



NRCA

COLLEGE
ADMISSIONS
Workshop

HOW DO I KNOW WHICH COLLEGE IS RIGHT FOR ME?



Research



Visit



Compare



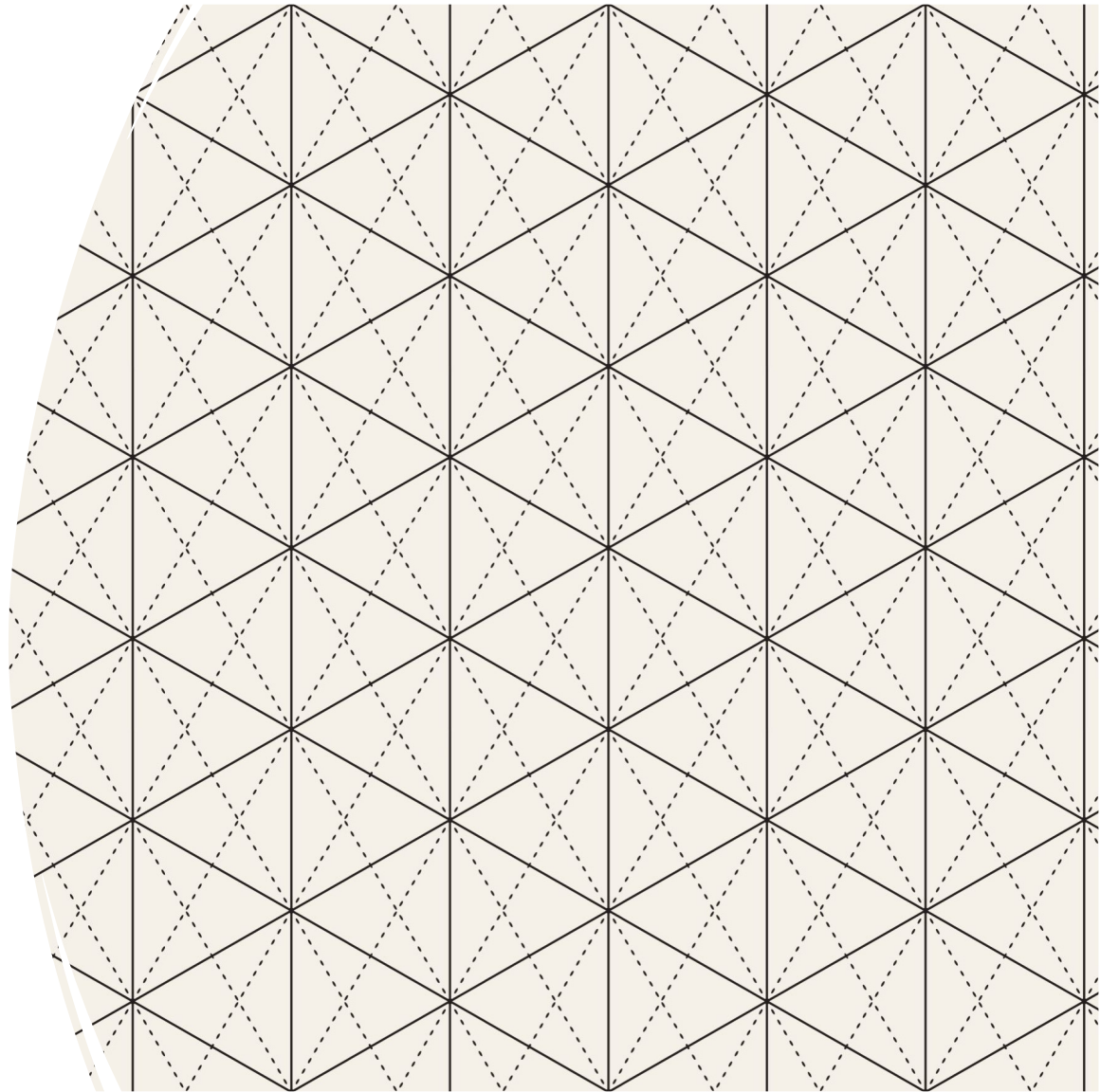
Discuss



‘Most important is finding a college that is right for the student, and that the goals and personality of the student are well-matched with the college. Students who think first about who they are and what they want are more likely to choose a college that fits them.’

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

- **Location**
- **Setting**
- **Size**
- **Academic Programs**
- **Cost**
- **Athletics**
- **Extracurricular activities**
- **Public or Private**
- **Student Body/Culture/Diversity**



WHAT ARE COLLEGES LOOKING FOR?

OBJECTIVE		SUBJECTIVE		
ACADEMIC RECORD	TEST SCORES	STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND EMPLOYMENT	ESSAY(S)	LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Level of courses completed• Grades in academic courses• HS GPA or Class Rank• GPA is almost always recalculated with the formula used by the college	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ACT or SAT (almost all take either one) - check with individual college to determine requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How is time spent outside the classroom?• Clubs, community service• Commitments and responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Topics may or may not relate to academic or career interests/goals.• Should be descriptive and specific to the student as an individual.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional insight about the student from an advocate's perspective (teacher, counselor, mentor, employer, organization advisor or sponsor, etc.)

Tip: Check the Common Data Set for each college on your list. This will show you where to put in the most effort.

THE MORE SELECTIVE THE COLLEGE...

The more subjective the decision becomes!



HOWEVER...

The average acceptance rate among all colleges is nearly 70%!! **There are plenty of colleges that are going to accept you!**

