. Let the coaches know who you are (schedule an interview or write a letter introducing who you are and possibly supplying an athletic resume)
6. Get exposure—complete athletic questionnaires on college websites, make a highlight video of your action and send it around, and speak with your high school coaches
7. Attend sports camps—they can help you get better and help get you noticed, particularly at college level sports camps
8. Contact the coaches (follow NCAA guidelines)
9. Sort out the paperwork—make sure you have all of the necessary documents such as your transcript to the athletic programs
10. Make the right choice in signing with a particular college—choose a university that offers you the best environment for athletic, academic and personal development

Sample Introductory Letter to Coaches (From Peterson's Sports Scholarships Book)

Date

Coach's Name, Title, Sport

Athletic Department

College/University

City, State Zip Code

Dear Coach:

I am 17 years old and will graduate from high school in June, 2____. I rank in the top quarter of my class and plan to take the ACT (or SAT) next November. I am very interested in attending college in (state) and in competing in college-level sports. I would appreciate any information about your (name of sport) program.

Last year I was runner-up in the 17-and-under competition in my region and placed fourth in the national finals. My coach is preparing me for international competition this summer. I would be pleased to provide you with letters from two instructors who can comment on my ability, with a video of my play during regional competition, or with recommendations from alumni from your institution who have observed my play and encouraged me to consider your college.

I am also writing to the college admissions office for an application and for information about the engineering program. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Student's Full Name (you can also insert your picture next to your contact info)

Street Address

Vienna, VA 22181

571-255-5555

Email Address: (must be professional format)

Objective: To pursue a career in business and play basketball at the collegiate level.

Oak High School
1234 Cougar Drive
Vienna, VA 22181
571-111-2222

Classes taken include: Introduction to Business, Marketing I and II, College Accounting, AP Calculus

DOB: 06/20/2000

GPA: 3.2/4.0

Height: 6'1"

SAT: Reading – 670, Math – 610

Weight: 195 lbs.

Main sport/position: Basketball/Forward

High School Coach: Mr. Coach

Stats:

	2014 - 2015	2015-2016
Points per game	22	18
Shooting percentage	57%	55%
Rebounds	11	16
Block Shots	5	7
Field goal percentage	87%	83%

Other Sports: Baseball

Camps, Clinics & Summer Leagues: List here with years

Athletic Accomplishments: List athletic accomplishments such as awards, service as team captain, Most Improved Player, etc.

Related Sports Activities: List the activities such coaching, refereeing, etc.

References: Provide your coach's name and contact info.

Important College Vocabulary

Accreditation

Certification that a school or an instructional program meets standards set by an outside reviewing organization. Many forms of financial aid are available only to students attending accredited institutions.

Academic Advisor

A member of the college faculty or staff who assists students with planning quarter or semester schedules as well as their overall programs of study. Advisors may also help with career planning.

Articulation

A formal agreement between high schools and colleges or between community/technical colleges and baccalaureate institutions, designed to make it easy for students to move from one educational level to the next without any gaps or repetition in their coursework.

Associate Degree

A degree awarded after completion of a two-year college program of study.

Bachelor's Degree

A degree awarded after completion of a four- or five-year college program of study.

Candidate Reply Date

The date by which most colleges require students to reply to offers of admission - May 1.

Catalog

A comprehensive resource listing college regulations, program and course descriptions, degree and graduation requirements, transfer requirements, and other essential information

Class Rank

The relative position of a student in his or her graduating class based on the cumulative grade point average. **FCPS DOES NOT RANK

College-Level Examination Program (CLEP)

Examinations taken by students who have gained experience through work, independent reading, or correspondence courses. Many colleges award advanced placement and/or degree credit based on a qualifying score.

Early Action (EA)

A student applies to a school early in the senior year and requests an early application review and notification of admission. The answer usually takes three to four weeks after application. If accepted, the student is not obligated to attend that institution but can bank this admission and still apply to other colleges during the regular admission cycle.

Early Decision (ED)

Early Decision allows students to apply to an institution early in the senior year and request an early notification of admission. Frequently, the student and school counselor sign a contract with the school at the time of application that indicates that if accepted, the student is obligated to attend that institution.

Internship

Program of supervised work experience related to a student's field of interest, performed with or without pay. Generally, the student receives degree credit.

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)

The association of member colleges that makes rules governing eligibility, recruiting and financial aid for student athletes.

Open Admissions

Students are admitted regardless of academic qualifications. The school may require an additional probationary period during which the student must earn satisfactory grades to ensure continued enrollment.

Private College

An academic institution financed primarily by tuition and endowments.

Public College

An academic institution financed primarily by tuition, endowments and state or local taxes. Tuition for in-state students is reduced and programs and policies are state-regulated.

Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC)

Two- three- or four-year college-based military training programs leading to an officer commission upon graduation.

Retention

The percentage of college freshmen that return for the following fall term.

Rolling Admissions

Students' applications are considered when all required credentials have been submitted. There is either no deadline or a very late deadline; qualified students are accepted until classes are filled. Applicants are notified of admission continuously throughout the enrollment period.

School Profile

A school document that accompanies the official transcript describing the high school's curriculum, average standardized test scores, grading scale, and specialty programs.

Secondary School Report (SSR)

A form that often accompanies the official transcript that contains identifying student information as well as counselor contact information and general school information. It can also ask counselors to rate the candidate academically and socially as well as provide additional comments for admission.

Wait List

Used by colleges to hold in reserve students who meet admissions requirements but cannot be accepted due to enrollment constraints.

Waiver to View Recommendations

The form many high schools ask their students to sign by which they agree not to review their teachers' recommendation letters before they are sent to the colleges or universities to which they are applying. This is often on the secondary school report sent with transcripts.

How to Pay for College—

Financial Aid



Financial Aid can appear in many forms:

Scholarships

Federally-funded Programs

State-funded Programs

Special Programs

Financial Aid Vocabulary

Award Letter

Notification of the terms and requirements of the financial aid package offered by a college.

College Scholarship Service (CSS) Profile

A financial aid application, in addition to the FAFSA, required by some schools for dispensing institutional funds.

Cost of Attendance (COA)

The annual cost of attending college that is used to determine a student's financial need; includes tuition, books, fees, room and board, transportation and out-of-pocket expenses; also referred to as the student expense budget

Dependent Student

An unmarried student under the age of 24 who has no dependents and who has access to parental support.

Estimated Family Contribution (EFC)

The total amount a student and his or her family are expected to pay toward college costs from their income and assets.

Federal Methodology

A formula established by Congress that evaluates the expected family contribution.

Federal Work-Study Program

A federally sponsored campus-based program that provides employment opportunities for students with demonstrated need

Financial Aid Package

The total financial aid award received by the student.

Financial Need

The amount by which a student's family contribution falls short of covering the student expense budget.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

A form distributed by the federal government for use by students applying for federal financial aid programs; may be mailed or filed electronically using FAFSA on the Web.

Gift Aid

Student financial aid, such as scholarships and grants, which does not have to be repaid and does not require a student's being employed.

Grant

A financial award that does not have to be repaid.

Independent Student

A student who is not dependent on parental support and meets one of several conditions established by the federal government.

Institutional Methodology

A formula used to determine eligibility for college money.

Loan

Money borrowed that must be paid back with interest.

Scholarship

Monetary gifts based on need and/or merit that do not have to be repaid.

Self-help Aid

Student financial aid, such as loans and jobs that require repayment or a student's being employed.

Simplified Needs Test

A formula used by families whose total adjusted gross incomes are under \$50,000 and who are eligible to file a 1040EZ, 1040A, or no tax return at all.

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV)

Virginia's coordinating body for higher education and financial aid resources.

Student Aid Report (SAR)

A report produced by the U.S. Department of Education that outlines information provided on the FAFSA, requests corrections and reports the expected family contributions.

Student Expense Budget

The annual cost of attending college that is used in determining a student's financial need. It includes tuition, books, fees, room and board, transportation and out-of-pocket expenses.

Tuition Payment Plan

A method of payment offered by colleges, banks, insurance companies and financial management organizations.

Scholarships

Each year, hundreds of thousands of scholarships from sponsors are awarded and do not have to be repaid. Scholarships, generally, are awarded to students with special qualifications such as their academic record, leadership ability, talents or need for financial assistance. Since colleges award many scholarships, students should apply to the colleges directly for information and applications. Other sources of scholarship aid are your parents' employers, labor unions, civic and religious organizations, professional associations, and other private groups. Renewable scholarships will have continuing eligibility requirements, such as maintaining a certain level of academic or athletic performance, or showing evidence of continuing financial need.

The best way to search for scholarships is to start early to begin the research. Scholarship hunting can be a very time-consuming endeavor, however, even the small amounts can help.

Where to start?

- Family Connection—many national and local scholarships are posted on your site
- Personalized website searches such as www.fastweb.com
- Local library
- Oakton's Career Center

Caution! Scholarships that sound too good to be true usually are. Learn how to recognize and protect yourself from common scholarship scams. The number one tip: if you have to pay money to get money, it's probably a scam.

Federally-funded Programs

Grants—money that is given to students or the institution to pay for the student's education, given on the basis of financial aid and do not need to be paid back.

