

LAS LOMAS HIGH SCHOOL

COLLEGE PLANNING & READINESS HANDBOOK

2021/2022



Junior Year Timeline

GET STARTED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling unsure about how to start this whole process? Don't worry. Read chapter 1.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think about what entrance tests you need to take, when to take them, and what type of preparation you need.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin gathering information about colleges. Naviance is a great exploration tool! i.e. Supermatch tool, aptitude tests, etc. Use your Clever account to sign in.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss college costs/finances with your family and figure out what is affordable. See chapter 3.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan to visit colleges. You can start with your local colleges and figure out your preferences on campus size, environment, and location.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check requirements for LLHS graduation and for the UC/CSU systems to be sure you are taking all the needed classes. See chapter 4.
FEBRUARY-MARCH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore careers/majors more in depth. Visit College & Career Center, and complete career/college search on Naviance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a list of your top 15 colleges and begin investigating them.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for free and reduced lunch and verify eligibility for test fee waivers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan your SAT/ACT testing schedule for the spring and register for the tests, if needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign up for a Junior appointment with your counselor. Watch for an email from your counselor.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit colleges over spring break.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make summer plans; job, travel, college class, etc.
APRIL-MAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to investigate college choices.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend College Fair at Saint Mary's College in Moraga.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take SAT or ACT, if needed. These are currently not required for Junior College, CSU's and UC's.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign up for and take AP exams in May.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin drafting a "brag sheet" or resume to help with filling out college applications.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are planning to apply to private colleges, ask teachers if they will write recommendations for next year.

JUNE-SUMMER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to collect information on your top colleges and career choices.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider taking summer courses/participating in summer programs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend essay workshops. Begin brainstorming ideas and drafting your college essays. Read the essay prompts for UC and the Common Application in chapter 7.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop art/music/drama portfolio(s), if appropriate.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athletes should be sure to complete the NCAA eligibility forms.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are applying to UCs and/or schools using the Common App, you can open UC application and Common App accounts starting August 1.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Senior Profile and Parent Survey is required if you plan to apply to private schools and some out-of-state public schools that require a counselor recommendation. The forms are due early in the semester of your senior year, so it is strongly recommended that you start working on it over the summer when you're likely to have more time to focus. They will be assigned surveys on Naviance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review your SAT or ACT scores; consider testing in the Fall.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit more colleges during the summer.

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1. WELCOME

You may already have a sense of where you want to go to college, or you may be worried that you don't have a clue. Either way, this handbook is designed to help you identify and consider your options. There's still plenty of time, but as a junior you need to start exploring different types of colleges, making sure you're taking the classes and tests you need, and looking ahead to the application steps next year.

A copy of this guide, with live links, is also available at the Las Lomas College & Career Center website at <https://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/Page/3015>.

Naviance is an online platform designed to help students navigate through high school and plan for post-high school success. Each student will have a unique Naviance account where they can develop their academic 4-year plans, create resumes, research and compare colleges, take personality inventory assessments, explore career pathways, find scholarships, and more.

Getting Organized

Create a calendar that is dedicated to events related to your college search such as:

- College & Career Center appointments and presentations
- College fairs
- College visits
- SAT/ACT test dates
- Application deadlines

Make sure you have digital or paper files for material on the following:

- Transcripts
- College entrance tests
- Activities resume
- College essays
- Campus visits and interviews
- Financial aid and scholarships

Keep a list of usernames and passwords, especially for your College Board account, where you will access your SAT, ACT, and AP exam scores. Do not use your high school email. Set up a personal, professional-sounding account. Some students keep these on their cell phones.

2. WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM COLLEGE?

Take a few minutes to think about what you want from college, setting aside what you may have heard from parents or teachers. Then start coming up with a few colleges to start investigating.

If you are like most teenagers, you probably have been told that going to college is important because it will help you to get a job and to prepare for a good future. That's not a lie, but you need to know the whole truth. If the only reason you go to college is for what may come afterward, then it will be harder for you to get through. College is not just about preparing for the future, it is *part of* the future you make for yourself. Here are some of the reasons for going to college that aren't just about a future job. Which ones are most appealing to you?

- ☐ Taking the classes I want to take.
- ☐ Getting to know people who are different from me.
- ☐ Getting to know people who are similar to me.
- ☐ Learning from people who are experts in their fields.
- ☐ Playing sports or cheering on the home team.
- ☐ Having fun (parties, pranks, games, hanging out).
- ☐ Going to a lecture just because I'm interested.
- ☐ Deepening my faith or questioning my faith.
- ☐ Living somewhere different from home.
- ☐ Preparing to make a positive difference in the world.
- ☐ Starting a club.
- ☐ Pursuing social justice.
- ☐ Playing music or enjoying music.

Thinking about all of the things that college can mean for you will help you narrow down your list of colleges. Other factors you may want to consider include living in a city or rural area, how far away from home, how big the college is, the weather, the extracurricular opportunities, and of course, the subjects that you might be interested in studying.

Pick a few colleges and start investigating!

A good way to start building a list of possible colleges is to pick just a few and start looking into them. They may not be right for you, but by exploring them a little bit you will start to discover what interests you and what turns you off about different colleges. Look them up in Naviance and/or in the college guides in the College & Career Center. Check out the information the colleges have online for “prospective students.” Sign up for more information and see what they send you. If you wonder what the campus is like but haven’t visited, try the online virtual tours now offered by many colleges.

Still not sure where to start?

- ☐ Browse through the promotional materials at the College & Career Center.
- ☐ Talk to relatives, neighbors, teachers, coaches, and friends.
- ☐ Utilize the SuperMatch College Search feature on Naviance.

There are also some websites where you can get information about a particular college or plug in your interests to produce a list of options to consider.

A new easy-to-use resource called College Scorecard (<https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/>) has information about each college’s costs, the test scores of the students admitted by the college, student body diversity, and a link to the school’s personalized price calculator. It also has dials and check-boxes so you can more easily narrow your search to colleges that fit your interests.

Another useful place to explore your options is bigfuture.collegeboard.org. It has profiles with key information about thousands of colleges, including admission requirements, deadlines, and costs. It also has a tool for calculating estimated debt at graduation, which is a good way to compare real college costs. Its standardized format makes it possible to compare colleges easily; the website also has a college search tool.

The LLHS College & Career Center website has lists of college information resources with live links: <https://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/domain/844>.

Students interested in Historically Black Colleges and Universities should consult Appendix A at the end of this handbook and the website www.hbcuconnect.com. For Hispanic-serving colleges, go to www.hacu.net.

Be more cautious than usual about online sources of information.

Websites that look like they are comparing colleges often are just advertisements, or they’re trying to get your contact information to sell to marketers. It’s fine to give your contact information to a college or to an organization that you are sure is legitimate, but before doing so, double-check to make sure they will not share your information without your permission.