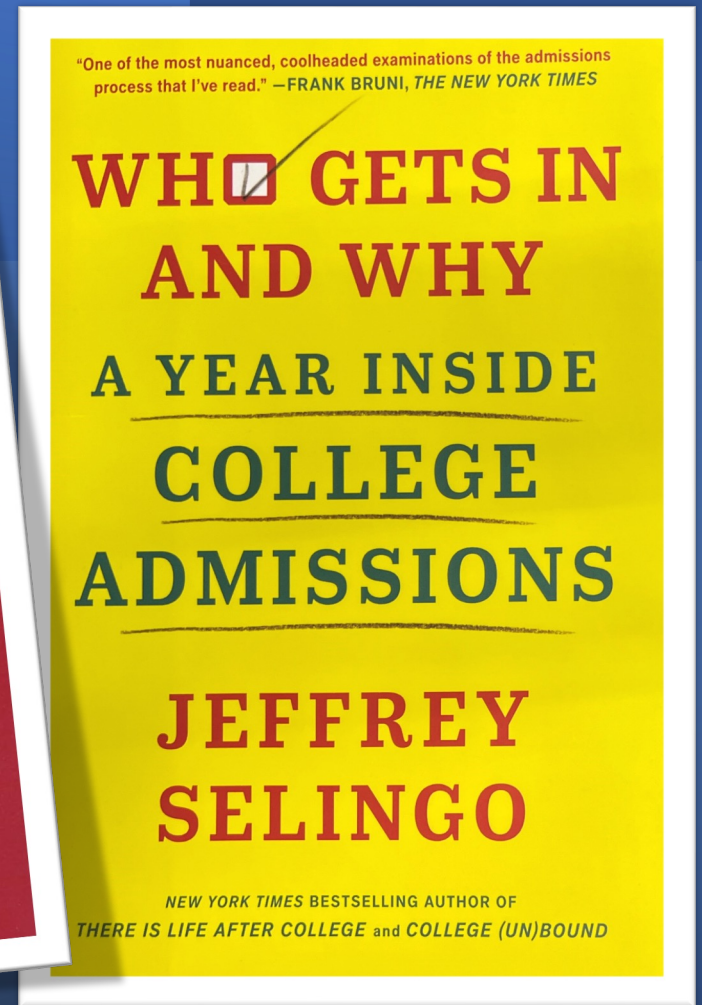
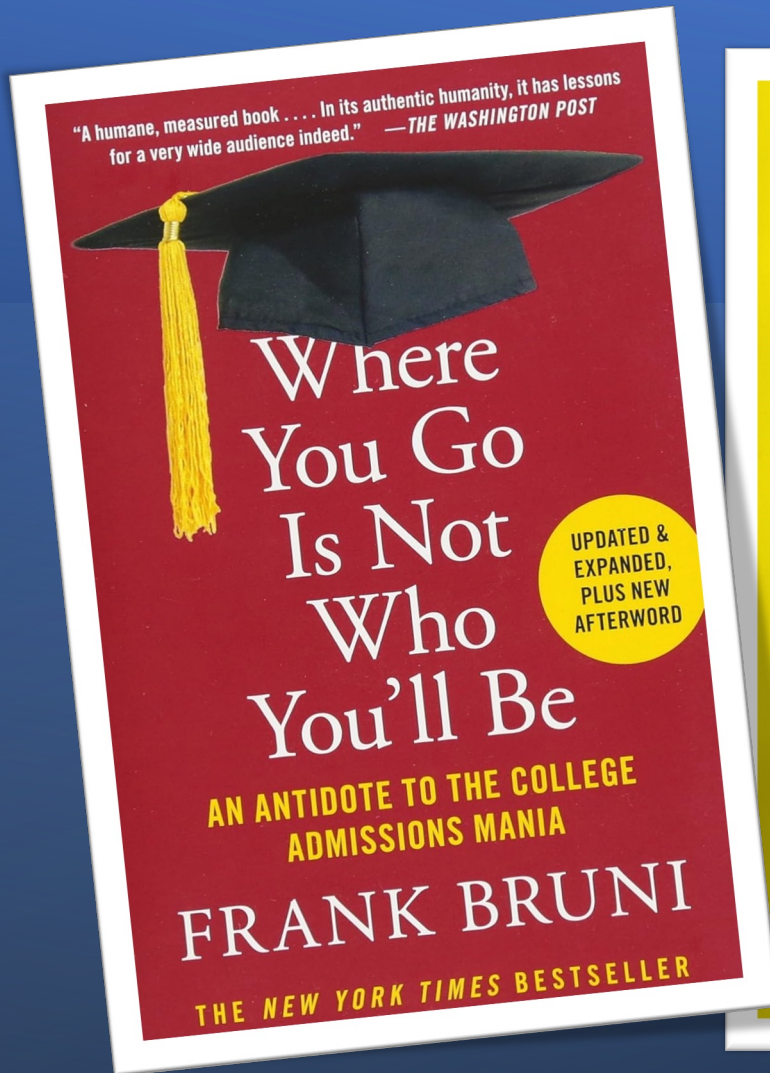
Excellent Article about acceptance rates/quality of colleges: [College Acceptance Rates and the Admissions Process \(collegeadvisor.com\)](http://collegeadvisor.com)

ARE SELECTIVE COLLEGES BETTER?

- Keep in mind that selectivity isn't everything. College acceptance rates do not inherently speak to the *quality* of students who applied, just the quantity. Moreover, college acceptance rates do not speak to the quality of education that each student will receive at a particular university.
- The hardest colleges to get into won't necessarily be the objectively *best* colleges; after all, no college is objectively the best! The most competitive colleges also may not be the best colleges *for you*. Remember school lists should be based on a variety of variables: faculty, alumni employment rates, the school's overall atmosphere (such as location, size, emphasis on athletics, presence or absence of Greek life), and the availability of opportunities that interest you (such as study abroad or specific research options).

[College Acceptance Rates and the Admissions Process \(collegeadvisor.com\)](http://collegeadvisor.com)

Must Reads!



North Raleigh Christian Academy

7300 Perry Creek Road
 Raleigh, North Carolina 27616
 Phone: (919) 573-7900
 Fax: (919) 573-7901

	Grade	Grade Points	Credit	
17-18 North Raleigh Christian Academy - HS				
12	British Literature	C (75)	2	1.00
12	Christian Apologetics	B (80)	3	1.00
12	Honors Ecology	A (93)	5	1.00
12	Honors 20th Century History & Economics	A (93)	5	1.00
12	Microsoft Office Specialists	A (94)	4	1.00
12	Statistics	B (81)	3	1.00
16-17 North Raleigh Christian Academy - HS				
11	American Literature	B (81)	3	1.00
11	Biblical Hermeneutics	B (84)	3	1.00
11	Chemistry	A (94)	4	1.00
11	Advanced Functions & Modeling	B (86)	3	1.00
11	Spanish III	B (85)	3	1.00
11	Technology Integration I	A (100)	4	1.00
11	US History	A (96)	4	1.00
15-16 North Raleigh Christian Academy - HS				
10	Anatomy	A (97)	4	1.00
10	Computer Programming Fundamentals	A (95)	4	1.00
10	English II	A (92)	4	1.00
10	Honors Algebra II	C (78)	3	1.00
10	Spanish II	A (92)	4	1.00
10	Systematic Theology	A (95)	4	1.00
10	US Constitution	A (97)	4	1.00
14-15 North Raleigh Christian Academy - HS				
9	Biblical Theology	A (96)	4	0.75
9	Biology	A (99)	4	1.00
9	English I	B (89)	3	1.00
9	Geometry	A (98)	4	1.00
9	Physical Education	A (100)	4	0.25
9	Spanish I	A (95)	4	1.00
9	Teacher Assistant	A (100)	0	1.00
9	World History	A (97)	4	1.00

Grading Scale

A = 90 - 100
 B = 80 - 89
 C = 70 - 79
 D = 60 - 69
 F = 0 - 59

Community Service Hours

Total Hours: 48

Academic Information

Total Units Earned: 80.00
 Weighted Cumulative GPA: 3.692
 Unweighted Cumulative GPA: 3.577
 Graduation Date: 06/01/2018
 Graduation Track: College-Prep

Accredited By:
 ACS
 Cognia

Juan Othridge
 SIGNATURE 12/05/2023
 DATE

YOUR ACADEMIC RECORD: THE NRCA TRANSCRIPT

- Shows grades 9-12 (course listing for 12th grade only until end of first semester)
- Updated each SEMESTER approximately 7-10 days after semester ends.
- NRCA does not rank students
- Only YEAR average shows on transcript once the grade level is completed
- Number of grade points earned depends on class level.
- Credits= 1 per course unless course doesn't meet daily
- Both weighted GPA and Unweighted GPA shown
- A majority of colleges recalculate GPA!