- *Pell Grants*: largest need-based student aid program for students with extreme financial need, amount is determined annually by Congress
- *Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants (FSEOG)*: priority is given to those who have also received the Pell Grant and have exceptional financial need
- Additional information available at studentaid.ed.gov

Federal Work Study—offered at most schools and consists of Federal scholarship of a student who works part-time at school. The money earned through this program goes directly toward the cost of attending the school. There are no set minimum or maximum amounts of this type of aid. Employment can consist of on and off campus work such as at a gym or museum.

Student Loans—many schools, both public and private, provide low-interest loans to students and their parents/guardians. The Federal Government also provides several types of student loans based on the level of financial need. The amount varies by the distributing institution and on whether you are claimed as a dependent by a parent/guardian. The process for applying for a loan may take several months; therefore, it is a good idea to start in advance.

- *Federal Perkins Loans*: no minimum amount, low interest rate, awarded to students with financial need, repayment begins nine months after graduation
- *Federal Stafford Loans-Subsidized*: vary in size and can increase as a student completes more years of education, variable interest rate loan, awarded to students who demonstrate financial

need, Federal Government pays interest on loan while student is in school and for a six month grace period after graduation

- *Federal Stafford Loans-Unsubsidized*: vary in value and are capped at the cost of attendance, interest payments begin immediately and can be paid monthly or accrued until the completion of studies, repayment of principal and interest begin six months after graduation
- *Federal Parent Loans for Students (PLUS)*: the parent must pay interest and principal payments while the student is enrolled in school and must continue payments after completion and repayment begins within sixty days of loan disbursement

State-funded Programs

College Scholarship Assistance Program (CSAP)—a Virginia need-based undergraduate grant program that is awarded to students who demonstrate extreme financial need and must be enrolled in at least half-time in a public or private school in Virginia

Tuition Assistance Grant Program (VTAG)—designed to assist Virginia residents who attend accredited private, non-profit college and universities in Virginia and no financial need required

Academic Common Market (ACM)—an arrangement between Southern states allowing students to pay in-state tuition rates at out-of-state schools while studying in select programs not available at Virginia public institutions

Two-year College Transfer Grant—merit and need-based grant that requires students to enroll in a participating four-year college during the fall following receipt of an Associate's Degree from a Virginia two-year public institution

Virginia Guaranteed Assistance Program (VGAP)—provides an incentive to financial needy students now attending elementary and secondary school in Virginia to raise their expectations and academic performance and to consider higher education

Several other grant and financial aid opportunities exist for the State of Virginia. Please see the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia's website: <http://www.schev.edu/>.

Other Special Programs

Montgomery GI Bill—available to enlistees, either active-duty or reserve, where service members contribute to an education fund and the Veteran's Administration contributes additional funds

Benefits available only while on active duty or within ten years of discharge

Post-9/11 GI Bill and Yellow Ribbon Program are recent additions

Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) Scholarship—offered by Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps, students will attend a four-year school while gaining military experience

One to four year scholarships available

Pays for tuition and a monthly allowance

Obligation of service

Highly competitive and interview is required

AmeriCorps—federal program that provides volunteer services to communities in need where participants receive an education benefit for two years in addition to living allowance and medical coverage

Education benefits must be used to pay off future or existing student loans

Hope Tax Credit—can provide a family up to \$1,800 maximum tax credit per year per dependent student, which can be claimed for two years

Lifetime Learning Tax Credit—a tax credit of 20% of the first \$10,000 paid for qualified tuition and related expenses for yourself, your spouse or a dependent you claim an exemption for on your tax return

WAYS TO SAVE MONEY FOR COLLEGE

Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs)—can help finance your education and reduce taxable income

Virginia 529 Plans—529 is the number the section of the Internal Revenue Code that governs the operation of state sponsored, tax advantages college savings plans

Allows parents/guardians to put aside money for future higher education expenses

Virginia offers 4 529 College Savings Plans, please see www.virginia529.com

Upromise—a rewards system for everyday spending on certain products that can help pay for college, please see www.upromise.com for more information

Prepaid Tuition Plans—plans for in-state schools that lock in for current tuition rates, states promise the amount set aside will buy the same amount of tuition at a state school in the future

Applying for Financial Aid

Applying for financial aid is a separate and vital part of the college application process. Your family may need assistance meeting the annual cost of tuition, books, fees and room and board. The following steps involve:

- Begin researching scholarships as early as possible; some scholarships are available to all grade levels while others will become available senior year
- Find out what financial aid forms your colleges require and the deadlines (such as the in-state tuition form in the college application)
- Attend the financial aid workshop offered in the fall
- Use a free calculator to estimate college costs (available on many websites such as College Board)
- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible after October 1st
 - www.fafsa.ed.gov
 - Create a FSA ID
 - Prepare for the FAFSA with the required documents and practice with a worksheet
 - Even if you think you will not qualify for financial aid, still complete the FAFSA
- Review the Student Aid Report (SAR), which will arrive about six weeks after you filed the FAFSA
- Carefully compare financial award letters when they arrive in the spring
- Make a trip to the financial aid office of your selected college and ask the important financial aid questions such as tuition payments, loans, grants, etc.

