

The Scoop on College Admissions

Brought to you by Mission: Scholarship

Navigating the College Admissions Process

1. Gathering/Collecting Personal Information

- GPA
- Test Scores (AP Scores, ACT, SAT, Superscores) *Do you qualify for a waiver?
- Your family financial information for Financial Aid applications
- First Part of Common Application (Family info, address, etc)
- Your extracurriculars
- Who will be your recommenders?

Tips on becoming more qualified applicant

- It is not too late to raise your GPA! (FOR SENIORS) Don't be afraid of honors classes!
- There are many schools that look for passion over your academic achievement.
- Attempt to raise your SAT or ACT. Ask your teachers for help and print free resources off of prepscholar.org
- Complete Unique Extracurricular Activities that showcase passion. Activities that will make admissions officers say "Wow!"
- Build relationships with your teachers and counselors so they will write you a recommendation. Choose a teacher that likes you! (You would be surprised how many people choose teachers who don't like them to write their recommendation to seem strategic, it doesn't work!)

2. Research Colleges/Universities

- Do they have your major ?
- Affordability - Financial Aid Policy, Merit Aid, Scholarship Programs
- Environment- City or Suburb ? , School Spirit ? , Clubs and Organizations?
- Do you qualify? Is your GPA Close? Is your SAT/ACT close?
- Deadlines - EA ? ED? RA? RD?
- Take some time to research 7 schools in NC that may potentially have your major, then do in depth research to cut your list of NC schools down to 2 or 3.
- Do the same for OOS Schools .
- One dream school - School you think you have no shot at but would love to go there.

3. Get Organized

- After you have researched schools, write down every deadline included with that school! (Including scholarship deadline dates)
- Google Calendar
- Planner
- Separate your college planner and regular school planner so that you won't get overwhelmed.

4. Start Applying!

- This is the order I feel makes the process easiest.
1. Fill out common app basic info (address, family info, etc.)
 2. Fill out extracurricular list (Wording here is very important!)
 3. Let your recommenders know that you need a recommendation
 4. Start brainstorming and completing your common app essay! Do not complete any other essay until this one is done!
 5. Begin your supplemental essays/materials for each school! (Some essays can be reused, I reused mine)
 6. Don't forget those scholarship essays! Deadline varies by school.

How will you apply to college

- Common Application
- Coalition Application
- Black Common Application
- Through the particular institution

5. Financial Info

- Make sure you have completed your FAFSA and have submitted a CSS Profile for each school if they require one!
- Don't forget these deadlines!

FAFSA AND CSS Profile

What is the difference between the FAFSA and CSS Profile?

Things to look for regarding Scholarships and Financial Aid

- **Cost of Attendance-** can your family pay out of pocket for you to attend this institution?
- **Financial Aid policy-** does this institution offer a financial aid package that would allow your family to afford the institution? (Be careful for financial aid packages that include loans!). Many prestigious universities offer the best financial packages since they will meet 100% of your family's demonstrated need. Check your school's NPC (Net price calculator) to estimate the amount of financial aid they can provide you based on your family's finances.
- **Merit Aid Opportunities-** Merit aid is financial aid granted to you based on your academic achievement and leadership throughout your academic career. Financial Need is rarely a factor when determining how much "merit" aid a person will receive.
- **Outside scholarship programs-** Are there outside scholarship programs that will finance your education? Programs such as Questbridge College Match and Tom Joyner would finance your entire education to attend a specific school.

6. Submit your test scores

- After you are done submitting your application for each school, immediately submit your test scores!
- Forgetting to submit these can result in your application being disregarded.

7. Now you wait!

- Remember that an acceptance or a rejection is not a symbol of your self-worth and intelligence. The college admissions process is unpredictable.

What they don't tell you

- GPA and Test Scores aren't everything.
- Your Essay Matters
- They will try to give you as less financial aid as possible, fight for your money!
- I can't go to college with below a 2.5 GPA. (This is a myth!)
- College is not the end all be all. You will be alright in the end.
- There is nothing wrong with doing two years of community college and then transferring your credits.
- No one can predict whether you will get into a school or not, the college admissions process is unpredictable.

What they don't tell you

- A 4.0 without rigorous courses doesn't hold a lot of weight in the college admissions process. You will need a good test score to supplement.
- You can always transfer from an institution after the first-year. Don't stay somewhere that you're not happy.
- Holistic Review is very prominent in college admissions. Holistic review is when colleges consider a numerous number of factors such as extracurricular activities, essays, race, etc. They will base your admission decision on all these factors.
- No college degree is more valuable than a determined, ambitious individual. Believe in yourself, and everything else will fall in its place.

Our College Admissions Stories



Ask us questions!

Ask us about college, college admissions, or anything else that's on your mind!

Mission Scholarship (If you need more assistance)

Mission Statement: To provide equitable access to high quality college resources for students from low income backgrounds by implementing an initiative that strives to prepare students academically, financially, and emotionally for the college and scholarship application process.

- Free Initial College Consulting Appointment
- College Readiness Booklets!
- <https://missionscholarship.org>