WHEN AND HOW DOES A COLLEGE RECEIVE MY TRANSCRIPT?

Unofficial Transcripts

- printed copy will be given to each student/family at Senior parent night in August
- check for errors and let Mrs. Etheridge know asap if you have questions or find a mistake
- can be sent by the student to colleges or scholarships that request them
- email Mrs. Etheridge or Mrs. Bauguess to receive a digital PDF if needed for any reason

Official Transcripts

- sent by Mrs. Etheridge to any institution requested
- request to be sent to a college after submitting an application by putting the college in the Applied column

NOTE

In most cases, official transcript will only be sent AFTER drop/add to ensure course listing is accurate.

ACT and SAT TESTS

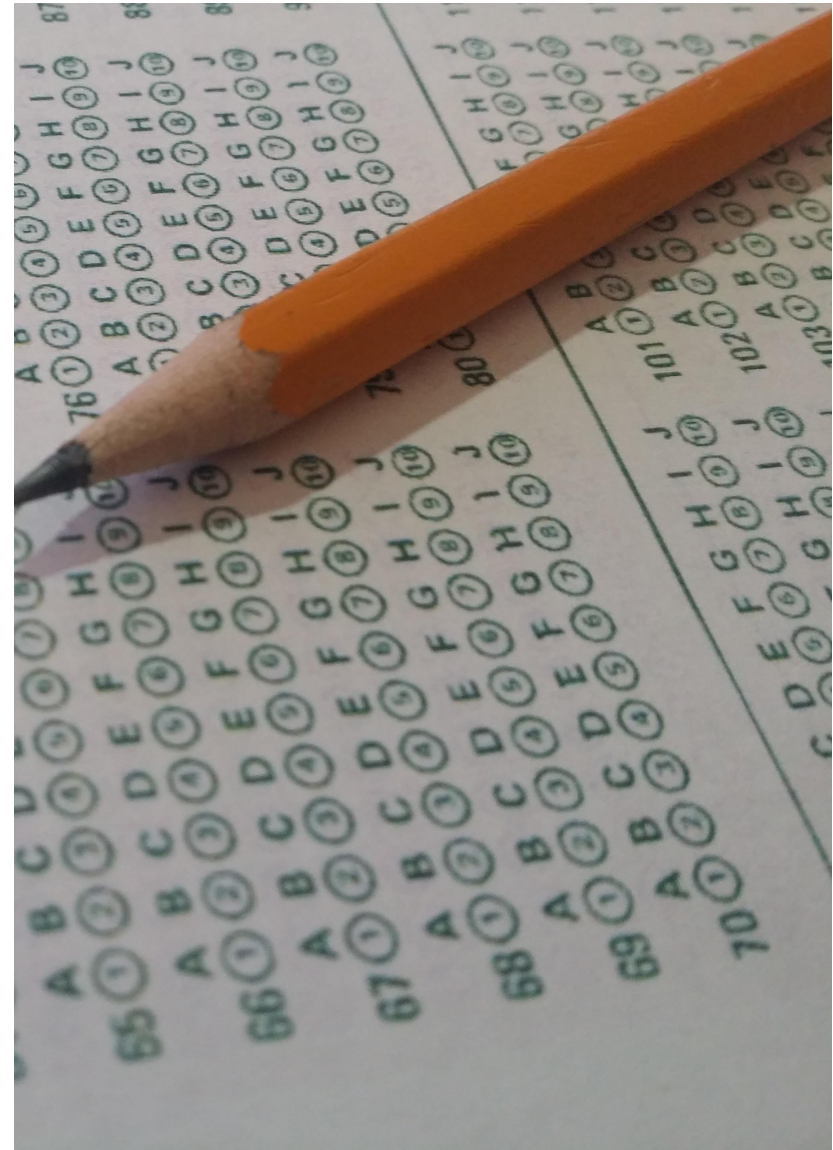
ACT required for graduation: Score of 16 in Reading, Math, or Composite

SAT is NOT required, but you can take it at another school on a weekend. I recommend taking it!

Take tests 2x so that superscoring is possible

Family sends scores to colleges

Senior ACT on October 15





SET UP YOUR ACCOUNTS

ACT: act.org

- schedule additional tests
- access and send scores

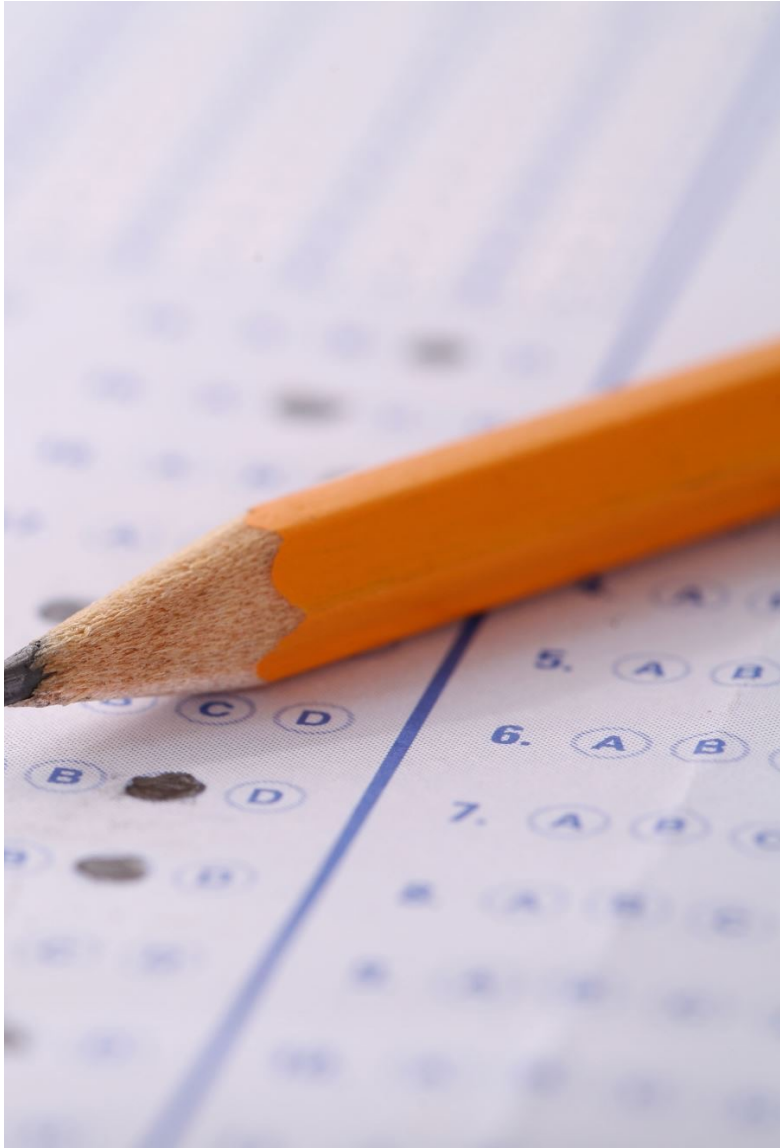
SAT: collegeboard.org

- schedule an SAT test (not required)
- send test scores

SHOULD I SEND MY SCORES?