To Do First

- ☐ **MOST IMPORTANT: Work hard to keep grades high or bring them up.** Junior year grades count the most for many colleges. If you haven't done as well as you would have liked in the past, now is the time to improve this year's grades and maintain good grades through your senior year.
- ☐ **Visit some local colleges**—small, large, public, private—in the Bay Area to see what each is like and to try to get a feel for the differences among them (examples include St. Mary's College, UC Berkeley, Stanford, San Francisco State University, and Diablo Valley College). If your family is traveling, take time to visit colleges on your trip.
 - ☐ When visiting, take an official tour and sign up ahead of time for an information session if you can. Look around the campus, visit the student union, coffee shop, and bookstore. It is helpful to strike up a conversation with students on the campus to find out what they like or don't like about the college and if they would choose to go there again.
- ☐ **Attend college fairs** which are held throughout the Bay Area each year. The College and Career Center hosts college rep visits every Fall, from September through November.
 - ☐ A college fair is usually held in May at St. Mary's College in Moraga on a Saturday afternoon. This fair is specifically for high school juniors and offers special workshops. Past topics include "The Scholar-Athlete," "Highly Selective Colleges," "Financial Aid," "Historically Black Colleges," and "Single Gender Colleges." In past years, over 150 colleges have sent representatives. Check the *College & Career Center Bulletin* and <https://www.wacac.org/college-fairs/wacac-fairs/> for more information.
- ☐ **Choose your test.** To determine which test (SAT or ACT) would be better for you, take practice tests for both, and then compare the scores at www.act.org/solutions/college-careerreadiness/compare-act-sat/.
 - Practice tests are available for the ACT (www.actstudent.org/sampletest/) and for the SAT (<http://sat.collegeboard.org/practice/satpractice-test>)
 - The website www.number2.com offers practice tests for both.
- ☐ **Prepare for your test.**

SAT: If you took the Practice SAT (PSAT) in October, use the test results booklet in December or January as a starting point for study. Watch for announcements. You can also access preparation material and practice tests on the Khan Academy website, khanacademy.com. Enter your College Board login information and your PSAT scores will be used to provide personalized study materials based on how you performed on the test.

ACT: The best way to prepare for the ACT is to take practice tests several times to gain familiarity with the question style and timing. Practice tests can be found at the ACT website, www.actstudent.org/sampletest/. Practice tests are also available in books, such as *The Real ACT*.

Second

- ☐ Start to develop a list of colleges of interest, including: “reach schools” (schools that you would very much like to attend but realize the chances of getting accepted are slim), “match schools” (ones that match your academic profile), and “safe bets” (ones that you would like to attend and are confident in the chances of getting accepted).
- ☐ Explore the features and tools available on Naviance.
- ☐ Learn what courses are required for admission to these colleges (see chapter 4, college websites, or catalogs) and make sure these courses have been or will be taken.
- ☐ Become familiar with the application process and timeline at the CSU system (www.csumentor.edu) and UC system (www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions).
- ☐ If you plan to apply to private colleges and/or out of-state public universities, get to know the Common Application (www.commonapp.org). The Common App opens on 8/1. Some private and out-of-state colleges are now using the Coalition Application in addition to or instead of the Common Application.
<http://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/> for a list of these schools.
- ☐ Think about which teachers from your junior year (usually one from a humanities class and one from a math or science class) might write letters of recommendation and ask them near the end of the school year if they would do so. Letters are not required for CSUs and may be requested for UCs. They are required by most private schools and some public out-of-state schools.
- ☐ Start to prepare application materials such as:
 - Lists of honors, activities, community service, and other relevant work experience
 - College application essays (see chapter 7)
 - For students of the arts: portfolio, DVD, or performance pieces (see the handout Visual and Performing Arts on the College & Career Center website)
- ☐ Check your Facebook page and other social media and online content that a college could access to learn more about you. Clean it up as necessary.

Remember, the College Advisor and Counselors are eager to help you and will make appointments with juniors in the spring, after the rush of senior year applications is over. Be as prepared as possible to make the most of your appointments.



3. CALIFORNIA'S COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Types of Colleges

Of the five types of colleges and universities in California, three of them are public—that is, they are overseen by people who are elected or are appointed by elected officials, and they are subsidized directly with tax dollars (not just indirectly through financial aid).

The 112 **California community colleges** tend to serve local populations in programs that range from career training to preparation for transfer to a four-year college. Many students attend part-time while working, and most commute to campus. Only a few community colleges have dorms.

The 23 **California State University (CSU)** campuses aim to enroll the top third of California high school graduates based on grades, test scores, and other factors. Some campuses have many students who come from out of the area and live in dorms, whereas other campuses cater to a more local population of commuter students.

Nine **University of California (UC)** campuses serve the state's top high school graduates. The students come from all over the state, country, and world, and most freshmen live in campus housing.

The fourth group is **private, non-profit colleges and universities**, also sometimes called “independent” colleges and universities. The independent colleges are not a system. Each one establishes its own admission requirements, admission policy, and application procedures. There are, of course, private colleges outside of California, as well as public institutions in other states that you can attend as an out-of-state student.

The fifth group is **colleges operated by for-profit companies**. Be very cautious of these. Many of them have been found to over-promise and under-deliver. It is not always obvious which system a college belongs to or whether it is non-profit or for-profit. For example, in San Diego the University of San Diego is non-profit, San Diego State University is in the CSU system, San Diego Mesa College is a community college, the University of California at San Diego is obviously a UC, and there is also a for-profit school called “San Diego College”.

Considering Community Colleges

Going to a community college instead of a four-year college can be the right choice for some students. Community college can serve as a bridge between high school and a four-year college and also provide specialized training programs that prepare students for the job market.

DVC and Los Medanos are great options, but are not necessarily representative of all community colleges. Many of the 112 community colleges in California have much larger campuses, with sports and entertainment facilities. Some of them even have dormitories (see the map at the end of this

chapter). In addition to taking classes for transfer to a four-year college, they also offer many one year and two-year programs that can lead to particular careers, like paramedics, electronics technology, culinary arts, or health care aide.

BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Cost

Community colleges are relatively inexpensive, with annual tuition of just over \$1,000. There will be additional costs for books, room and board, and personal expenses, such as entertainment and transportation. If you live with family, room and food will be cheaper than if you live away from home, but your experience as a student will be different. Financial aid is available, and awards are higher for full-time students.

Classes

Besides the lower costs, students may benefit from community colleges' smaller classes, easier access to instructors, and classes that are offered at different times of day, making it easier to work or pursue other interests while going to college. Some community colleges offer honors programs. These classes may offer priority registration, a cohort of students for greater community, and more challenging classes.

Student Life

Students of all ages, from all over the world, and with different educational and socioeconomic background attend community colleges.

However, because these institutions tend to be commuter colleges, there are often fewer student activities and less of a sense of student life on campus. Going to a community college often requires more self-motivation. Living with other motivated students can help.

