

PREPPING FOR COLLEGE

2020 - 2021
BOOKLET



venicearts

A Center for **Media** and the **Imagination**

The Essentials

Table of Contents

[TERMS TO KNOW](#)

[11TH GRADE PLANNING](#)

[TERMS TO KNOW](#)

[12TH GRADE PLANNING](#)

[THE SAT](#)

[THE ACT](#)

[FEE WAIVERS](#)

[COLLEGES TO CONSIDER](#)

[FLY-IN AND DIVERSITY
PROGRAMS](#)

[VISITING COLLEGES](#)

[FAFSA AND THE CSS/FINANCIAL AID
PROFILE](#)

[SCHOLARSHIPS](#)

[LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION](#)

[BRAG SHEET](#)

[PORTFOLIOS](#)

Creative Pathways Services

1

1-ON-1 College Mentoring:

Email our college counselor Bryan at bryan@venice-arts.org to make an appointment! You can start working on your college application process, get help with a plan of action, applications, college essays, financial aid & more!

2

Get notified and help with scholarship opportunities:

Visit our list of scholarship resources at venicearts.org/scholarship-resource-page

3

College Events:

Get informed and be a part of our informational interactive College Events such as College Day, Career Day and more!

4

Prep for the future!

Receive help with resumes, interview skills and get notified about potential internship opportunities in creative industries.

Terms You Need to Know

01 Early Action

A college admission plan in which students apply earlier in the year than usual and receive their results early as well. This benefits students by providing results early. Early action plans are non-binding — students receive an early response to their application but do not have to commit to the college until the normal reply date of May 1.

02 Early Decision

Early decision plans are binding — a student who is accepted as an ED I (early decision I) applicant must attend the college. Unlike traditional Early Decision I (ED I) programs with deadlines in October or November, Early Decision II allows students to wait until later in the admissions cycle to claim their allegiance to a particular school. Most of these deadlines typically fall in early or mid-January and admissions decisions are typically rendered in early-to-mid February.

03 Test Optional

Specific policies differ from school to school, but "test-optional" typically means that a university will treat standardized test scores as additive to the student's profile rather than required. More consideration is given to the other components – transcript, letters of recommendation and extracurricular involvement. And many admissions counselors look more closely for demonstrated growth over the four years of high school.

04 FAFSA

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is a form that can be prepared annually by current and prospective college students (undergraduate and graduate) in the United States to determine their eligibility for student financial aid.

06 The Common Application

Informally known as the Common App) is an undergraduate college admission application that applicants may use to apply to any of 731 member colleges and universities in 48 states and the District of Columbia, as well as in Canada, China, and many European countries.

07 Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

Expected family contribution. A formula based on income, assets, and family size that estimates how much of a college's price tag you can, in theory at least, afford to pay.

Terms You Need to Know

09 **The Posse Foundation**

Posse is a college access and youth leadership development program that identifies, recruits and selects student leaders from public high schools and sends them in groups called Posses to some of the top colleges and universities in the country. Posse Scholars receive four-year, full-tuition leadership scholarships from Posse partner colleges and universities.

10 **Questbridge National College Match**

The Questbridge National College Match is an alternative, generally binding, and free application process for high-school seniors. It helps students apply to and be selected for admission at partner colleges with full four-year scholarships. Students may also use the program's application materials to apply for admission through partner colleges' regular decision processes.

08 **Questbridge College Prep Scholarship**

The Questbridge College Prep Scholarship is a pre-college scholarship program offered by QuestBridge for qualifying high school juniors. The application is a condensed version of the National College Match application, and also asks students to list their interest in each of the partner schools.

11 **CSS/Financial Aid Profile**

(CSS PROFILE), short for the College Scholarship Service PROFILE, is an application distributed by the College Board in the United States allowing college students to apply for financial aid typically from private colleges.

12 **Need-Based Aid**

Money awarded to students when their family can't afford to pay the full price. Need-based aid may come in the form of grants or scholarships, but it can also be loans with lower interest rates.

13 **Merit Aid/ Non-Need Based Aid**

This is money awarded without regard to financial need. It can be based on academic achievement, artistic abilities, leadership skills, or any other characteristic.

14 **Super Score**

The process by which colleges consider your highest section scores across all the dates you took the SAT or ACT.

15 **Work-Study**

Federal Work-Study provides part-time jobs for undergraduate and graduate students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay education expenses. The program encourages community service work and work related to the student's course of study. Must work first to receive the allotted work stipend.