College Access Fairfax

This organization helps Fairfax County Public School Students with acquiring financial aid. They will assist students and parents in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and other financial aid applications. Each year, they host and sponsor financial aid seminars and hold FAFSA Completion Workshops. They also award 10 College Access Scholarships to FCPS students and assist in the scholarship process. For more information, log onto www.collegeaccessfairfax.org.

For more information, the following websites may be helpful:

Federal Student Aid: studentaid.ed.gov

FinAid!: www.finaid.org

College Board: www.collegeboard.com/student/pay

Peterson's: www.petersons.com/finaid/

U.S. News & World Report: www.usnews.com/sections/education/paying-for-college

FAFSA4caster-Federal Student Aid: www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov/

Sallie Mae: www.salliemae.com

Go College: www.gocollege.com

Family Connection

The lifeline for Oakton's college source is Family Connection. Every student has their own site created for them, which is linked to Blackboard. This website offers many useful features such as college search and compare capabilities, scholarship lists, scattergrams (that compare Oakton's graduates admissions data, SAT scores and GPA's, with their admissions decisions), college maps, college resources, and acceptance histories. Each student's data is entered into the website such as GPA, SAT scores, and personal contact info. With this data, a college and scholarship match is available. For example, if a student has a 3.4 GPA, a list of colleges with an acceptance history within that range will appear.

Additional features of Family Connection include building a resume, completing a 'game plan', listing potential colleges, and completing surveys. The website is so helpful that students are recommended to begin using it their freshman year and watch how their interests develop over the years.

Family Connection is essential for documenting college materials. This is how the counseling department keeps track of the transcript fees, materials, and date that items were received and mailed. For instance, if you want to see when your transcript was mailed, just check your family connection account.

Oakton High School Logged in as: OHS Oakton (log out) Manage my account

family connection

home courses colleges careers about me my planner

my colleges
colleges I'm thinking about
links
fcps resources

what's new

- FCPS District has assigned the task [\(11\) Complete Your Individual Responsibility to Community SMART Goal](#) to you
- FCPS District has assigned the task [\(11\) Academic SMART Goal](#) to you
- FCPS District has assigned the task [** Complete Game Plan survey](#) to you

[more since last visit](#)

Welcome Message

Family Connection

Welcome to FCPS Family Connection, the 24/7 online access to individual student plans and resources for post secondary planning.

Students may view and exchange information with school counseling staff through this extensive resource. Please review the categories at the left of the screen to explore and record student interests, achievements and plans.

- About Me**
Provides information linked to the individual student's plans, accomplishments and goals. Students may identify skills and interests, chronicle resume activities and store documents related to their goals.
- About College**
Contains a detailed search program that includes the ability to match each student's application plans to the acceptance history of students from your high school to individual colleges. Students may search by criteria, find colleges by name, compare institutions, and review graphic presentations of decisions. The schedule of visits by college representatives to your high school is also available here.
- From Your School**
Links students to individual and group communications with school counseling staff and other resources for the college application process, career opportunities and financial aid.

The tools provided at this site are supplemental to the services provided by FCPS staff. Please contact your school counselor or career center specialist for more information.

Scholarships:

Scholarships offered by organizations other than Fairfax County Public Schools are neither sponsored nor endorsed by the Fairfax County School Board, the Superintendent, or this school.

Get the mobile app!
Naviance Student
Available on the App Store

You have **no new messages**
[document library](#)
[contact us](#)

Web Resources

Employment

- Snag a Job: www.snagajob.com
- Employment Spot: www.employmentspot.com

Gap Year

- American Gap Association: www.americangap.org
- AmeriCorps State and National www.americorps.org
- Idealist www.idealists.org
- Center for Interim Programs www.interimprograms.com
- Teach for America www.teachforamerica.org
- Peace Corps www.peacecorps.gov
- Global Service Corps www.globalservicecorps.org
- United Planet www.unitedplanet.org
- Student Government Jobs www.studentjobs.gov
- Cool Works (outdoor jobs) www.coolworks.com
- Back Door Jobs www.backdoorjobs.com

Apprenticeships

- Virginia Department of Labor and Industry:
http://www.doli.virginia.gov/apprenticeship/sponsors_occupations.html
- Construction Workforce Development Coalition: www.futureforcenow.com