For a list of California community colleges that have dorms, go to www.cccco.edu/CommunityColleges/CollegeHousing.apx. Under the "Community Colleges" tab at the top, click on "College Housing."

ADMISSION

California community colleges admit all California residents with a high school diploma or the equivalent.

TRANSFERRING TO A FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE

With careful planning, a student can complete 60 semester or 90 quarter units of core requirements at a community college and transfer as a junior to a UC, CSU, or four-year private college. To transfer to a UC campus, use the Transfer Admission Planner (TAP), found at <http://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/transfer/transfer-admission-planner/index.html>.

California's public universities (CSU and UC) give preference to transfer applicants from California community colleges. Some UCs have a preferential relationship with certain community colleges and offer a transfer guarantee program (TAG). Check the individual UC's

website to see if such a program exists and what it requires. Some private four-year colleges also offer transfer preferential or guarantee programs.

Transfers to some UC campuses, especially UC Berkeley and UCLA, can be very competitive, especially in fields such as business administration, engineering, and computer science. Other UCs usually admit 40–70% of community college transfer applicants.

Guaranteed Transfer Admission to Historically Black Colleges

The following HBUCs guarantee admission to community college students who complete certain courses at any of California's 112 community colleges with a grade-point average of 2.5. For more information, including a list of courses, visit the website of the individual college.

- Bennett College in North Carolina
- Dillard University in Louisiana
- Fisk University in Tennessee
- Lincoln University in Missouri
- Philander Smith College in Arkansas
- Stillman College in Alabama
- Talladega College in Alabama
- Tuskegee University in Alabama
- Wiley College in Texas

CAREER TRAINING AT COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Numerous careers that can lead to well-paying jobs require only an Associate Degree (2–3 years of college) or a certificate. These include jobs such as airline mechanic, automobile service technician, broadcast engineer, carpenter, chef, dental assistant or hygienist, court reporter, graphic designer, paralegal, nurse's assistant, and webmaster.

Not every community college offers every specialized program. To find which offers the program you want, go to www.cccco.edu and click on "Students." In the "Find a Community College" box, on the "By Academic Program" line, enter the program key word (such as "culinary").

A new website, <http://salarysurfer.cccco.edu/SalarySurfer.aspx>, shows what former community college students statewide now earn after completing a degree or certificate in programs offered at California community colleges. This information could help you set goals and develop your academic plan.

Considering CSU and UC Colleges

CSUs and UCs are public institutions offering four-year bachelor degree programs.

BENEFITS OF CSUs AND UCs

Cost

Because they are public institutions supported with tax revenues, CSUs and UCs are a good value.

Research and Advanced Scholarship

In addition to undergraduate instruction, these colleges also conduct research as part of masters and doctoral degree programs. As an undergraduate, you may have exposure to research activities, particularly when you reach upper-division courses.

Certificate and Specialty Programs

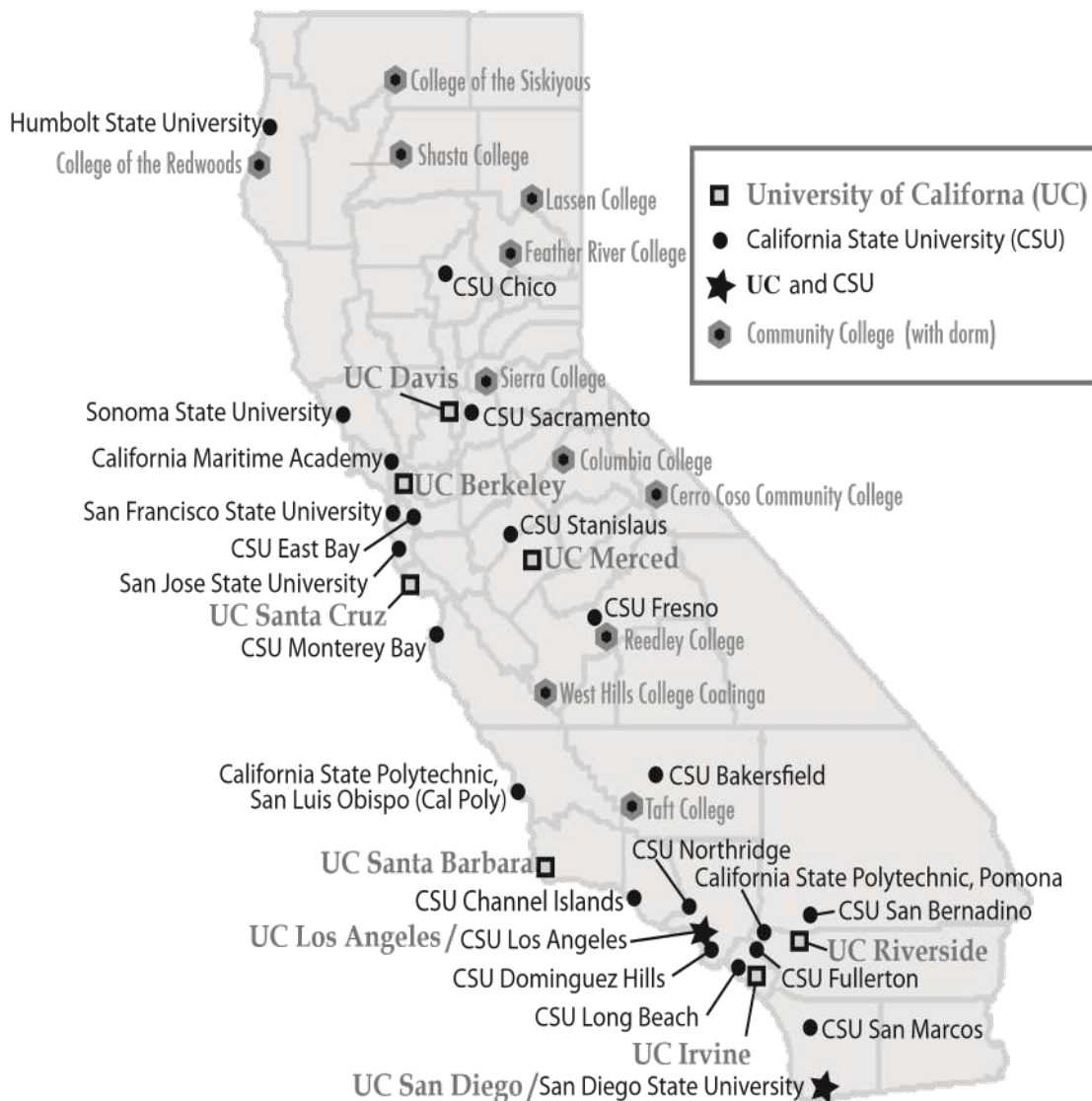
In addition to regular academic programs, many of these schools have outstanding certificates in areas such as nursing.

Student Life

All CSUs and UCs have on-campus dormitories. Most students live in dorms for at least their first year. This is a great way not only to transition from living at home to living independently but also to become part of the college's community. CSUs and UCs have many clubs and organizations to offer as well.