11th GRADE PLANNING

September - November

Take the PSAT—Take the PSAT as a junior to practice for the SAT and qualify for the National Merit Scholarship program. Khan Academy provides free personalized Official PSAT practice and Official SAT Practice.

Prepare for the SAT and/or ACT—Begin preparing for the SAT and/or ACT at the start of junior year. It is a good idea to take a full length practice test of each, and use the results to help you decide which test is best for you. Many students take their test of choice two or three times, with the final test in early fall of their senior year. Check out the fantastic SAT prep resources that are available for free on Khan Academy!

Learn more about colleges—Use online search tools, attend college fairs, speak with college reps, and ask friends already in college for their thoughts on different colleges to begin formulating an opinion of where you want to go. Continue this process throughout junior and senior year. College Board has created a great resource for your college search at [BigFuture](#).

Make local visits to college campuses—Take time in the fall of your junior year to visit local colleges. Even if these aren't schools you want to attend, this will provide you with an initial sense of what college is like. College Board provides a helpful campus visit guide at [BigFuture](#).

December - February

Take the SAT and/or ACT—Take the SAT and/or ACT for the first time in the winter of junior year. Most students do better their second time, so plan to test again the spring of junior year or fall of senior year. If you are worried about the cost of the test, ask your school counselor for a fee waiver! Go here to sign up and find out more information at <https://pages.collegeboard.org/sat-covid-19-updates>

Take SAT Subject Tests for courses ending in the fall—SAT Subject Tests, which are required for some colleges, are best taken immediately after you've taken the relevant class and while the material is still fresh.

If possible, set up appointments to visit and speak with representatives at your target colleges—Call ahead to admissions offices of colleges you want to visit. Note that certain colleges offer "fly - in" programs to cover cost of travel for students with financial need. Continue setting up appointments throughout junior and senior year, but don't worry if it's not possible for you to visit your target colleges. College Board provides a helpful campus visit guide at [BigFuture](#).

Search for traditional scholarships—Once you are midway through your junior year, it's time to begin searching for more traditional scholarships that are specially made available to students in their senior year of high school. Continue searching throughout junior and senior year. College Board provides financial aid tips at [BigFuture](#).

March - May

Take the SAT and/or ACT—If you feel like you can improve on your initial winter SAT and/or ACT results, take the SAT and/or ACT for the second time in the spring of junior year. Go here to sign up and find out more information about the SAT, <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/register>! AND here for the ACT, <https://www.act.org/registration>.

Take SAT Subject Tests for courses ending in the spring—SAT Subject Tests, which are required for some colleges, are best taken immediately after you've taken the relevant class and while the material is still fresh in your mind.

Take AP Exams—AP Exams, which provide an opportunity to earn college credit, are offered each year in May. Khan Academy is now the Official Practice Partner for AP, so you'll find great AP resources there!

June - August

If possible, visit target colleges—travel to top target colleges the summer after junior year to visit dorms, classes, and recreation centers. Check individual college websites for details on info sessions, tour times, and interview opportunities. Info on Fly-In/College Vists on pages 18-19.

Determine the application deadlines for each of your target schools—Early decision and early action applications are typically due in November of your senior year, while most regular admissions applications are due between January 1 and March 1. The Common App, usually available at the beginning of August, will consolidate the deadlines for you.

Begin preparing for your interview—Research the colleges where you plan to apply, identify those that may offer optional interviews, and begin practicing for the interviews with an available teacher or friend.

Begin drafting college application essays—Senior year is very busy, so the summer after junior year is a great time to begin college application essays.

Identify potential teachers to provide recommendation letters—During the summer after junior year, begin identifying potential recommenders. These should be teachers from your core classes (math, science, history, English, or world languages) who know you best.

Prepare a Brag-sheet or list of your accomplishments and extra curricular activities.

Prepare materials for your teachers' letters of recommendation—Prepare a few bullet points for your teachers, explaining why you chose them as recommenders and how you believe you excelled academically in their classes.

Outline your financial aid plan—Use the financial aid calculators found on individual college websites, also known as net price calculators, to determine how much your family will need to contribute for your college education. Create a list of all the financial aid options you plan to pursue along with the deadlines for each.

Apply for traditional scholarships—Many seniors apply to more than 30 scholarships. Don't shy away from local options or ones that require essays. Since fewer students apply for these, you often have a better chance. Begin applying between junior and senior year and continue throughout the school year. More information about each of these topics can be found at [BigFuture](#).