The Military

- www.military.com
- ASVAB: www.asvabprogram.com
- The Army: www.army.mil
- The Navy: www.navy.mil
- The Air Force: www.af.mil
- The Marine Corps: www.marines.mil
- The Coast Guard: www.uscg.mil
- Army ROTC: www.armyrotc.com
- Air Force ROTC: www.afrotc.com
- Navy ROTC: www.nrotc.navy.mil
- US Air Force Academy: www.usafa.edu
- US Coast Guard Academy: www.cga.edu

- US Merchant Marine Academy: www.usmma.edu
- US Military Academy: www.usma.edu
- US Naval Academy: www.usna.edu

Trade Schools

- www.best-technical-schools.com
- www.khake.com/index.html

2-Year College

- American Association of Community Colleges: www.aacc.nche.edu
- www.communitycollegereview.com
- www.communitycollegetimes.com
- www.achievingthedream.org
- Virginia Transfer Agreements: www.myfuture.vccs.edu/transfer

College Entrance Exams

- SAT: www.collegeboard.org
- ACT: www.actstudent.org
- TOEFL: www.toefl.org
- SAT Prep with Quizlet: <https://quizlet.com/subject/sat/>
- Khan Academy: <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/sat>

4-Year College

- The Common Application: www.commonapp.org
- National Association for College Admissions Counseling: www.nacacnet.org
- NCAA Eligibility Center: www.eligibilitycenter.org
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities - HBCU's college search: www.hbcumentor.org
- The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities: www.hacu.net
- The National Catholic College Admission Association: www.catholiccollegesonline.org
- Hillel International (The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life): www.hillel.org

College Research

- Family Connection (through Blackboard)
- National Center for Education Statistic's College Navigator: <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator>
- College View: www.collegeview.com
- Peterson's: www.petersons.com
- College Week Live (online college fairs): www.collegeweeklive.com
- Match College: www.matchcollege.com

College Application

- The Common Application: www.commonapp.org
- Coalition for Access & Affordability: www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org
- ZeeMee: Helping Students Get Seen: www.zeemee.com
- Application Help: www.collegeapps.com

International Student Resources

- Department of Education's Resource Guide on Supporting Undocumented Youth: www2.ed.gov/about/overview/focus/supporting-undocumented-youth.pdf
- International Financial Aid: www.iefa.org/
- Study in the USA: www.studyusa.com

Financial Aid

- Free Application for Federal Student Aid: <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>
- CSS Profile: <https://student.collegeboard.org/css-financial-aid-profile>
- Student Aid: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/>
- State Council of Higher Education for Virginia: <http://www.schev.edu/>
- State Council of Higher Education for Virginia's Tuition Assistance Grant Program: <http://www.schev.edu/students/factsheetvtag.asp>
- Virginia 529 Plans: www.virginia529.com
- FinAid!: www.finaid.org
- Sallie Mae: www.salliemae.com
- Merit Aid: www.meritaid.com
- Go College: www.gocollege.com
- FCPS Resources of Financial Aid: www.fcps.edu/is/schoolcounseling/careerconnections/services/faresources.shtml
- College Access Fairfax: www.collegeaccessfairfax.com
- Upromise: www.upromise.com

- Academic Common Market:
[http://www.sreb.org/page/1304/academic common market.html](http://www.sreb.org/page/1304/academic%20common%20market.html)

Scholarships

- Family Connection (through Blackboard)
- Fast Web: www.fastweb.com
- Scholarships.com: www.scholarships.com
- College Board: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search>
- Black Excel Scholarship Database for Minority Students:
<http://www.blackexcel.org/link4.htm>

Volunteer Opportunities

- Volunteer Fairfax: www.volunteerfairfax.org
- Volunteer Match: www.volunteermatch.org
- Do Something: www.dosomething.org
- Corporation for National and Community Service: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/>

Summer Enrichment Opportunities

- Family Connection (through Blackboard)
- Explore Health Careers: <http://explorehealthcareers.org>
- National Geographic: <http://ngstudentexpeditions.com/>
- U Summer: www.usummer.com
- Open Culture (free online college classes):
<http://www.openculture.com/freeonlinecourses>
- Academic Earth (free online college classes): <http://academicearth.org/>
- Volunteer Vacations USA Today Article:
<http://www.usatoday.com/story/travel/destinations/10greatplaces/2014/03/13/family-volunteer-travel-vacation/6372067/>
- American Hiking Society Volunteer Vacation: www.americanhiking.org
- Teen Life: www.teenlife.com

College Comparison Worksheet

COLLEGE NAME			
Location —distance from home			
Size —enrollment —physical size of campus			
Environment —type of school (2- or 4-year) —school setting (urban, rural) —location & size of nearest city —co-ed, male, female —religious affiliation			
Admission Requirements —deadline —tests required —average test scores, GPA, rank —notification			
Academics —your major offered —special requirements —accreditation —student-faculty ratio —typical class size			
College Expenses —tuition, room and board —estimated total budget —application fee, deposits			
Financial Aid —deadline —required forms —percentage receiving aid —scholarships			
Housing —residence hall requirement —food plan			
Facilities —academic —recreational —other			
Activities —clubs, organizations —Greek life —athletics, intramurals —other			
Campus Visits —when —special opportunities			

CHOOSE SKILLS.