Resources

University of California system This site provides detail about UC admissions requirements and information about selection criteria used by UC campuses. For each campus, it lists the majors offered and important phone numbers.	www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/freshman
California State University system	www.calstate.edu/
California Community Colleges To apply online	www.cccco.edu http://home.cccapply.org/apply
Overview of California colleges	www.californiacolleges.edu
Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU)	www.aiccu.edu



This map shows locations of California public colleges and universities.

Note that the community colleges shown here are only those with dormitories.

There are many more community colleges that do not provide on-campus housing.



4. COLLEGE PRICING AND FINANCIAL AID

Regardless of whether you are admitted to a UC, CSU, or to a private college with very high tuition, your actual costs will depend mostly on your family's financial situation. The best way to figure out how much a particular college will cost you and your family, after financial aid, is to use the Net Price Calculator on each college's website. Search for the name of the college and the words "Net Price Calculator," or use the link from <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov>, which also has average costs by family income level. The school's calculator will ask you a few key questions and then give you an estimate of your costs and financial aid.

The example below, from Stanford, which offers generous financial aid, is for a single parent with an income of \$50,000, with the eldest of two children going to college. They do not own a home and have \$25,000 in savings.

Net Price Calculator

Award Estimate

Based on the information that you provided, your estimated aid award at Stanford for an academic year would be based on the following information:

Estimated Costs	
Tuition and Fees	45,729
Room and Board	14,107
Personal/Books and Supplies	5,064
Total Costs	64,900
Scholarship/Grant Aid	
Estimated Scholarship/Grant (Learn more >)	59,900
Net Price (Costs less Scholarship/Grant Aid)	
Estimated Net Price (Learn more >)	5,000
Anticipated Resources to Meet Net Price	
Estimated Parent Contribution	0
Estimated Student Contribution (Learn more >)	2,200
Student Academic Year Job (Learn more >)	2,800
Estimated Student Loan (Learn more >)	0

Anyone can apply for financial aid regardless of income, and even wealthy students can receive scholarships and subsidized loans. In the fall of your senior year, you will learn about applying for financial aid using the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) form and for some private schools, the CSS PROFILE form. Nationally, more than seven in ten full-time students receive aid averaging more than \$10,000. To compare the cost of different colleges, pay attention to the "Estimated Net Price" generated by each school's Net Price Calculator.

Note that college pricing can sometimes be misleading. Don't let a college's sticker price scare you off. Some private colleges have a high advertised tuition price that almost no one actually pays. Use the Net Price Calculator on the college's web site to see what the costs would likely be given your personal financial and family situation.

In addition, some universities have an Honors College or Honors Program within the larger school that may offer substantial financial aid (even a free ride in some cases) to selected students.

Questions

Even after the financial aid, there are expenses I will need to cover. How will I do that?

Don't worry too much about that until you actually figure out which colleges you get into and what types of financial aid they offer. Frequently they may help with part-time work during college, as well as federal student loans that come with low interest rates and protections in case you have difficulty repaying. When you actually choose which college to attend, you should try to avoid those that expect you to take out more expensive loans.

What about private scholarships?

There are scholarships that are available to help pay for college, in addition to the ones that a college offers you. On web sites like www.collegeboard.org, you can run a customized search that may find scholarships aimed toward your special skills, background, academic interests, and extracurricular activities.

The College & Career Center has a list of scholarships on our "[Paying for College](#)" page on our website, as well as on Naviance.

What if my parents or I are undocumented immigrants?

If your parents are undocumented but you are a U.S. citizen, you are treated the same as any other Californian. If you are undocumented, then you can still qualify as a California resident (paying in-state tuition), as well as for state financial aid. However, you would not be eligible for federal financial aid. The College & Career Center can help you figure out how to handle your specific situation.

See the website Educators for Fair Consideration at www.e4fc.org for information, resources, and scholarships for undocumented students.

My financial situation is complicated. Where can I get more detailed information about calculating financial aid?

A detailed description of financial aid forms and methods of calculation, including step-by-step instructions for filling out the forms, can be found in the Princeton Review's book, *Paying for College Without Going Broke* by Kalman A. Chany (Random House). This book discusses in depth the items used in calculations for the FAFSA compared to the formulas used by many private colleges (PROFILE), and offers useful information about special case situations and how specific assets (e.g., trusts, farms) are evaluated. Make sure to also look over the book resources on p. 26.

Resources

FAFSA online application Phone: 1-800-433-3243	www.fafsa.gov
CSS PROFILE online application (for private schools)	https://student.collegeboard.org/css-financial-aid-profile
California Student Aid Commission	www.csac.ca.gov
U.S. Dept. of Education/Office of Postsecondary Education	www.ed.gov
Other EFC calculators	www.finaid.org www.collegeboard.org
Federal government student aid info. Contains information about Federal student grant and loan programs and the interest rates charged	http://studentaid.ed.gov , Click on “Types of Aid” at the top.
Student guide to financial aid Overview of financial aid process; contains financial aid calculator	www.finaid.org
Free search engine with access to information on 600,000 scholarships NOTE: Some find this site a bit hard to maneuver, but others feel it’s an important resource.	www.fastweb.com
College Board	www.collegeboard.org See “For Parents” for an online financial aid calculator.
Calculator to compare financial aid offers from different colleges	www.salliemae.com/plan-for-college/college-planning-toolbox/
List of colleges that have pledged to eliminate loans for students with financial need Includes details on the eligible income levels for each plan	http://projectonstudentdebt.org
List of merit aid offered by colleges and universities in the United States Site that evaluates and explores public university honors programs and colleges	www.meritaid.com http://publicuniversityhonors.com/

5. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

What classes do I need to take to get into college?

Most four-year colleges require that students complete a set of required college preparatory courses (for example, four years of English). These college preparatory courses have a “P” after the course name in the LLHS catalog. **To determine if you have taken these classes, look for the courses designated “(P)” on your transcript.** If you don’t have your transcript, check with your academic counselor.

What courses do UC/CSUs require for admission?

The UC and CSU systems require a specific pattern of courses for admission (called the “a-g” requirements). For more detail, see the requirements list on the University of California website). These requirements are also listed in the *LLHS Course Catalog*. All students at LLHS are required to complete the “a-g” requirements. New UC admission guidelines also allow students to meet some “a-g” requirements by completing college courses or by earning certain scores on AP or IB exams. See the UC admissions website for details.

You can check the UC-approved course list online at: <https://doorways.ucop.edu/list>. Search by high school, then type in “Las Lomas High School” and click on the school name when it appears. This will produce the list of courses approved for the current year. Since the awarding of “P” status can change from year to year, be sure to check the status for the year you have taken/are taking the course (click on earlier years to check).

What courses do other colleges require for admission?