- You should evaluate whether or not to submit test scores for each college on your list.
- FOR TEST OPTIONAL SCHOOLS, generally, a good strategy is to research the “middle 50” SAT and/or ACT range for each school -- that is 25% of students scored below, and 25% of students scored above. This information can usually be found on the Admission or Class Profile section of the school’s website, or through college research sites such as College Board’s Big Future.
- You can also google “[school name] Common Data Set” and review more detailed testing data in Section C: First-time, First-year (Freshman) Admission in the PDF.
- If your score falls within or above a college’s middle 50%, it may be helpful to submit your standardized test scores to that college.





TEST SCORE FAQ

If I submit testing, do I need to submit scores from ALL of my test sittings?

This depends on whether the college super scores (i.e., takes the highest score for each section, regardless of the date of the exam), or if the college accepts Score Choice (which means that you can pick the highest individual test scores per section to submit). Some schools may require that students submit their entire testing history, so this is something to double-check on each college's website. Remember, that this is more important when officially submitting your test scores through the College Board or ACT (as opposed to self-reporting them on the Common App).

Should I report a past or future AP exam on my application?

Most schools will only give you credit for 3s, 4s, and 5s, so for admissions, it is usually recommended that students only list scores of 3 or above.

If I have taken the SAT and ACT, do I need to submit both scores? You do not have to submit both scores. Some students do if both scores are very high, but submitting both scores is rarely, if ever, preferable to submitting solid scores from a single exam.

[ACT vs SAT Score Conversion Chart | The Princeton Review](#)

WHAT SHOULD BE ON YOUR LIST?

SAFETY SCHOOLS

- Schools you are relatively sure to get into
- Schools you love and can see yourself going to
- Your GPA and test scores should be well above the average student's scores to qualify as safety.
- There are no guarantees with college admissions!
- Prep Scholar's Guide to [Safety Schools](#)

WHAT SHOULD BE ON YOUR LIST?

- **MATCH SCHOOLS**
- A school in which you have a pretty good chance of admission
- Schools you love and can see yourself going to
- GPA and test scores fall within the middle 50% range.
- Academic and Extracurricular interests
- Budget
- Most schools to which you apply should be match schools.
- Match Schools

WHAT SHOULD BE ON YOUR LIST?

- **REACH SCHOOLS**
 - A school that is unlikely to offer you admission
 - GPA and test scores fall 25% or below that of the average student.
 - You love the school and can see yourself going there.
 - Do not apply if your scores are too far below the range. Focus your attention on other great schools—there are plenty to choose from!
 - Reach Schools

FIND CAREERS
AND
COLLEGES
THAT MATCH
YOUR GOALS,
PREFERENCES
, GRADES,
AND TEST
SCORES



[SCOIR](#)



[Find Your Christian College](#)



[College Foundation of NC](#)



[College Board Big Future](#)



[College Transitions Dataverse](#)



[College Data](#)



[O'Net OnLine](#)



[College Search Spreadsheet Template | CollegeXpress](#)

RECOMMENDATION LETTER PROCESS

TEACHER RECOMMENDATION REQUEST PROCESS

- ✓ Talk to the teacher **in person** and request a letter
- ✓ If the teacher agrees, he or she will give you a form to complete. **Forms will come from the teacher only!**
- ✓ After completing the form, ask teacher to sign it.
- ✓ Bring the **signed** form to Mrs. Etheridge (or email it)
- ✓ Request the letter in SCOIR by going to My Colleges/Application Documents

<https://scoir.helpdocs.io/article/8a5m6p2fd4-requesting-teacher-recommendations>

- ✓ I will approve the request in SCOIR
- ✓ Teacher will receive request through SCOIR and upload a letter by the due date.
- ✓ Teacher may give you a form/survey to help them write the letter



Requesting Other Letters

- You do not need to use this process to request a letter from Mrs. Etheridge. There will be a survey for you to complete in SCOIR. By completing that survey, you are requesting a letter.
- If requesting a letter for a scholarship or athletics, or anything else besides college, this process does not apply.



UNDERSTANDING RECOMMENDATION LETTER DEADLINES

- Letters (and other documents coming from the school) are due to the college approximately 2 weeks after the application is DUE
- You will put the **application** due date on your request form and we ask the teacher to have letter finished and uploaded by your earliest application due date.
- The letter does not have to be sent at the same time you submit the application.
- Example: If Application is due November 1, the letter will be due around November 15. Even if you submit the application on October 1, you will still give the teacher the due date of NOVEMBER 1.
- Do not push the teacher to complete their letter! If they do not complete by November 1 (most will), you can remind them gently on that day, and they still have about 2 weeks before it is due.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

ESTABLISHING NC RESIDENCY

NC RDS | Use residency determination to establish tuition and aid eligibility | NC Residency Determination Service

Notes

- Best to do this before beginning applications to NC colleges
- Skip the PowerSchool ID question (it is for public school students)

TYPES OF APPLICATION DEADLINES





UNDERSTANDING APPLICATION DEADLINES

The Common Application opens on **August 1**. An account can be created sooner, and some information entered prior to August 1 will be saved when it rolls over. NOT essay questions- save those elsewhere!

Regular decision deadlines vary per college. Most fall between December and February.

Early Action deadlines are typically Oct/Nov. There is no advantage to applying earlier than the stated deadline, but do not wait until last minute!

Early Decision deadlines are similar to EA but are **binding** agreements. You can only apply to ONE school Early Decision. Contact me if you plan to apply ED because I need to walk you through it.

If a college has rolling applications, they may accept summer applications and many continue through summer after graduation. Some end earlier, so note deadlines for each college.

HOW TO APPLY

- COMMON APP: [Apply to college with Common App | Your future starts here](#)
- You can apply to NC Colleges through [How to Apply to College & Get Financial Aid \(cfnc.org\)](#)
 - NC Countdown to college: October 21-27, 2024 FREE Applications to many NC Colleges!
- SCOIR: any college with the green bar accepts application directly through SCOIR
- College websites: Many will direct you to Common App, but some have their own application

AFTER YOU APPLY

- **Immediately move the college to Applied on your SCOIR My Colleges page.**
- This prompts me to send your supplemental documents, including your transcript, school report, school profile, and any letters that have been written and uploaded to your account in SCOIR. You can check the status to see what has been sent.
- Colleges do not typically need these documents immediately- they are usually 'due' approximately 2 weeks after the application deadline.
- You should receive an email from the college with further instructions. Typically, they will ask you to set up an account or "portal." Do this as soon as possible.
- Most colleges will keep your portal updated with further instructions, scholarship opportunities, and more.
- Keep me updated on results (accepted, denied, waitlisted, deferred) by changing the status of the college in SCOIR.
- After first semester grades are finalized (end of January), I will send an updated transcript to all colleges that have not denied admission.
- Once you commit to a college, mark it Enrolling in SCOIR. That is where I will send your final transcript after graduation.

WHO SENDS IT?