Launching March 2016 — the new SAT® champions the classroom skills and knowledge that are essential for college. Encourage your students to choose the new SAT because the skills they own should take them further.

TEST FEATURES	THE NEW SAT®	ACT®
Curriculum-based	✓	✓
Optional essay	✓	✓
No guessing penalty	✓	✓
Full test specifications available online	✓	
FEE WAIVERS		
Test fee waivers for eligible students	✓	✓
Free late registration for fee waiver students	✓	
Four college application fee waivers sent directly to eligible students	✓	
Four free score sends with registration	✓	✓
Four free additional score sends	✓	
FREE PRACTICE		
Official, personalized practice recommendations on Khan Academy® that help students where they need it most.	✓	
Four full-length practice tests	✓	
Sample Test Questions	✓	✓
SAT Practice app with paper scan & score functionality	✓	
SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE TESTED		
Focused on the few things evidence shows matter most for college and career, in both math and ELA	✓	
Vocabulary: Focused on words more widely used in college and career	✓	✓
History/social studies and science included throughout all required sections of the test	✓	
Integration of words and numbers across academic disciplines	✓	
Demonstration of command of evidence	✓	
Essay analyzing a source	✓	

TEST STRUCTURE AND FORMAT	THE NEW SAT [®]	ACT [®]
Testing time	3 hours + 50-minute SAT essay (optional)	2 hours 55 minutes + 40-minute essay (optional)
Structure	3 tests + optional SAT essay	4 tests + optional writing test
Score range	Composite 400–1600 (SAT Essay: reported in 3 dimensions, each 2–8)	Composite 1–36 (writing domain scores: 2–12)
Test length and timing	Number of questions: 154 Time per question: 1:10 Reading Test 65 Minutes 52 Questions Writing and Language Test 35 Minutes 44 Questions Math Test 80 Minutes 58 Questions <i>Use of a calculator on some problems</i>	Number of questions: 215 Time per question: 0:49 Reading Test 35 Minutes 40 Questions English Test 45 Minutes 75 Questions Math Test 60 Minutes 60 Questions <i>Use of a calculator on some problems</i> Science Test 35 Minutes 40 Questions

The new SAT has been designed to be an even more useful tool by focusing on the classrooms skills and knowledge research shows are most essential for success in college. More than 2 million students throughout 190 countries and territories demonstrate their skills and knowledge on the SAT every year. Virtually all colleges and universities — more than 2,000 in total — look at SAT scores as one of several factors to make admission decisions.

For more information, visit SAT.org/new

ACT data was retrieved July 2, 2015, from act.org and actstudent.org.

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NCAA ELIGIBILITY CENTER QUICK REFERENCE SHEET



Core Courses

- **NCAA Division I requires 16 core courses.** See the chart below for the breakdown of this 16 core-course requirement.
- **NCAA Division II currently requires 14 core courses.** Division II will require 16 core courses for students enrolling on or after August 1, 2013. See the breakdown of core-course requirements below.

Test Scores

- **Division I** uses a sliding scale to match test scores and core grade-point averages. The sliding scale for those requirements is shown on page two of this sheet.
- **Division II** requires a minimum SAT score of 820 or an ACT sum score of 68.
- The SAT score used for NCAA purposes includes **only** the critical reading and math sections. The writing section of the SAT is not used.
- The ACT score used for NCAA purposes is a **sum** of the following four sections: English, mathematics, reading and science.
- **When you register for the SAT or ACT, use the NCAA Eligibility Center code of 9999 to ensure all SAT and ACT scores are reported directly to the NCAA Eligibility Center from the testing agency. Test scores that appear on transcripts will not be used.**

Grade-Point Average

- **Be sure** to look at your high school's List of NCAA Courses on the NCAA Eligibility Center's website (www.eligibilitycenter.org). Use the list as a guide.
- Only courses that appear on your school's List of NCAA Courses will be used in the calculation of the core grade-point average. Use the list as a guide.
- **Division I** core grade-point-average requirements are listed on the sliding scale on Page No. 2 of this sheet.
- **The Division II** core grade-point-average requirement is a minimum of 2.000.
- Remember, the NCAA grade-point average is calculated using NCAA core courses only.

DIVISION I 16 Core Courses

- 4 years of English.
- 3 years of mathematics (Algebra I or higher).
- 2 years of natural/physical science (1 year of lab if offered by high school).
- 1 year of additional English, mathematics or natural/physical science.
- 2 years of social science.
- 4 years of additional courses (from any area above, foreign language or comparative religion/philosophy).