These requirements vary from college to college, and a few do not have a specific list of required courses. However, it generally strengthens a student’s application to take additional solid academic courses beyond the minimum listed, and most selective colleges expect you to do so. **Check each college’s website because requirements may change.**



6. YOUR GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

Las Lomas GPA


Las Lomas calculates and reports a **simple grade point average (GPA)** by awarding points for each semester grade (4 points for an A, 3 points for a B, etc.), totaling the number of points, and dividing that number by the number of semester courses taken. All grades, including P.E., are factored in this calculation.

The LLHS transcript has 6 different GPAs. See the chart below to learn the difference between the GPAs and figure out which ones to use on different applications.

Where can I find my Las Lomas High School GPA?

Both Aeries and Naviance will have your GPAs listed. You may also obtain a copy from your College Advisor or from an Academic Counselor.

Acad GPA (9-12)	Total GPA (9-12)	Acad GPA (10-12)
This is your cumulative GPA for A-G, or college preparatory, courses taken from 9th grade to 12th grade. Does <i>not</i> include grades from courses outside of A-G/College Prep.	This is your cumulative GPA for ALL courses taken from 9th grade to 12th grade. This <i>does</i> include grades from courses outside of A-G/classes that are not college preparatory (e.g. P.E., Yoga, etc.)	This is your GPA for college preparatory courses only taken during 10th grade through 12th grade. - This is the GPA you report to UC's and CSU's



Unweighted VS Weighted

Unweighted: An unweighted GPA does not take academic rigor into consideration. i.e. AP and Honor classes are weighted the same as any other regular class.

Weighted: A weighted GPA *does* take academic rigor into consideration. AP and Honor classes are weighted more heavily than regular classes.

Las Lomas High School

Ranking

Some high schools report ranking according to GPA of students within a graduating class. Las Lomas does not rank students and so does not report ranking figures to colleges. When asked for your class ranking, type “N/A”.

7. COLLEGE ADMISSION TESTS

(Pre-Covid) Most four-year colleges and universities require students to submit scores from either the ACT or SAT standardized tests. Colleges permit students to submit scores from both the ACT and SAT tests and will choose the higher score.

Some students take both the ACT and the SAT to see which they do better on, while others take practice tests online and compare their scores using conversion tables available on the UC and other websites.

Use your junior year to plan your college entrance exam strategy (determine which tests are needed and decide which ones to take), register for the tests, and begin preparing for them.

TEST TIMING

Most students complete entrance tests during the Spring semester of their Junior year, through the summer before Senior year.

By taking these tests in the spring, you will get back a full set of SAT and/or ACT scores during the summer and will then have time to decide if you need or want to take the tests over in the fall. If you are satisfied with the scores from the spring, then the test pressure is off. However, if you want to try to improve the scores, you can study over the summer and take the tests again in August through November (or even December for some colleges).

Testing Updates:

For the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 admission cycles, UC's and CSU's will be test-blind, meaning they won't consider ACT or SAT test scores for admission. And although many colleges are currently test-optional, many other colleges still allow and some will require ACT/SAT tests to be submitted. Click [HERE](#) to see a list of test-optional colleges.

The ACT

The ACT is a 2-hour, 55-minute test that measures skills in English, Math, Reading, and Science Reasoning. Composite score range is from 1 to 36. There is an optional 30-minute writing test. Students have to take this optional writing test only if the colleges they are considering require it.

DECIDING TO TAKE THE ACT

While students' scores on the ACT may parallel almost exactly their scores on the SAT, other students have found that they get higher scores on one test than the other. It has been suggested that some students do better on the ACT because it is subject-based and thus tests more of what students have been actually learning in school. You may choose to take both tests (or both practice tests) to see which is better for you. To compare your results, use conversion tables available on the UC and other websites.

The SAT

The SAT is a three-hour multiple-choice test, split into four timed sections. The SAT score will be out of 1600, with each section scoring out of 800.

EVIDENCE-BASED READING AND WRITING Score range: 200–800

Reading (65 minutes, 52 questions). Multiple-choice questions are based on supplied passages and include examples of all of the following: passages from literature, social science, and science and at least one from a U.S. founding document.

Writing and Language (35 minutes, 44 questions). Multiple-choice questions are based on passages written specially for the test. Questions involve analyzing the passages and measure a student's ability to improve sentences or paragraphs and to identify sentence errors (such as diction, grammar, subject-verb agreement, etc.).

MATH Score range: 200–800

Roughly 80% multiple choice questions and 20% “Grid-In” answers. The test focuses on the “Heart of Algebra” (linear equations and systems), “Problem Solving and Data Analysis” (quantitative literacy), “Passport to Advanced Math” (manipulation of complex equations), and will include some geometry and trigonometry.

The test is administered in two parts:

No calculator (25 minutes, 20 questions) and with calculator (55 minutes, 38 questions)

****Subject tests and the optional SAT essay are no longer being offered by The College Board.***

Sending Test Scores to Colleges

You should wait until you have applied to a school to send test scores. Note that only you, not a College Advisor, can request that scores are sent.

SAT SCORE-REPORTING POLICY (SCORE CHOICE)

SAT Score Choice policy means that the college chooses which SAT test results it will get. Each college sets its own score-reporting requirements. The UCs want all SAT scores. Other colleges allow students to choose which SAT scores to send. At the time you request scores be sent, the online form will automatically inform you of the score-use practices of each college they list.

DEADLINES

Most colleges list *the date that test scores are due* OR *the last testing acceptable date* for meeting the test score submission deadline. For a quick answer, see www.collegeboard.org.

For more information on standardized testing, please contact Mrs. Allison Ridenhour
aridenhour@auhsdschools.org

8. COLLEGE ESSAYS

Most colleges and universities require applicants to write one or more essays as part of the admissions process. Sometimes referred to as a *personal statement*, these essays are written in response to a *prompt*, which either poses a question or topic.

Different College Requirements

The UC system currently requires students write four short Personal Insight Questions (PIQs). CSUs and community colleges do not require applicants to write an essay as part of the application. Colleges that are part of the Common Application or Coalition Application usually require one longer essay and may require additional writings called *supplemental essays*.

Timing

It is a good idea to begin writing essays during the summer between junior and senior year. Prompts for supplemental essays are available in the spring of your junior year.

What Colleges Are Looking For

The point of a college essay is to give colleges a picture of who you are beyond GPA, test scores, and activities lists. They are not looking for your life story or a recounting of activities but a view into what makes you unique. They are interested in narratives that demonstrate qualities such as curiosity, intellect, self-motivation, tenacity, creativity, kindness, leadership, and empathy. While they are reading essays, admissions representatives will likely be asking themselves, “Is this a person I would like to meet?”

Getting Started

Think about small moments that made a big difference in your life. This does not need to be huge or exotic but should be unique to you.

Consider:

What are you passionate about?

Which experiences in your life are unique? These do not need to be unusual or extraordinary and may include work experiences, family responsibilities, or volunteer activities.

Which experiences could make a good story?

Focus on the “why” rather than the “what.” For example, rather than recounting that service trip, focus on one moment in that trip that made a difference and explain why. “Showing” rather than “telling” will make the essay more powerful.