Document	Person Responsible	How to Request
Application	Student	N/A
Test Scores (if applicable)	Student	N/A
Transcript	Mrs. Etheridge	Move college to Applied
School Report	Mrs. Etheridge	Do not need to request
Letter(s) of Recommendation	Mrs. Etheridge	Teacher- ask for form, fill out, get signed, give to Mrs. Etheridge, request in SCOIR Counselor- Fill out Survey in SCOIR Anyone else- ask them to write and email to Mrs. Etheridge Do NOT put email addresses in the recommender section of the Common App!
School Profile	Mrs. Etheridge	Do not need to request
Early Decision Contract (if applicable)	student, parent, and counselor sign SCOIR generated document	Student selects "ED" when moving college to Applied in SCOIR.



DON'T MISS THIS VERY IMPORTANT STEP!

After you submit an application to a college, immediately move it to the Applied column in SCOIR. This alerts me to send your letter(s), transcripts, etc. to that college.

A thick yellow border surrounds the text, and a horizontal yellow line is positioned below the text.

COMMON APP:
SECTION BY SECTION

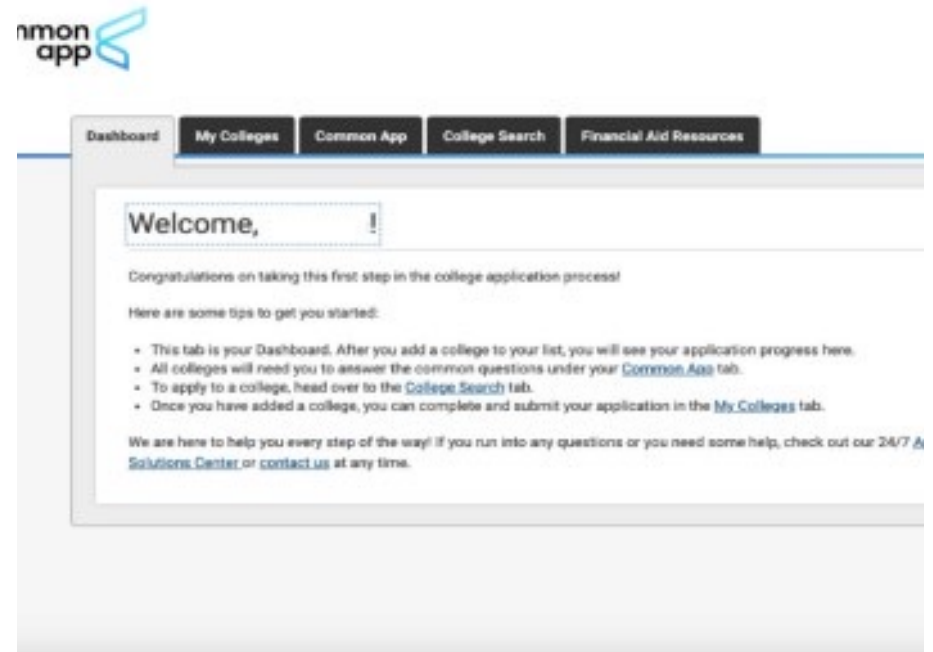


START EARLY

- This will save you so much time and stress during the school year. While some of the info the Common App asks for you should know off the top of your head (like your birthday), other information may require some investigation (such as your mom's graduate school or your counselor's email address).
- A good tip is to go through the Common App once and fill out all the information you can. When you come across something you aren't sure of, make a list of those gaps on a piece of paper or a note in your phone, so you can follow up with the appropriate people (your parent/guardian, counselor, teacher, etc.) to get those questions answered.

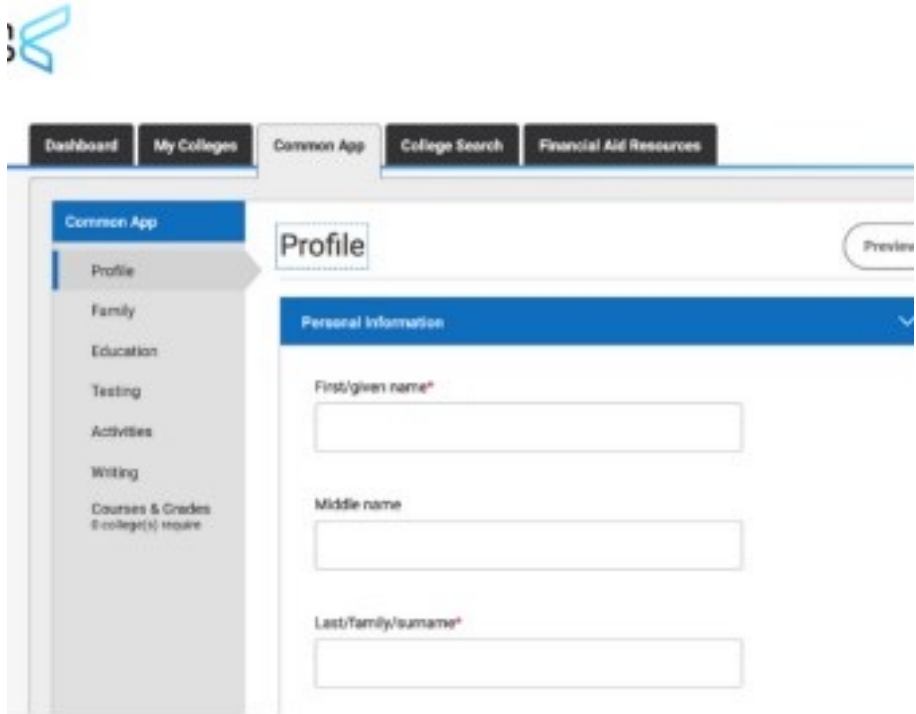
SETTING UP YOUR ACCOUNT

When you create your Common App account, you'll see five tabs: Dashboard, My Colleges, Common App, College Search, and Financial Aid Resources. The application also has an extensive (though sometimes confusing and incomplete) Help section. Here's a screenshot.



COMPONENTS

The Common App has two major components: 1) The general “Common App” section (which is sent to all colleges) 2) The college-specific sections (which will be completed on a college-by-college basis)



The screenshot displays the Common App interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs: Dashboard, My Colleges, Common App (selected), College Search, and Financial Aid Resources. Below the tabs, a left sidebar contains a menu with options: Common App (selected), Profile, Family, Education, Testing, Activities, Writing, and Courses & Grades (College(s) Home). The main content area is titled "Profile" and features a "Preview" button. Underneath, a section titled "Personal Information" is expanded, showing three input fields: "First/given name*", "Middle name", and "Last/family/surname*".



PROFILE

This section asks for basic information about you. You should be able to complete most of this off the top of your head, but there may be some questions you're unsure of.

You'll need to provide the following personal information:

- Name ● Address ● Contact Details ● Demographics ● Geography ● Language ● Citizenship ● Common App Fee Waiver

One REALLY important point: make sure you use your full legal name, as it appears on your passport, driver's license, and/or other official forms of identification. This version of your name must match your transcript, financial aid materials, and standardized testing score reports. If not, colleges might lose track of your paperwork.



PROFILE

What does it mean when Common App asks, “would you like to share a different first name that you go by?”