Terms You Need to Know

01 Federal Direct Student Loan Program (FDLP)

Given to undergraduate students are as follows: Direct Subsidized Loans are loans made to eligible undergraduate students who demonstrate financial need to help cover the costs of higher education at a college or career school. Interest is not accrued for certain periods, such as when you're in school at least half-time; Direct Unsubsidized Loans are loans made to eligible undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, but eligibility is not based on financial need. Interest is accrued during all periods. Both are the best and low interest loans.

02 Parent PLUS Loan

A loan offered to parents of students enrolled at least half time, or graduate and professional students, at participating and eligible post-secondary institutions.

03 Cal Grant

A financial aid program administered by the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) providing aid to California undergraduates, vocational training students, and those in teacher certification programs. Cal Grants are the largest source of California state funded student financial aid.

04 The Student Aid Report (SAR)

A paper or electronic document that gives you some basic information about your eligibility for federal student aid and lists your answers to the questions on your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

05 Pell Grant

A subsidy the U.S. federal government provides for students who need it to pay for college. Federal Pell Grants are limited to students with financial need, who have not earned their first bachelor's degree, or who are enrolled in certain post-baccalaureate programs, through participating institutions.

06 Perkins Loan

Federal loans that are reserved for low-income students. The interest rate is relatively low and the time before your first payments is due, happens to be longer than with other loan programs.

12th GRADE PLANNING

September - November

Take the SAT and/or ACT – *Optional at many colleges due to the pandemic.*

If you feel like you can improve on your initial SAT and/or ACT results, take the tests for the second (or at most, third) time in the fall of senior year. If you are worried about the cost of the test, ask your school counselor for a fee waiver!

Revise college application essays—Once senior year begins, ask a teacher to proofread your application essays and then make any revisions and prepare drafts before college applications are due.

Ask for letters of recommendation—At least a month prior to the deadline, provide your recommenders with bullet points listing how you excelled academically in their classes along with the letter of recommendation forms and stamped envelopes addressed to the colleges where you are applying.

Gather all application materials—Make sure you, or your school counselor, have the necessary materials for college admissions including forms, test scores, essays, recommendations, and transcripts. If you are worried about the cost of the application, ask your school counselor or college of interest for a fee waiver! UC and CSU applications are due December 4th.

Submit early decision application, if desired—Early decision applications, usually due in November, require a binding commitment in exchange for early acceptance.

Submit early action applications—For early action schools, you receive a decision early but can wait for the regular decision deposit deadline to make your choice.

Fill out and submit the FAFSA—FAFSA, the main determinant of federal financial aid, can be submitted after October 1 of your senior year. Submit ASAP, as some schools give aid on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Submit CSS PROFILE if applying early— Though the FAFSA cannot be submitted until after October 1, certain schools require the CSS PROFILE in the fall if you plan to go through their early application process.

Ensure official SAT and/or ACT score reports are sent to early application schools—In addition to your application forms, letters of recommendation, essays, and other requested materials, your early decision application will require you to go to the [College Board \(SAT\)](#) and [ACT Student \(ACT\)](#) websites to send colleges your official test score reports.

Make local visits to college campuses—Take time in the fall of your junior year to visit local colleges. Even if these aren't schools you want to attend, this will provide you with an initial sense of what college is like. College Board provides a helpful campus visit guide at [BigFuture](#).

12th GRADE PLANNING

December - February

Take SAT Subject Tests for courses ending in the fall—SAT Subject Tests, which are required for some colleges, are best taken immediately after you've taken the relevant class and while the material is still fresh.

Receive response on early applications—Most applications submitted through early programs will receive a decision by December. If you submit your financial aid forms on time, you should receive an estimated financial aid package as well.

Submit enrollment deposit for early decision school, if desired—If you've decided to apply early decision and the school's financial aid package meets your need, enrollment deposits are often due in winter of your senior year. If you're worried about the cost of the deposit, talk to the school about a fee-waiver.

Submit regular decision applications—Most colleges have regular decision due dates sometime between January 1 and March 1 of each year.

Ensure official SAT and ACT score reports are sent to regular decision schools - In addition to your application forms, letters of recommendation, essays, and other requested materials, your regular decision application will require you to go to the [College Board \(SAT\)](#) and [ACT Student \(ACT\)](#) websites to send colleges your official test score reports.

Go into the regular decision interview condent—Interviews for some regular decision schools happen in the winter, but don't stress out. You've done your research; now it's just about having a conversation!