UC Essays

Personal Insight Questions

What do you want UC to know about you? Here is your chance to tell us in your own words.

DIRECTIONS

- You will have 8 questions to choose from. You must respond to only 4 of the 8 questions.
- Each response is limited to a maximum of 350 words.
- Which questions you choose to answer is entirely up to you, but you should select questions that are most relevant to your experience and that best reflect your individual circumstances.

KEEP IN MIND

- All questions are equal: All questions are given equal consideration in the application review process, which means there is no advantage or disadvantage to choosing certain questions over others.
- There is no right or wrong way to answer these questions: It's about getting to know your personality, background, interests, and achievements in your own unique voice.

Prompts:

1. Describe an example of your leadership experience in which you have positively influenced others, helped resolve disputes, or contributed to group efforts over time.
2. Every person has a creative side, and it can be expressed in many ways: problem solving, original and innovative thinking, and artistically, to name a few. Describe how you express your creative side.
3. What would you say is your greatest talent or skill? How have you developed and demonstrated that talent over time?
4. Describe how you have taken advantage of a significant educational opportunity or worked to overcome an educational barrier you have faced.
5. Describe the most significant challenge you have faced and the steps you have taken to overcome this challenge. How has this challenge affected your academic achievement?
6. Think about an academic subject that inspires you. Describe how you have furthered this interest inside and/or outside of the classroom.
7. What have you done to make your school or your community a better place?
8. What is the one thing that you think sets you apart from other candidates applying to the University of California?

For additional guidance on approaching the questions, see

<http://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/how-to-apply/personalquestions/freshman/index.html>

Common Application Essays

From the 2020–2021 Common Application

The essay demonstrates your ability to write clearly and concisely on a selected topic and helps you distinguish yourself in your own voice. *What do you want the readers of your application to know about you apart from courses, grades, and test scores?*

Choose the option that best helps you answer that question and write an essay of no more than 650 words, using the prompt to inspire and structure your response.

Remember: 650 words is your limit, not your goal. Use the full range if you need it, but don't feel obligated to do so. (The application won't accept a response of shorter than 250 words.)

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

APPENDIX A

FURTHER RESOURCES

Websites

A note of caution regarding websites: Online resources are an excellent source for college information, but be wary of “.com” sites. For example, there is a “FAFSA.com” site that states it will fill out your FAFSA form, **but for a fee**. The federal government’s FAFSA site and other federal educational websites end in “.ed.gov,” and California government sites end in “.ca.gov.” The information on these government sites is offered for free, as are their publications. Non-profit organizations end in “.org” and are more reputable than “.com” sites, although some .org sites charge for certain services.

U.S. Department of Education The Scorecard is a new, easy-to-use search tool. The Navigator has more detailed statistics. Both include almost all public, nonprofit and for profit colleges	https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/ http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator or
College Board Comprehensive site; details about colleges and comparisons	www.collegeboard.org
Out-of-state public colleges and universities that offer reduced tuition rates to California residents as part of the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) program Includes details about specific requirements students must meet	http://wiche.edu/wue
College Board sponsored site Very comprehensive. \$19.95 registration fee for one year membership. Free for PSAT/NMSQT takers.	www.myroad.com
myCollegeOptions Extensive information about college preparation, financing	www.mycollegeoptions.com
Historically Black Colleges & Universities	http://hbcuconnect.com
Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities	www.hacu.net
Minority Online Information Service	www.molis.org
National Center for Fair & Open Testing Lists schools that do not require SAT Reasoning Test, ACT, or SAT Subject Tests	www.fairtest.org

Books

The College Board Handbook

Barron's Profiles of American Colleges (30th edition)

The Fiske Guide (2021 edition)

Princeton Review's The Best 377 Colleges

Peterson's Four-Year Colleges

Admission Matters: What Students and Parents Need to Know about Getting into College, Sally Springer, Jon Reider, and Joyce Morgan, 2017.

African American Student's College Guide: Your One-Stop Resource for Choosing the Right College, Getting in, and Paying the Bill, Issac Black, 2000.

Colleges that Change Lives, Loren Pope, 2012.

The College Finder, Steven R. Antoff, 4th Edition, 2020.

The Insider's Guide to the Colleges, 2014: Students on Campus Tell You What You Really Want to Know, 35th Edition, Yale Daily News Staff, 2014.

The Price you Pay for College, Ron Lieber, 2021.

The Ultimate Scholarship Book 2021, Gen and Kelly Tanabe, 2021.

Where you Go is Not Who You'll be, Frank Bruni, 2021.

APPENDIX B

HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

For most of the history of the United States, African Americans were formally excluded from many colleges. In response, a number of public and private colleges were created specifically for Blacks. While these historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) are now multiracial in their enrollment (a few are not even majority Black), the colleges rightfully celebrate their role in countering discrimination.

If you are interested in the racial, ethnic, or gender makeup of a college, the search functions at www.collegeboard.org and <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/> include data on the proportion of freshmen who self-identify in different categories. Colleges with at least 25% Latino/a students may refer to themselves as Hispanic-Serving Institutions or HSIs.

Name and Address of Institution	Admissions Phone Number	Financial Aid Phone Number	Location	No. Students
Alabama A & M University P.O. Box 908 Normal, AL 35762 www.aamu.edu	256-372-5245	256-372-5400	Suburban campus in small city; 2 miles from downtown	3,165
Alabama State University 915 Jackson Street Montgomery, AL 36101-0271 www.alasu.edu	334-229-4291 800-253-5037	334-229-4323	Urban campus in small city	6,075
Albany State College 504 College Drive Albany, GA 31705-2796 www.asurams.edu	229-430-4650	229-430-4650	Urban campus in small city	3,660
Central State University 1400 Brush Row Road Wilberforce, OH 45384-3002 www.centralstate.edu	937-376-6348	937-376-6519	Suburban campus in rural community	2,116
Clark Atlanta University 240 James P. Brawley Dr., SW Atlanta, GA 30314 www.cau.edu	800-688-3228	404-880-8992	Urban campus in large city	3,485
Fisk University 1000 17 th Avenue, North Nashville, TN 37208 www.fisk.edu	615-329-8665 800-443-3475	615-329-8735	Urban campus in large city	853