If you go by a nickname or shortened version of your name, or if you go by your middle name instead of your first name, and you would like the colleges and universities to which you apply to also refer to you by this name you should provide it in this field. For example, if your legal first name is William but you typically go by Will. You should avoid listing a casual or colloquial nickname, or your social media usernames. For example, Will would be appropriate to list in this field but not “Fresh Prince of Bel Air.”

What if I have two permanent addresses, one with each parent? You should put down the address of the home where you spend most of your time. A little bit later, you’ll be able to write down your other address in the “Family” section.



PROFILE

What if I don't have a home phone number?

Select mobile as your preferred telephone number, and then provide that number. Under alternate phone number, select no alternate phone number.

Do I have to provide my religion and ethnic background?

This is optional information, so you don't have to provide it. However, you do need to provide your citizenship status.

What if more than one of the ethnic options provided on the Common App apply to me?

You may include all ethnic identities that apply to you.



PROFILE

What email address should I use?

You should use one that you check regularly. If you don't check email regularly, the admissions process is a good time to get into the habit! If your current email address is something you don't want colleges seeing (i.e., something you created in middle school), you should probably create a new email account that is a version of your name.

**DO NOT USE YOUR SCHOOL EMAIL ADDRESS!!
YOU CANNOT RECEIVE OUTSIDE EMAIL TO THIS
ADDRESS.**

**TIP: Set up a new email address to be used only
for things that are college-related.**



FAMILY

The Family section asks you about three main things:

- Household ● Parent(s) and/or Guardian(s) ● Sibling(s)

- In this section, you provide information about the other members of your household. If you don't know certain information, such as country of birth, occupation, or education level, about your parent(s) or guardian or siblings, you may want to ask them for their help as you fill out the section!

This section asks you lots of questions about your academic performance, so having a copy of your high school transcript at your side will be really helpful as you complete it! Specifically, you'll be asked for the following pieces of info:

- Current or Most Recent School
- Other Secondary Schools
- Colleges & Universities
- Grades
- Current/Most Recent Year Courses
- Honors
- Community Based Organizations
- Future Plans

EDUCATION



EDUCATION: NRCA SPECIFIC DETAILS

School CEEB Code: 343-223

High School Address: 7300 Perry Creek Rd, Raleigh, NC 27616

Phone number: 919-573-7900

Graduating Class Size: 124 (class of 2025)

Class Rank Reporting: NRCA does not rank

GPA Scale: 4.0 Weighted

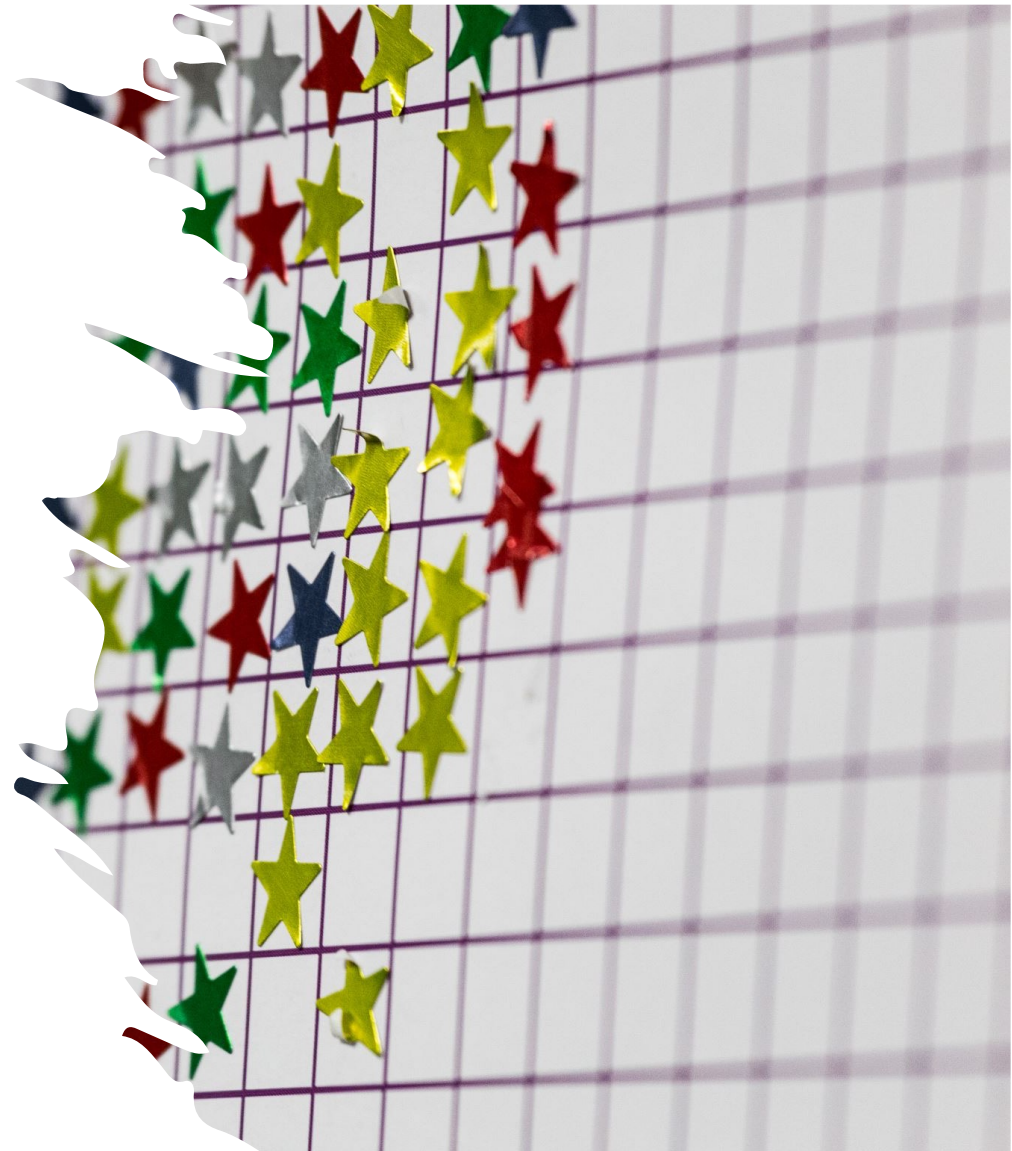
Course Scheduling System: Semesters

***Enter all courses for senior year except for Homeroom, Study Hall, and Early Dismissal**

EDUCATION

I don't have any honors or awards from high school. Do I leave the Honors section blank?

Yes, but remember that this includes all honors at the school, state/regional, national, and international levels. If you've received something like a School Spirit Award or a Citizenship Award, these are honors you may include. On the right side, check off the "level" of your awards; the majority of students will choose "school" for most, if not all, awards. Note: you shouldn't list extracurricular positions such as "club president" here in the Honors section, those will be listed in the Activities section. And if you don't have any honors or awards (some high schools simply don't give out a great deal of them), that's completely fine and you can leave this section blank!





EDUCATION

Can my future plans affect my admission to the university or college?