Fill out and submit the CSS PROFILE or other school-based aid forms—Certain schools require the CSS PROFILE in addition to FAFSA to determine financial aid. Submit ASAP, as schools often give aid on a first-come, first-serve basis. More information about the FAFSA can be found on [BigFuture](#).

Create your college portals and emails — Each college will send you details in early December about how to make a portal. The college will contact you through your portals and emails to request additional information as needed.

12th GRADE PLANNING

March - May

Update your FAFSA, CA DREAM ACT and CSS PROFILE applications—Revise your financial aid applications with data from your most recent year tax returns if this information was estimated on your initial FAFSA / CSS PROFILE. Deadline for your FAFSA and CA DREAM ACT is March 2nd. Ensure your

Send tax transcript for verification, if requested—Certain colleges may require verification of your financial information. Follow up your financial aid applications by sending the requesting college copies of you or your parents' tax transcripts.

Receive decision on regular applications—Regular decision applicants typically receive an accept/reject/wait-list response in March or April.

Compare financial aid packages from multiple schools—Once you are accepted, colleges will offer a financial aid package consisting of grants along with suggested loans and work-study.

Consider work-study—Many students consider work-study options offered by their college if they cannot fully cover the cost of attendance through grants and scholarships. You can indicate your interest for work-study on the FAFSA and by contacting your college's financial aid office.

Consider loans—Many students consider loans for college if they cannot fully cover the cost of attendance through grants, scholarships, and work-study. The best deals are often from subsidized federal loans, specifically Stafford loans (now often called Direct Loans).

Consider a financial aid appeal—If your family's circumstance has changed, or if a college's financial aid package does not meet your need, reach out to the financial aid office ASAP to appeal the offer.

Submit your enrollment deposit—The final date to submit a deposit and lock in your place for regular decision applications is typically May 1. If you're worried about the cost of the deposit, talk to the school about a fee-waiver.

Take AP Exams—AP Exams, which provide an opportunity to earn college credit, are offered each year in May.

Create a CSAC Account—Upon receiving all your FAFSA/CA DREAM ACT and your HS GPA Verification Form, the California Student Aid Commission will send you a letter to create an account detailing your Cal Grant Award. Visit : <https://mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov/>

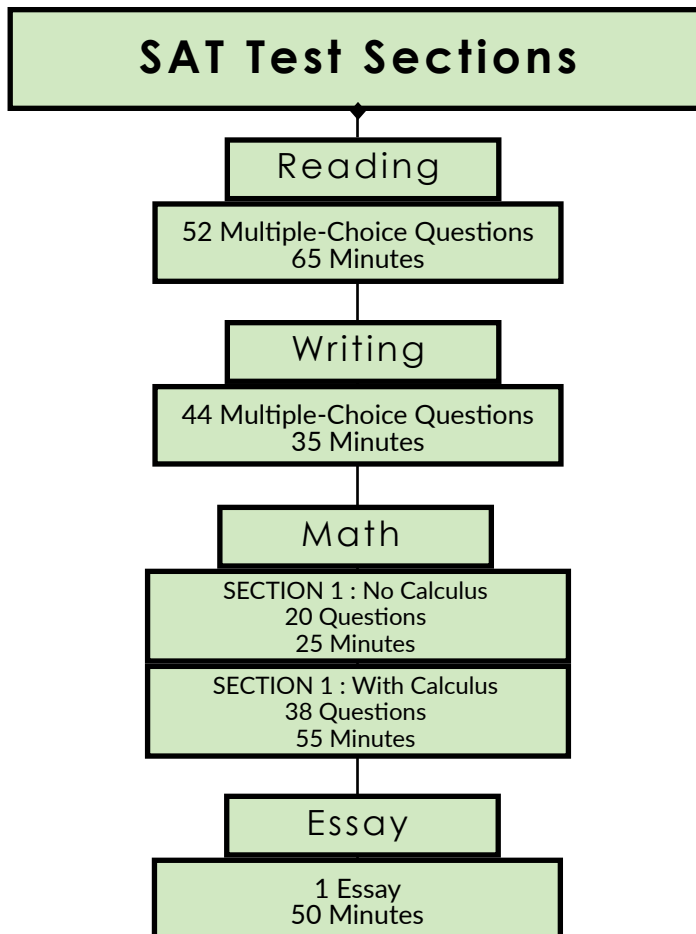
June - August

Complete ongoing enrollment paperwork for your college—Once you've decided on a college, you will receive updates regarding orientation, scheduling, housing, etc. Complete all paperwork by the necessary deadlines.