Florida A & M University 1601 South MLK Jr. Blvd. Tallahassee, FL 32307 www.famu.edu	850-599-3796	850-599-3730	Commuter campus in small city	12,057
Grambling State University P.O. Box 864 Grambling, LA 71245 www.gram.edu	318-274-6183	318-274-2342	Suburban campus in small town	9,920
Hampton University 100 E. Queen Street Hampton, VA 23668 www.hamptonu.edu	757-727-5328 800-624-3328	757-727-5661	Urban campus in small city	4,269
Howard University 2400 Sixth Street NW Washington, DC 20059 www2.howard.edu	202-806-2763 800-282-6363	202-979-1773	Urban campus in large city	10,002
Jackson State University 1400 J.R. Lynch Street Jackson, MS 39217 www.jsums.edu	601-979-0928 800-848-6817	601-979-1773	Commuter campus in small city	9,802
Lincoln University 820 Chestnut Street Jefferson City, MO 651029 www.lincolnu.edu	573-681-5599 800-521-5052	573-681-6156	Commuter campus in large town	2,361
Morehouse College 830 Western Drive SW Atlanta, GA 30314 www.morehouse.edu	404-215-2632 800-992-0642	404-215-2638	Urban campus in large city	2,167 (men only)
Morgan State University 1700 East Cold Spring Lane Baltimore, MD 21239 www.morgan.edu	443-885-8500 800-332-6674	443-885-3170	Commuter campus in very large city	7,546
Norfolk State University 700 Park Avenue Norfolk, VA 23504 www.nsu.edu	757-823-8396 800-274-1821	757-823-8381	Urban campus in large city	4,522
North Carolina A&T State University 1601 East Market Street Greensboro, NC 27411 www.ncat.edu	336-334-7946 800-443-8964	800-443-0835	Urban campus in small city	10,725
North Carolina Central University P.O. Box 19717 1801 Fayetteville Street Durham, NC 27707 www.nccu.edu	919-530-6100	919-530-6180	Urban campus in small city	8,645

Prairie View A & M University P.O. Box 3089 100 University Drive Prairie View, TX 77446-0188 www.pvamu.edu	936-261-1000 800-334-1807	936-261-1000	Residential campus in small town	8,343
Southern University at New Orleans 6400 Press Drive New Orleans, LA 70126 http://suno.edu	504-286-5000	504-286-5263	Commuter campus in large city	3,165
Spelman College 350 Spelman Lane SW Atlanta, GA 30314 www.spelman.edu	404-6270-5193 800-982-2411	404-270-5222	Urban campus in large city	2,204 women only)
Tennessee State University 3500 John B. Merritt Blvd. Nashville, TN 37203 www.tnstate.edu	615-963-5101	615-963-5701	Commuter campus in large city	9,027
Texas Southern University 3100 Cleburne Avenue Houston, TX 77004 www.tsu.edu	713-527-7472	713-313-7530	Commuter campus in large city	6,315
Tuskegee University 102 Old Administration Building Tuskegee, AL 36088 www.tuskegee.edu	334-727-8500 800-622-6531	334-7276-8088	Urban campus in large town	3,117
University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff Box 4983 1200 University Drive Pine Bluff, AK 71601-2799 www.uapb.edu	870-575-88492 800-264-6585	870-575-8302	Commuter campus in small town	2,821
University of D.C 4200 Connecticut Ave. NW Washington, DC 20008 www.udc.edu	202-274-6155	202-274-5060	Commuter campus in large city	5,667
Virginia State University P.O. Box 9018 Petersburg, VA 23803 www.udc.edu	804-524-5902 800-871-7611	804-524-5990	Suburban campus in large town	5,890
Xavier University 7325 Palmetto & Pine Streets New Orleans, LA 70125 www.xula.edu	504-520-7388	504-520-7835	Commuter campus in large city	6,285

APPENDIX C

COLLEGE ADMISSION GLOSSARY: LEARN THE LINGO

When applying to college, you are bound to come across unfamiliar terms. This glossary can help you make sense of all the information you're sorting through.

APPLYING

Application: A college application is part of the competitive college admissions system. Admissions departments usually require students to complete an application for admission that generally consists of academic records, personal essays, letters of recommendation, and a list of extracurricular activities. Most schools require the SAT or ACT. Deadlines, the date set by college admissions offices, after which applications for admission will not be accepted, for admission applications are established and published by each college or university.

Advanced Placement (AP): AP courses are college-level classes taught in the high school following guidelines and covering material that will instruct students in AP subject areas and should prepare them to take Advanced Placement tests offered by The College Board.

“Best Fit”: The college search is not about getting into the best college. There is no school that is best for all students. Some students do best at large public universities; others excel in small liberal arts colleges; still others want to study far from home. If you want to make the most of college, don't just apply to the big-name schools or the ones your friends are excited about. Do your own research to find schools that are the best fit for you.

Campus Interview: This is a personal, face-to-face interaction between an admissions applicant and an institutional representative (admissions officer, alumnus, faculty, etc.). Interviews are rarely required.

Campus Visit/Tour: A service by the college admissions office for prospective students, allowing them to visit various campus buildings, meet key institutional personnel, and get a firsthand look at campus life.

Catalogue: A catalogue is a comprehensive publication that provides a detailed overview of an institution, including its mission, programs, costs, admissions requirements, faculty and administration, etc.

College Essay: A brief composition on a single subject, required by many colleges as part of the application process for admission.

College Fair: An event at which colleges, universities, and other organizations related to higher education present themselves in an exposition atmosphere for the purpose of attracting and identifying potential applicants.

College Rep Visit: This is when a college or university admissions representative visits a high school or community site for the purpose of recruiting students for admission to the institution.

Common Application: The Common Application (a.k.a the Common App) makes it possible for students to use one admissions application to apply to any of 456 member colleges and universities. There is a Common App for First-Year Admission and for Transfer Admission. Both versions allow the application to be filled out once online and submitted to all schools with the same information going to each.

Demonstrated Interest: Includes a student's expression of his or her desire to attend a particular college through campus visits, contact with admissions officers, and other actions that attract the attention of college admissions personnel. While not all institutions use this as a factor in accepting students for admissions, studies have shown that many schools do consider demonstrated interest in their admissions decisions.

Extracurriculars: Extracurricular activities are simply anything you do that is not a high school course or paid employment (but note that paid work experience is of interest to colleges and can substitute for some extracurricular activities). You should define your extracurricular activities in broad terms—many applicants make the mistake of thinking of them solely as school-sponsored groups such as yearbook, band or football. Not so. Most community and family activities are also "extracurricular."

GPA (Grade Point Average): Quantitative measure of a student's grades. The GPA is figured by averaging the numerical value of a student's grades. It is cumulative, starting freshman year: grades count every year.

Honors Classes: The difference between a regular class (such as English 1) and the honors class (English 1 Honors) is not necessarily the amount of work, but the type of work required and the pace of studying. Honors courses are not advanced in the same sense that high school Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses are. Rather, honors courses are enriched; they offer the same material in greater depth and with a faster pace.

In-State (Resident) Student: A student whose permanent residence is in the same state as the college or university he or she attends or hopes to attend. In-state students pay lower tuition than do out-of-state students.

Prospective Student: Any student who is a potential applicant for admission, particularly those who have shown interest in attending the institution or in which the institution has shown interest.

Out-of-State (Non-Resident) Student: Student whose permanent residence is in a different state than that of the college or university which he or she attends or hopes to attend. Out-of-state students generally pay higher tuition than do instate students.