Admissions committees are responsible for building a diverse student body in terms of backgrounds, ambitions, and academic interests. Think about it like this—wouldn't college be a bit dull if every single student was the exact same major? While this can impact decisions, you should remember that it's just one of many factors that colleges consider. Keep in mind that many students go into college undecided and many more change their majors! So be honest about what you think you want to study in college. Additionally, some colleges offer independent majors that allow students to build their own program of study. Generally, it won't hurt you to be undecided, but it could help you to have credible, compelling academic goals and interests.

What if I don't know what my career interests are?

You can choose “undecided,” which doesn't make you look “bad” or unprepared. Colleges know that students' interests evolve and change throughout college, so it's okay to be undecided



EDUCATION

What should I do if I've attended other high schools? You will need to add the school(s) in the Other Secondary/High Schools section. You will also need to include a brief response describing "why you left each of the above secondary/high schools." For example, perhaps you changed schools because your family moved or you transferred to a school outside of your district in order to pursue a specific academic opportunity. You will have up to 250 words for this short response, but you may not need to use the entire word count.

Why does it ask if I have taken coursework at a college or university? Colleges are interested in your experience with any college-level coursework as it can be an indicator of your ability to succeed in college. If you have taken any dual enrollment courses at a local college/university during your time in high school, attended any pre-college enrichment programs at a college/university, and/or enrolled in a college-level course for credit, you can list up to 3 institutions here. If you haven't had access to these opportunities, that's okay too!

TESTING



- In the common section of the Common App, you will choose to self-report scores or not.
- In the specific college's section, you may be asked if you want self-reported scores considered. If you say 'yes,' the college will not review your application until they have your self-reported scores.
- If you are planning to apply test optional to any of the colleges on your list, put NO where it asks if you want to self-report scores.
- To self-report directly to a college, some ask you to enter the score on your application, some will accept a PDF of your score report emailed to the admissions office, and some want it uploaded to your portal.
- If your test scores are considered for admissions, you will still likely need to submit your **official** test scores to the college in which you enroll.



ACTIVITIES

- The activities section is one of the most important parts of the application! This is how you show colleges how you've spent your time outside of the classroom.
- You'll need to provide the following information for each activity:
 - Activity type
 - Position/Leadership description and organization name (if applicable)
 - Details, honors won, and accomplishments
 - Participation grade levels
 - Timing of participation
 - Hours spent per week
 - Weeks spent per year
 - If you intend to participate in a similar activity in college

ACTIVITIES

Admissions officers are looking for **quality over quantity**, so don't worry if you don't have 10 separate involvements to list! Once you've chosen the type of activity from the drop-down menu, you'll have 50 characters to use for the position/leadership description and 100 characters to use for the organization name.

You can think of these two sections, together, as a snapshot of the activity and your role. Make every character count by using common abbreviations and no fluff.



ACTIVITIES

You may decide whether to use an organization's official name or a descriptive name. For instance, you might list "President, Wombat Club," but colleges won't know what a Wombat Club does. If the Wombat Club is a school spirit organization, then you could say, "President, school spirit club;" alternatively, you can describe the club's function in the following field.

The activity description "including what you accomplished and any recognition you received, etc." field is your opportunity to provide specific details about how you made a difference through each activity. You only have 150 characters to use in this response, so don't repeat anything you've already mentioned or indicated in the other fields. You want to be as specific and detailed as possible. A great way to do this is by focusing on SMART details: Specific, Measurable Actions with Results over Time.



ACTIVITIES

- If you have athletic accomplishments, include them in your response. For example, “Placed 2nd in state finals after running three hours each morning before school for six months.” If you raised a certain amount of money for a charity or you had an accomplishment at a job, then say so. For instance, “Folded 285 pairs of jeans in one day; a new store record.”

Does the order matter?

- The directions say to “list your activities in the order of their importance to you” so that is what admissions officers will interpret as they are reading your activity list. Your order of importance may be prioritized based on which activities you've had the most impact in or have had the most impact on you. The activities where you've had a significant leadership role, time commitment, accomplishment, and/or longer involvement usually go towards the top of the list.

ACTIVITIES

What if I don't remember how many hours or weeks I spent doing each activity?

Make the best estimate that you can. This is just so colleges know how committed you were to the activities you were involved in. Colleges want students who are active and engaged community members and this is one way they can determine this.

I don't have any activities to list because I'm always home taking care of my siblings or other responsibilities. Should I leave this section blank?

Absolutely not! Taking care of your siblings, any family responsibilities, part-time or full time jobs are all serious commitments and something that admissions officers will want to know about! In this case, write down how many hours per week you spend taking care of your siblings, family responsibility, or work, and make sure you also indicate during which grades you did this, as well as when during the year it happened (i.e., school year and/or summer break). You can also describe these responsibilities in more detail in the Additional Information section or even in a personal essay.



ACTIVITIES

What if I've participated in more than 10 activities during high school?

Choose the activities where you feel your participation has made the greatest impact or the ones that are the most important to you. If you feel like you must report other activities, you may do so in the Additional Information section. Some colleges also invite students to submit resumes; however, resumes are not recommended for a college that doesn't invite them.

What's to stop students from fabricating accomplishments or activities?

Aside from general ethical considerations, everything a student submits on the Common App may be corroborated by your school counselor's School Report. This report isn't quite a letter of recommendation, rather it's the narrative that your counselor submits along with your letter of recommendation.



ACTIVITIES

Does it matter if I intend to continue with a similar activity in college?

It certainly can! If you're a recruited athlete, then you definitely want to indicate that you'll continue your sport. If you're an accomplished musician, colleges might want to know that you'll try out for the orchestra. Other more general activities may have less of an impact and colleges know that students often want to try new things once they get to college!

What if I can't describe the depth of my commitment or the magnitude of an accomplishment in 150 characters?

If you're asking this question, then you may have hit upon a strong topic for one of your essays or for a longer description in the Additional Information section! But 150 characters should be sufficient for most accomplishments. If a college allows you to submit an additional resume, this can also be an opportunity to talk about your involvements in more detail, especially if your role unfolded over several years with many accomplishments along the way.



RECOMMENDERS

- List each recommender by name and job title, but do NOT enter their email addresses. This includes teachers, counselor, and any other recommenders. The email address box is optional (no star beside it), so just leave it blank.
- Doing this shows the college that they will be receiving letters through another method. In our case, they will come from SCOIR sent by Mrs. Etheridge.
- When you enter email addresses, Common App sends an email to the recommender asking them to upload their letter and there will be no letter there, which can confuse the college.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For many students, and even some college counselors, the Additional Information section is the most baffling element of the Common App. “Circumstances or qualifications” can mean almost anything. Is it another essay? A resumé? An extended activity list? A space for accolades? A writing sample? It can be any of the above—or it can be left blank—but students must think carefully about how, and whether, to use it. In this section you’ll be presented with the question “Do you wish to provide details of circumstances or qualifications not reflected in the application?” If you answer yes, a text box will appear that allows you to provide up to 650 words of any additional information you wish to share.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Some “circumstances or qualifications” will be obvious for certain students. Here are some examples of topics to discuss:

- Any extenuating circumstance(s) that may have affected your academic performance
- A significant extracurricular activity (such as service, leadership, or artistic performance at the state or national level) that isn’t fully described elsewhere
- Major extracurricular or academic work, such as scientific research or creative writing
- Employment or entrepreneurship
- Extended activity list (only if activities are truly compelling)

A magnifying glass with a black handle and a silver rim is positioned on a bright yellow background. The lens is focused on a small, indistinct object, symbolizing investigation or attention to detail.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Will it look bad if I leave this section blank?