SAT: The Need-to-Know

- The SAT measures critical reasoning and verbal skills.
- It tests in English, Reading, Math, and Writing.
- The test lasts 3 hours and 50 minutes with the writing section
- Top score is 1600

*For format and dates <https://www.latutors123.com/tutoring-resources/sat/format-dates/>



SAT/ACT Prep

- Your high school or local library stocks ACT and SAT prep books.
- Khan Academy offers free online SAT prep, but also offers Math, Grammar, and Science lessons that are helpful for extra practice on both the SAT and ACT.
- Buy used prep books on Amazon, they cost only a fraction of the price.
- If you qualify for a test fee waiver for the ACT, you are also given access to the ACT Kaplan Online Prep Live program.
- Critical Reader online offers free study guides for the ACT and SAT grammar and punctuation rules, vocabulary, and the reading sections.

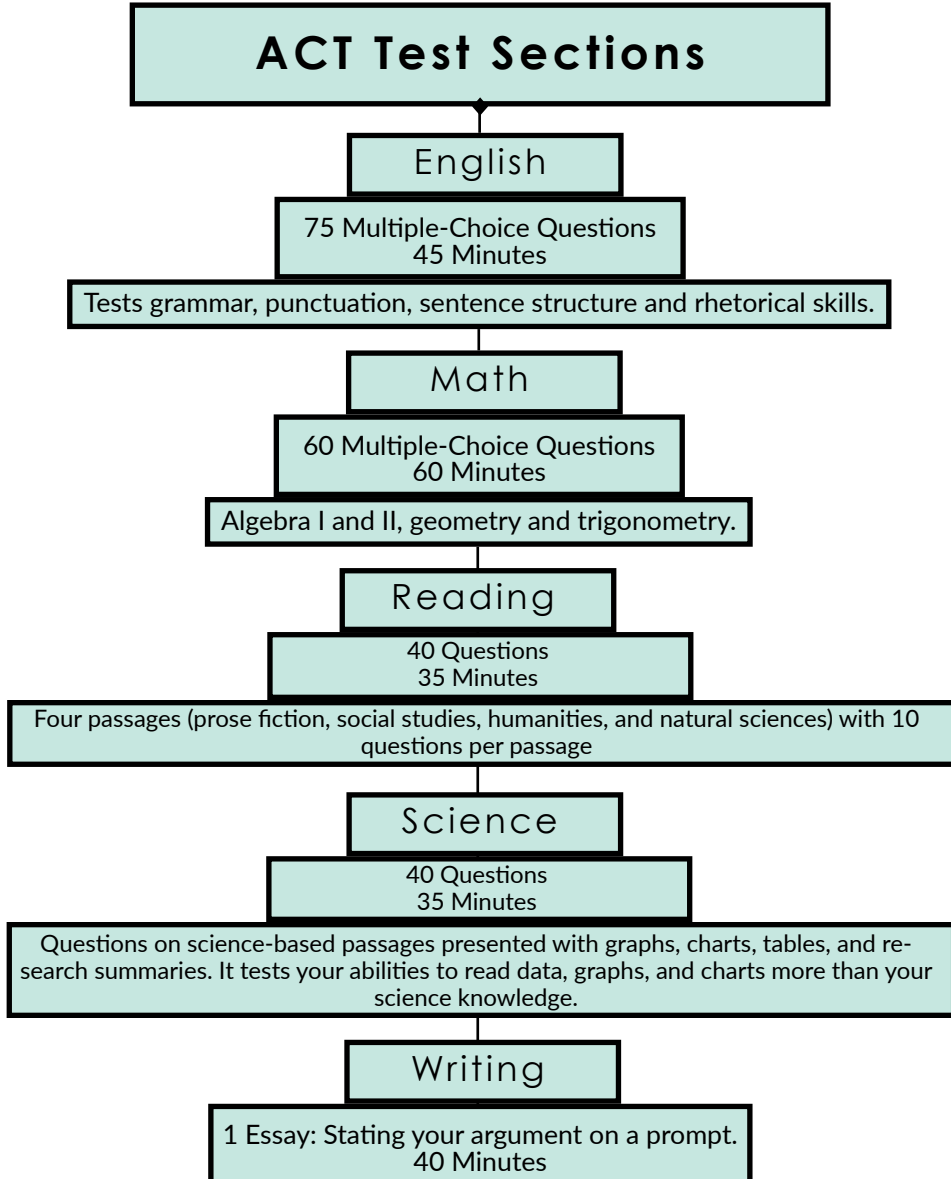
SAT COVID-19 UPDATES go to <https://pages.collegeboard.org/sat-covid-19-updates>

Most colleges have implemented an optional SAT exam policy. Please check with each college.