"Reach School": A college or university that you have a chance of getting into, but your test scores, GPA and/or class rank are a bit on the low side when you look at the school's profile. The top U.S. colleges and top universities should always be considered reach schools.

Recommendations: Statements or letters of endorsement written on a student's behalf during the college application process.

"Safety School": A college or university where you clearly meet the admission requirements: minimum GPA, test scores, etc. It's important, though, that the school also be one that you would want to attend, should you not gain admission to more selective colleges.

School Profile: This is an overview of your high school's program, grading system, course offerings, and other features that your school submits to admissions offices along with your transcript. For better or worse, admissions offices use this information to weigh your GPA, placing a student's GPA against the academic reputation of the school she or he attends.

Selectivity: Selectivity is the degree to which a college or university admits or denies admission based on the individual student's record of academic achievement. In general, a highly selective school admits 25% of applicants, a very selective school admits 26% to 49% of applicants, a selective school admits 50% to 75% of applicants and a school with open admission admits applicants based on space availability.

Transcript: This is the official document containing the record of a student's academic performance and testing history. The school at which a student is or has been officially enrolled must issue the transcript, certified by the signature of an authorized school administrator. The school's official seal or watermarked school stationery may also be used to authenticate the transcript.

Virtual Tour: This is an online feature offered by some colleges and universities to allow prospective students to view various aspects of campus life without visiting the institutions in person.

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

ACT: A two-hour-and-55-minute examination that measures a student's knowledge and achievement in four subject areas -- English, mathematics, reading and science reasoning -- to determine the student's readiness for college-level instruction. There is also an optional writing test that assesses students' skills in writing an essay. The ACT is scored on a scale of 1 to 36 for each of the four areas. The four subject area scores are averaged to create a Composite Score.

PSAT Test: This exam prepares students for the SAT and is used to qualify students for the National Merit Scholarship semifinals and other academic awards.

SAT: This is a widely used college entrance examination program. It is a 3-hour exam measuring verbal and mathematical skills, as well as grammar/conventions and the ability to write a brief essay. Students may earn a total of up to 1600 points on the three-hour exam (up to 800 points in each of the exam's content areas: reading/writing/language and math).

TYPES OF POST SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

Art School (Arts College, Art Institute, Conservatory): An institution specializing in the visual, performing, and/or creative arts.

College: An institution of higher learning, often referred to as a "four-year" institution, which grants the bachelor's degree in liberal arts or science or both.

Community College: Community colleges, sometimes called junior colleges, technical colleges, or city colleges, are primarily two-year public institutions providing higher education and lower-level courses, granting certificates, diplomas, and associate's degrees. Many also offer continuing and adult education. After graduating from a community college, some students transfer to a four-year college or university for two to three years to complete a bachelor's degree.

Graduate School: Usually within universities, these schools offer degree programs beyond the BA degree.

Historically Black College: HBCUs are institutions of higher education in the United States that were established before 1964 with the intention of serving the black community. There are 105 HBCUs today, including public and private, two-year and four-year institutions, medical schools and community colleges.

Liberal Arts College: A degree-granting institution where the academic focus is on developing the intellect and instruction in the humanities and sciences, rather than on training for a particular vocational, technical, or professional pursuit.

Private Institution: This is a college or university funded by private sources without any control by a government agency. The cost of attending a private institution is generally higher than a public institution.

Proprietary Institution: This is a term used to describe postsecondary schools that are private and are legally permitted to make a profit. Most proprietary schools offer technical and vocational courses.

Public Institution: A college or university that receives public funding, primarily from a local, state, or national government that oversees and regulates the school's operations is considered a public institution.

University: A "post-secondary institution" that consists of a liberal arts college, a diverse graduate program, and usually two or more professional schools or faculties, and that is empowered to confer degrees in various fields of study.

Vocational or Technical School: This type of institution is similar to a community college in that it offers specific career-oriented programs that last from a few months to a couple of years. Most are specialized and offer intense training in one specific skill area.

Religion-Based Institution: These are colleges and universities established by and currently operating under the sponsorship of a church, synagogue, or mosque; a denomination; or a particular religion.

Single-Sex (or Single-Gender) College: This is a college that accepts either women only or men only.

COLLEGE ACCEPTANCE TERMS

Acceptance: The decision by an admissions officer or committee to offer the opportunity for enrollment as a student at a particular institution.

College Selection: The act of choosing and making the decision to enroll in and attend a particular higher-education program.

Deferred Admission: A category of admission used in conjunction with early (action, decision, notification, or acceptance) plans to indicate that a student has not been admitted early but will remain in the applicant pool for reconsideration during the review of applications for regular admissions.

Deferred Enrollment: This is a category of admission available at some institutions for fully accepted students who wish—for a justifiable reason—to take a semester or year off before enrolling in college.

Denial: The decision by an admissions officer or committee to not offer a student admission to a particular institution.

Early Action: Early action is when a prospective student applies for admission by early deadline (before the regular admission deadline) and receives notice of acceptance, denial, or deferment with no obligation to the university to enroll, if accepted for admission.

Early Admission: Through this program, qualifying high school juniors with outstanding academic records may forgo their senior year in high school and enroll in a college or university.

Early Decision: Through this program offered by many post-secondary schools, students willing to commit to a school if accepted submit their application by a date well before the general admission deadline. If accepted, the student must enroll in that school, so students should only apply Early Decision to their first choice school. That said, a student may only apply Early Decision to one school.

Gap-Year Programs: Year-long programs designed for high school graduates who wish to defer enrollment in college while engaging in meaningful activities, such as academic programs, structured travel, community service, etc.

Notification Date: The date by which applicants who are accepted for admission are expected to notify the institutions of their intent to enroll and make enrollment deposits. That date is often on or around May 1st.

Rolling Admissions: This is a practice used by some institutions to review and complete applications as they arrive, rather than according to a set deadline.

Waitlist: An applicant is put on the waitlist when an admissions officer or committee decides to offer the applicant the opportunity to enroll in the institution only if there is space available in the incoming class after fully admitted students have responded to their offers to enroll. This category of admissions is reserved for students whose profiles are strong, but who are marginally qualified in comparison to the overall strength of others in the pool of applicants.

TYPES OF POST-SECONDARY DEGREES

A.A.: This stands for an "associate of arts" degree, which can be earned at most two-year colleges.

A.A.S.: This refers to an "associate of applied science" degree, which can be earned at some two-year colleges. B.A. or B.S.: B.A. stands for "bachelor of arts," and B.S. stands for "bachelor of science." Both degrees can be earned at four-year colleges.

Graduate Degrees: These degrees are earned beyond the bachelor's degree when the student completes graduate school curriculum requirements. Common examples include the MA (master's degree), PhD (doctoral degree) MBA (master's degree in business administration), MD (medical doctor).

Certificates: In an economy that increasingly rewards specialization, more and more institutions are offering certification programs, typically a package of five or six courses, for credit or not, taken over three to 18 months. Some cost a few thousand dollars, others much more.