No. This section is completely optional. However, if you do choose to complete it, admission officers take this section seriously, so make sure you use this section constructively and positively.

Can I use this space for an extra essay?

You can, but you probably don't want to unless the essay is really essential for colleges' understanding of what you'll contribute to classes or campus life. Less is often more. Students who don't feel that they have obvious topics such as the above will most likely leave this section blank. That is 100% okay.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

How should I write about uncomfortable situations in my personal or family life?

If there were any extenuating circumstances at home or in school that affected your academic performance, you should complete this section. When you're writing about these situations, always stick to the facts. For example, "My sophomore year was a difficult year for me and my family. In the fall, my father lost his job, and my parents went through a divorce. In the spring, I was diagnosed with mono. As you can see on my transcript, my grades suffered that year. Over time, I have learned how to better manage my schoolwork, activities, and family responsibilities. I now feel very well prepared to balance all the different parts of college life."



SHOULD I WRITE ABOUT COVID-19?

This essay is not the proper space for your thoughts about living through Covid. It's not necessary to talk about how you turned the experience into a positive or how you made the most of a bad situation. Other parts of the application, such as the activities section, or other essays will allow you to talk about new projects or initiatives that you started.

With that said, if Covid has had a significant impact on your life beyond the impact it had on others around you, it is ok to use this space to write about that.

Don't write your main personal statement about COVID-19 This is one of the reasons that this optional essay is being offered: colleges want to learn more about your stories (and not just what happened to you during the pandemic). If you write your personal essay on COVID-19 it is simply a missed opportunity to share something that reaches back before and will continue after COVID-19 is history.

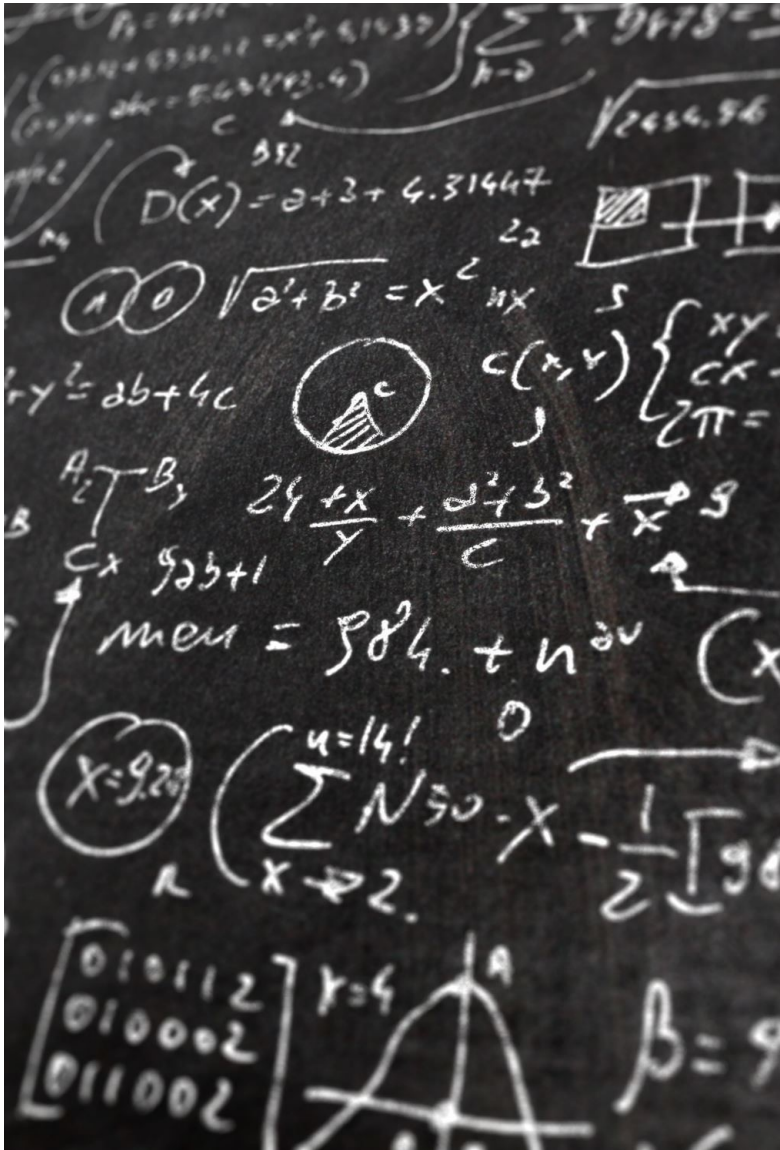


MY COLLEGES

Once you add colleges and universities via the College Search tab, you'll see additional sections to complete under the My Colleges tab. These sections will vary from school to school, and usually include:

- Entry term
- Degree Status
- Financial Aid Preference
- Academic Program
- Family (whether you have had family members attend the college)
- Previous Contact with Institution (interview, visit)
- Writing Supplement (college specific essays and short answers)

Many colleges have additional essay questions, called Supplemental Essays, included in their college page. Some schools may include important additional information about their supplements on their website.



MY COLLEGES

The Common App is “adaptive,” meaning that some questions are tailored to you based on your prior responses. Adaptive questions are common in supplements. For instance, a school might have different questions for different academic programs, so it won’t reveal the questions until after you’ve indicated which academic program you’re applying to.

Don't reuse the topic of your Personal Essay for supplement essays. Each supplement essay is an opportunity to reveal a different aspect of your character and experiences and your fit for that specific college. Although there are many different prompts, you can answer almost any question by describing a specific moment when you learned, changed or made a difference.

MY COLLEGES

Is it OK to recycle supplemental essays for different colleges? It is not recommended to recycle essays for another college. If you want to repurpose it however, it's okay to discuss some of the same experiences and important moments in your life making a specific connection with each college. Colleges use supplements to determine the "fit" of a prospective student in their community. Supplements can also be one of the biggest missed opportunities because students often don't take the time to tailor them to each particular school.

How firm are word limits? This depends on the college. Some colleges will set exact limits by the word or character. In these cases, you should stick to the limits. Other colleges will be vague and say "about a page" or "a paragraph." In these situations, it's best to follow their suggestions as closely as possible and err on the side of a shorter essay if you can.



DEMONSTRATED INTEREST

How important is the “interview/visit” question?

Colleges are sensitive to what they call “demonstrated interest” (things like visits and interviews). That’s why it’s important to fill out a registration form when you visit a college or meet an admissions officer at your school or a local college fair or event. If you’re not able to visit the campus in-person, check and see what virtual opportunities are available to attend such as a virtual information session, student panel, virtual campus tour, virtual admissions/alumni interview, or other webinars and virtual events. Even an email to your regional admissions officer can help.