DIVISION II 14 Core Courses

- 3 years of English.
- 2 years of mathematics (Algebra I or higher).
- 2 years of natural/physical science (1 year of lab if offered by high school).
- 2 years of additional English, mathematics or natural/physical science.
- 2 years of social science.
- 3 years of additional courses (from any area above, foreign language or comparative religion/philosophy).

DIVISION II 16 Core Courses (2013 and After)

- 3 years of English.
- 2 years of mathematics (Algebra I or higher).
- 2 years of natural/physical science (1 year of lab if offered by high school).
- 3 years of additional English, mathematics or natural/physical science.
- 2 years of social science.
- 4 years of additional courses (from any area above, foreign language or comparative religion/philosophy).

**NCAA DIVISION I SLIDING SCALE
CORE GRADE-POINT AVERAGE/
TEST-SCORE**

Core GPA	SAT <small>Verbal and Math ONLY</small>	ACT
3.550 & above	400	37
3.525	410	38
3.500	420	39
3.475	430	40
3.450	440	41
3.425	450	41
3.400	460	42
3.375	470	42
3.350	480	43
3.325	490	44
3.300	500	44
3.275	510	45
3.250	520	46
3.225	530	46
3.200	540	47
3.175	550	47
3.150	560	48
3.125	570	49
3.100	580	49
3.075	590	50
3.050	600	50
3.025	610	51
3.000	620	52
2.975	630	52
2.950	640	53
2.925	650	53
2.900	660	54
2.875	670	55
2.850	680	56
2.825	690	56
2.800	700	57
2.775	710	58
2.750	720	59
2.725	730	59
2.700	730	60
2.675	740-750	61
2.650	760	62
2.625	770	63
2.600	780	64
2.575	790	65
2.550	800	66
2.525	810	67
2.500	820	68
2.475	830	69
2.450	840-850	70
2.425	860	70
2.400	860	71
2.375	870	72
2.350	880	73
2.325	890	74
2.300	900	75
2.275	910	76
2.250	920	77
2.225	930	78
2.200	940	79
2.175	950	80
2.150	960	80
2.125	960	81
2.100	970	82
2.075	980	83
2.050	990	84
2.025	1000	85
2.000	1010	86

For more information, visit the NCAA Eligibility Center website at www.eligibilitycenter.org.

Colleges and universities IN VIRGINIA



Start checking out Virginia's universities

Virginia's higher education options are as diverse as its landscape. Students can earn a certificate or transfer degree through one of the state's 2-year institutions or regional education centers, which can lead to a bachelor's degree at one of the many Virginia 4-year public or private institutions. The Commonwealth's schools offer career pathways, highly ranked undergraduate programs, competitive tuition, and financial aid programs. The campuses are beautiful, and range from metropolitan-based settings to classic college environments nestled in the mountains or along the shoreline and everywhere in between. Use the links below to start exploring!

PUBLIC FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

- 1 CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT UNIVERSITY, NEWPORT NEWS
www.cnu.edu
- 2 COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY, WILLIAMSBURG
www.wm.edu
- 3 GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY, FAIRFAX
www.gmu.edu
- 4 JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY, HARRISONBURG
www.jmu.edu
- 5 LONGWOOD UNIVERSITY, FARMVILLE
www.longwood.edu
- 6 NORFOLK STATE UNIVERSITY, NORFOLK
www.nsu.edu
- 7 OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY, NORFOLK
www.odu.edu
- 8 RADFORD UNIVERSITY, RADFORD
www.radford.edu
- 9 UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON, FREDERICKSBURG
www.umw.edu
- 10 UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA, CHARLOTTESVILLE
www.virginia.edu
- 11 UVA'S COLLEGE AT WISE, WISE
www.wise.virginia.edu

- 12 VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY, RICHMOND
www.vcu.edu
- 13 VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE, LEXINGTON
www.vmi.edu
- 14 VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY, PETERSBURG
www.vsu.edu
- 15 VIRGINIA TECH, BLACKSBURG
www.vt.edu

OTHER PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

- 16 INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED LEARNING AND RESEARCH, DANVILLE
www.ialr.org
- 17 NEW COLLEGE INSTITUTE, MARTINSVILLE
www.newcollegeinstitute.org
- 18 ROANOKE HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER, ROANOKE
www.education.edu
- 19 SOUTHERN VIRGINIA HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER, SOUTH BOSTON
www.svheducation.org
- 20 SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER, ABINGDON
www.swcenter.edu