If you managed to take the SAT test before, you can include those results on your college application.

ACT: The Need-to-Know

- The ACT measures what you have learned in school, including English, Math, Reading, Science, and Writing.
- The test lasts 3 hours and 35 minutes with the writing section.



Fee Waivers

Fee Waivers available for the following:

- ACT/SAT Testing
- SAT Subject Tests
- Submitting ACT/SAT scores to each school (School Reports)
- AP Tests
- High School Grade Transcripts Submission
- College Application Fees
- CSS/Financial Aid Profile

TESTING:

- The ACT fee waiver restarts each year. Students can only request two separate ACT fee waivers
>check here for dates <https://www.act.org/content/act/en/covid-19.html>
- The SAT fee waiver covers the fees for that SAT eligible period.
- Students can only request two SAT fee waivers and two SAT Subject Test Fee waivers (You can take up to 3 tests in one day under one fee waiver.)
>Check here for more information <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/register/fees/fee-waivers>

TRANSCRIPTS/APPLICATIONS:

- Many high schools charge to send your grades (transcripts) to colleges. In most cases, fee waivers for transcripts are available for students who receive free/reduced lunch.
- You can request fee waivers for the Common Application on the Profile screen in Fee Waiver section.

Economic Need Requirements (Must meet at least ONE):

- You have received or are eligible to receive an ACT or SAT testing fee waiver.
- You are enrolled in or eligible to participate in the Federal Free or Reduced Price Lunch program (FRPL).
- Your annual family income falls within the Income Eligibility Guidelines set by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service.
- You are enrolled in a federal, state, or local program that aids students from low-income families
- Your family receives public assistance.
- You live in federally subsidized public housing, a foster home or are homeless.
- You are a ward of the state or an orphan.
- You can provide a supporting statement from a school official, college access counselor, financial aid officer, or community leader.

TYPES OF COLLEGE TO CONSIDER

STATE COLLEGES (PUBLIC COLLEGES)



A college or university that is funded by state and national funds and generally charges less tuition to in-state students.

PRIVATE COLLEGES



Colleges and Universities that are funded through tuition, private funds, and endowment. This can be an affordable option if you have a competitive academic profile.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES



Sometimes called junior colleges, are two to four-year schools that provide affordable postsecondary education.

ART COLLEGES



An educational institution with a primary focus on the visual arts, including fine art, especially illustration, painting, photography, sculpture, and graphic design.

TECHNICAL COLLEGES



A college of further education providing courses in a range of practical subjects, such as information technology, applied sciences, engineering, agriculture, cosmetology and culinary.

LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES



A liberal arts college is a college with an emphasis on undergraduate study in the liberal arts and sciences. A liberal arts college aims to impart a broad general knowledge and develop general intellectual capacities, in contrast to a professional, vocational, or technical curriculum.



Women's colleges in higher education are undergraduate, bachelor's degree-granting institutions, often liberal arts colleges, whose student populations are composed exclusively or almost exclusively of women.

HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES (HBCU)



A Historically Black College or University that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the education of Black Americans.

RELIGIOUSLY AFFILIATED COLLEGES



Religiously Affiliated colleges vary in religious affiliation and intensity of religious life. Most are liberal arts colleges with enrollments between 800 and 2,000 students. Church-related higher education also includes large research universities (Boston University, Notre Dame, for example), medical colleges, professional schools, two-year colleges, theological seminaries, and Bible colleges.

FLY-IN & DIVERSITY PROGRAMS

SEVERAL COLLEGES OFFER FREE FLY-IN PROGRAMS, TRAVEL ASSISTANCE SCHOLARSHIPS, OVERNIGHT PROGRAMS AND DIVERSITY PROGRAMMING THAT COMES AT LITTLE OR NO COST TO STUDENTS ACCEPTED TO THEIR PROGRAMS.

MANY PROGRAM DEADLINES ARE IN JULY-NOVEMBER FOR THE FALL.

SOME COLLEGES THAT OFFER FLY-IN/DIVERSITY PROGRAMS OR TRAVEL VOUCHERS:

- Amherst College
- Babson College
- Barnard College
- Bates College
- Bentley University
- Bowdoin College
- Brandeis University
- Bryant University
- Bryn Mawr
- Bucknell University
- Carleton College
- Carnegie Mellon University
- Colby College
- Colgate University
- Colorado College
- Columbia University
- Connecticut College
- Dartmouth College
- Davidson College
- Dickinson College
- Emory University
- George Washington University (GWU)
- Grinnell College
- Hamilton College
- Haverford College
- Ithaca College
- Johns Hopkins University
- Kenyon College
- Lehigh University
- Lewis and Clark College
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)
- Miami University (Ohio)
- Middlebury College
- Mt. Holyoke College
- Oberlin College
- Ohio University
- Purdue University
- Reed College
- Rice University
- Simpson College
- Smith College
- St. Olaf College
- Swarthmore College
- Trinity College
- Tufts University
- University of Denver
- University of Pennsylvania
- University of Richmond
- University of Rochester
- Vassar College
- Washington University in St. Louis
- Wellesley College
- Wesleyan University
- Whitman College
- Williams College
- And More!!!

SEE MORE AT:

**[HTTP://BLOG.COLLEGE-
GREENLIGHT.COM/BLOG/
COLLEGE-FLY-IN-AND-DIVERSI-
TY-PROGRAMS/](http://blog.college-greenlight.com/blog/college-fly-in-and-diversity-programs/)**

College Visits

BEFORE YOU GO:

- Contact any students you know who go to that school so you can ask them any questions on campus
- Schedule to sit in on a class that interests you
- Schedule to take a guided tour of the campus or get information to take a self-guided tour
- Sign-up for an information session with current students and admissions officers
- If you would like to, schedule an overnight visit in the dorms
- (Optional) Schedule an interview with an admissions officer.

What to ask?

Financial Aid:

- What percentage of nancial aid need does the college meet?
- Does nancial aid follow students during study abroad programs?
- How much, on average, do students end up owing in loans after they graduate?
- Will my costs go up if your tuition changes, or does my rate stay the same all 4 years?
- Do you provide resources and support for nancial aid students and rst generation college students?

Classes:

- What is the average class size?
- Is it difcult to enroll in classes you need to take?
- Are classes mostly lecture style (big group, professor teaches in the front) or seminar style (conversation in a small group in a circle)?
- What kind of work-study jobs are available? Is getting a work-study job a very competitive process?

Life:

- How long do students typically live in the dorms?
- If you could change anything about the school, what would you change?
- What do you love about your school?
- What are the dorms like? What are the best and worst amenities in the dorm?
- Do you like the dining hall food?
- Do you feel close with your peers? Professors?
- What are the most popular extracurriculars on campus?
- What do you do in your free time? On weekends?

FINANCIAL AID 101

- Complete the FAFSA Application and the CSS/Financial Aid Profile, both of which open online, on **October 1**.
(They help colleges determine your financial aid need.)
- Filing periods begin for FAFSA and the Cal Grant Verification Form on: **October 1st of every year. Ensure your high school submits the GPA Verification Form on your behalf by the March 2nd deadline.**
www.csac.ca.gov

CSS/FINANCIAL AID PROFILE

- In order to get financial aid awards from colleges (this is non-federal aid, not FAFSA), you need to complete the CSS/Financial Aid Profile, which is part of the College Board.
- Some colleges require their own financial aid applications. A complete list of schools that use the CSS profile is available on the college board website.
- **The profile application opens on October 1.**
- The latest you should submit an application for a college or scholarship is two weeks before the earliest application date (Early Decision/Early Action).
- You can qualify for a fee waiver that covers up to 8 college or scholarship application fees. You can get a CSS fee waiver if you already qualified for SAT or SAT Subject Test fee waivers. You can also apply if you are a first generation college student from a low income family, more information on the college board website.

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFO NEEDED TO APPLY:

- Current Tax Return
- TANF or SSI information (if your family receives it)
- Whether your parents are self-employed or own their own business
- Your housing status
- Personal information, including your Social Security Number

TIPS!

- If you already have a SAT/SAT Subject Test/AP/College Board Profile, use the same login information for the CSS/Financial Aid Profile.
- Applications are non-refundable, so be 100% sure that you are going to apply to that school or scholarship
- You might need information from your non-custodial parent or guardian (the parent you don't live with) if your parents are divorced.

TIP:

The FAFSA4Caster is a tool used to calculate how much aid you qualify for.
Find it on the FAFSA.ed.gov website, under “Thinking about College.”