PUBLIC TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

- 21 BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, WEYERS CAVE
www.brcc.edu
- 22 CENTRAL VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE, LYNCHBURG
www.cvcc.vccs.edu
- 23 DABNEY S. LANCASTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE, CLIFTON FORGE
www.dslcc.edu
- 24 DANVILLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, DANVILLE
www.dcc.vccs.edu
- 25 EASTERN SHORE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, MELFA
www.es.vccs.edu
- 26 GERMANNA COMMUNITY COLLEGE, LOCUST GROVE
www.germanna.edu
- 27 J. SARGEANT REYNOLDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE, RICHMOND
www.reynolds.edu
- 28 JOHN TYLER COMMUNITY COLLEGE, CHESTER
www.jtcc.edu
- 29 LORD FAIRFAX COMMUNITY COLLEGE, MIDDLETOWN
www.lfcc.edu
- 30 MOUNTAIN EMPIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, BIG STONE GAP
www.me.vccs.edu
- 31 NEW RIVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN
www.nr.edu
- 32 NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE, ANNANDALE
www.nvcc.edu
- 33 PATRICK HENRY COMMUNITY COLLEGE, MARTINSVILLE
www.ph.vccs.edu
- 34 PAUL D. CAMP COMMUNITY COLLEGE, FRANKLIN
www.pdc.edu
- 35 PIEDMONT VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE, CHARLOTTESVILLE
www.pvcc.edu
- 36 RAPPAHANNOCK COMMUNITY COLLEGE, GLENNS
www.rappahannock.edu
- 37 RICHARD BLAND COLLEGE, PETERSBURG
www.rbc.edu
- 38 SOUTHSIDE VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE, ALBERTA
www.southside.edu
- 39 SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE, RICHLANDS
www.sw.edu
- 40 THOMAS NELSON COMMUNITY COLLEGE, HAMPTON
www.tncc.edu
- 41 TIDEWATER COMMUNITY COLLEGE, NORFOLK
www.tcc.edu
- 42 VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE, ABINGDON
www.vhcc.edu
- 43 VIRGINIA WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE, ROANOKE
www.virginiawestern.edu
- 44 WYTHEVILLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE, WYTHEVILLE
www.wcc.vccs.edu

PRIVATE NON-PROFIT FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

- 45 AVERETT UNIVERSITY, DANVILLE
www.averett.edu
- 46 BLUEFIELD COLLEGE, BLUEFIELD
www.bluefield.edu
- 47 BRIDGEWATER COLLEGE, BRIDGEWATER
www.bridgewater.edu
- 48 CHRISTENDOM COLLEGE, FRONT ROYAL
www.christendom.edu

- 49 EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY, HARRISONBURG
www.emu.edu
- 50 EMORY & HENRY COLLEGE, EMORY
www.ehc.edu
- 51 FERRUM COLLEGE, FERRUM
www.ferrum.edu
- 52 GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY (VA CAMPUS ONLY), ASHBURN
www.gwvirginia.gwu.edu
- 53 HAMPDEN-SYDNEY COLLEGE, HAMPDEN-SYDNEY
www.hsc.edu
- 54 HAMPTON UNIVERSITY, HAMPTON
www.hamptonu.edu
- 55 HOLLINS UNIVERSITY, ROANOKE
www.hollins.edu
- 56 JEFFERSON COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES, ROANOKE
www.jchs.edu
- 57 LIBERTY UNIVERSITY, LYNCHBURG
www.liberty.edu
- 58 LYNCHBURG COLLEGE, LYNCHBURG
www.lyncburg.edu
- 59 MARY BALDWIN COLLEGE, STAUNTON
www.mbc.edu
- 60 MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY, ARLINGTON
www.marymount.edu
- 61 RANDOLPH COLLEGE, LYNCHBURG
www.randolphcollege.edu
- 62 RANDOLPH-MACON COLLEGE, ASHLAND
www.rmc.edu
- 63 REGENT UNIVERSITY, VIRGINIA BEACH
www.regent.edu
- 64 ROANOKE COLLEGE, SALEM
www.roanoke.edu
- 65 SHENANDOAH UNIVERSITY, WINCHESTER
www.su.edu
- 66 SOUTHERN VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY, BUENA VISTA
www.svu.edu
- 67 SWEET BRIAR COLLEGE, SWEET BRIAR
www.sbc.edu
- 68 UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND, RICHMOND
www.richmond.edu
- 69 VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY, RICHMOND
www.vuu.edu
- 70 VIRGINIA WESLEYAN COLLEGE, NORFOLK
www.vwc.edu
- 71 WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY, LEXINGTON
www.wlu.edu

Please visit www.schev.edu/students/collegeListAlpha.asp for updated listings of Virginia's colleges, including private, for-profit institutions, and vocational schools.



State Council of
Higher Education for Virginia

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