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarship Programs:

- Questbridge
- Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation
- Gates Millennium Scholar Program
- MDRC

Scholarship Types:

- Academic Scholarships
- Essay/Writing Scholarships
- Merit
 - Ex: Athletic, art, leadership
- Community Service
- Identity
 - Ex: Religious belief
- Passions/Hobbies
 - Ex: Unique hobbies/special skills (like making a prom dress out of duct tape)
- First Generation College Student Scholarships
- Legacy (at a College)
- College Specific
- High School/Local Specific
- Military (for active members, Veterans, and their family members)
- Both POSSE and Questbridge are scholarship programs that you must be nominated for.

Where to look for more scholarships:

- Scholarships.com
- Petersons.com
- CollegeBoard.org
- **Venice Arts has a wide variety of scholarship resources—please visit our scholarship list @ www.venicearts.org/scholarship-resource-page

Letters of Recommendations

Need to Know

- At the beginning of the semester, ask two academic teachers and (most likely) your school counselor, to write letters of recommendation. Not all scholarships or colleges require letters of recommendation
- You should also ask other non-academic teachers, such as music, drama, or art teachers, including teachers at after school programs such as Venice Arts.
- This is helpful to round out your application as non-academic teachers can speak to another side of you.
- However, these will not be your main recommendation letter as colleges require academic instructors to write letters.
- Some high schools require you to submit a “brag sheet” or information about yourself to the teachers and school counselor writing about you, that they can write a detailed recommendation.

Brag Sheet

A brag sheet helps you think about who you are and what makes you special!

It is a tool to help start the writing process for personal statements, college admission and scholarship essays. Share with teachers, counselors, or college advisers who plan to write your letters of recommendation.

Things to Include:

- Contact Information (Email, Phone Number)
- An explanation of the program/ scholarship you are applying for and reasons why you are a good t.
- GPA
- SAT/ACT Scores
- AP Scores
- SAT Subject Test Scores (If applicable)
- Senior Year Classes
- Community Service/Volunteering
- Extracurricular Activities
- School Clubs
- Cultural/Travel Experience
- Art Experience
- Leadership Positions
- Employment
- **Recognition, Honors, and Awards**

Brag Sheet Sample

1 List any careers and/or intended major(s) that you are considering and why.

2 What's your proudest academic or personal accomplishment? Name any academic honors/awards you may have won.

3 Are there any personal circumstances that have impacted your academic performance in high school? Please note, anything you share can be mentioned in your counselor's letter.

4 What academic skills have you demonstrated in high school that provide evidence that you will be successful in college? Be specific, and please provide a concrete example of how you learned or utilize that skill.

5 How have you changed over the course of the last three years?

6 List your in school activities in order of importance to you. Please include years involved, positions held, and/or significant contributions. Please use bullets or numbers to separate.

7 List your out of school activities. These could include jobs, internships, volunteer opportunities, creative work, hobbies or interests. Please use bullets or numbers to separate.

8 What are one or two activities that are most important to you? Describe in detail your involvement and what makes it so important.

9 What would you most want us to tell colleges about you, your life, or your future plans?

PORTFOLIOS

WHAT MOST SCHOOLS REQUIRE:

- Between 8-20 works, of any medium including video/Im
- Some schools recommend pages from your journal or sketchbook to show your artistic process of research, thinking, and investigation
- Submit your portfolio on [SlideRoom](#), an online portfolio service
- The average cost of submitting a portfolio is between \$10-\$15
- Fee waivers are available for students who qualify for the Common Application Fee waivers (you must electronically link your common application profile and your Slide Room profile)

TIPS!

- If you already have a SAT/SAT Subject Test/AP/College Board Profile, use the same login information for the CSS/Financial Aid Profile.
- Applications are non-refundable, so be 100% sure that you are going to apply to that school or scholarship
- You might need information from your non-custodial parent or guardian (the parent you don't live with) if your parents are divorced.

PORTFOLIO DAY

- Prepare to share your portfolio (original artwork, sketchbooks, digital work on laptops/tablets) for an informal review by representatives from art and design schools.
- Ask questions about their programs of study.
- High school students, parents, teachers, school counselors and college transfer students are encouraged to attend.
- This event is free and open to the public. More info @ nationalportfolioday.org

Want to know more about Creative Pathways?

Contact: Creative Pathways Manager, Carly Short - carly@venice-arts.org

Questions about 1-on-1 mentoring?

Contact: VA College Counselor, Bryan Coreas - bryan@venice-arts.org

Creative Pathways Page

www.venicearts.org/creative-pathways



Made by Jackie Forsyte, Summer Intern 2017

Updated by Tiffany Kang, Summer 2018

Updated by Malia Sirota, Summer 2019

Redesigned by Crystel Astuhuaman, Summer 2020