



CALENDAR

Williamsville South High School

WEBSITE



**Junior Class
College Planning
Handbook**

**STEPS TO THE
COLLEGE PRO-
CESS**



September 2025

Dear Williamsville South Juniors and Parents,

Congratulations! You are about to embark on a very exciting time for you and your families making post high school plans! Do you want to attend college? There are many options, from community and technical colleges, to small private colleges and SUNY colleges. Each has its own distinct advantages and benefits. Perhaps you will be seeking full-time employment or looking into the military. This booklet will provide the necessary information needed to make a decision that is right for you.

The major decision of where to attend college can feel overwhelming, but it need not be a complex, difficult process. Taking a little time to do homework can help you make informed choices which will have a tremendous impact on your life. We encourage you to take the time to make an appointment with your counselors, ask questions, and gather data.

Colleges are welcoming students for college visits (either virtually or in person). Even if you have to start with a virtual tour and admissions information session it is a great way to begin the process and gather information.

*Student Services will routinely post college events for students to attend or any college/career fair informational event we become aware of.

Remember, the more informed you are, the more comfortable you will feel with your decision.

Sincerely,

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The top tasks for Juniors

- Take the SAT and/or ACT as a Junior. The goal is to try and have your testing complete prior to senior year. The very last opportunity to improve your score would be the very beginning of your senior year. If you are planning on attending a 4-year college this is often required. **It is nice to have all your testing done before submitting applications.**
- Use the school based internet web-site to explore colleges, various majors, and career interest inventories. <http://student.naviance.com/willshs> (click on Single Sign On, then use: WITS login, google password)
- Check out the college campuses by attending either a virtual or campus visitation. The goal is to complete many visits prior to senior year which will help you in determining applications. Use early fall to finalize campus visits & interviews.
- Attend the “**College Information Night**” in the spring. The night is a panel presentation where college representatives discuss the college admissions process.
When: March 17th @ 6:30PM
Where: Williamsville South HS
- Attend the National College Fair (Convention Center) **Field Trip on March 18th, first come first serve juniors.** You can also find information on colleges and virtual fairs at <https://www.nacacattend.org/fairs>.
- Financial Aid Exploration—Financial Aid Forms will be processed in October of the Senior Year. Learn more about the process. Also attend the spring “**Financial Aid Information Night**”
When: November 6th @ 6:30PM
Where: Williamsville North HS
- Colleges like to see senior year courses of study which are characterized by appropriate challenge and rigor. It means that colleges want to see evidence in your courses that you are willing to stretch intellectually and academically in core areas of curriculum. Keep challenging core classes and consider Advanced Placement or a course with a college articulation agreement when selecting your schedule—everything counts.

Meet with your school counselor to talk about various options!



WINTER

- ◆ Use your PSAT score report as a tool to prepare for the SAT. Develop SAT/ACT preparation plan and register to take the SAT and/or ACT.
- ◆ **SAT:** Collegeboard www.collegeboard.org has teamed up with Khan Academy www.khanacademy.org/sat and the [Bluebook App](#) for free SAT practice. Use SAT preparation books, or take a prep class.
- ◆ Download from the app store: Daily practice for the SAT (provides a SAT question every day).
- ◆ **ACT:** use the ACT website <https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/test-preparation/math-practice-test-questions.html?page=0&chapter=0> for preparation material, ACT preparation books, or take a prep course.
- ◆ Counselors meet with juniors regarding senior year courses, SAT/ACT information, discuss post high school opportunities. When selecting classes for next year, keep in mind colleges want to see students who are gaining momentum and maintaining rigorous core classes.
- ◆ Review how to use “Naviance” with the school counselor. Explore resources such as guide books, scholarships, and volunteerism.
- ◆ Take advantage of February break to explore college websites, identify criteria to use in assisting the college search process, start making lists of schools to visit, review the college admission criteria.

SPRING & SUMMER

- ◆ Take the SAT and/or ACT in the spring. Use fall of senior year for final SAT/ACT testing and to improve scores for potential scholarship opportunities (colleges determine scores).
- ◆ Develop a list of colleges to visit. Utilize break times such as spring break, summer vacation and early fall.
- ◆ A great time to visit is spring of your junior year. Look at Campus Visit schedules on the college websites. Register for Campus Visits right on the college website or call the campus. Even if you can't get to a campus you can still do a virtual tour and/or speak directly to an admissions representative and/or head of a department of the college major you are interested in. Check out NACAC Virtual College Fairs: www.virtualcollegefairs.org
- ◆ Consider specific factors such as college major or interest area, academic abilities/performance, athletics, and/or special programs. (Military Academy admissions process should be started).
- ◆ Take advantage of learning opportunities such as volunteerism, internship, leadership development, and service.
- ◆ Apply for NCAA eligibility for college sports Division I and II only. Applications available through the clearinghouse at www.eligibilitycenter.org.

AUGUST—FALL OF SENIOR YEAR

- ◆ Finalize any admissions testing such as ACT and SAT (Try to have all testing complete by October). Make sure scores are released to the college campus when registering for testing. **You get four for free when you register—you have to pay a testing agency later.**
- ◆ Some college majors such as Physician Assistant, Nursing, and a few other specialty programs have EARLY admission dates. Students will have to be prepared for early application deadlines. Be prepared to work on college applications in August. Check deadlines with the colleges.
- ◆ Once school starts school counselors will review information about the college application process. Counselors will see students in classroom settings and have individual meetings.
- ◆ Be prepared to apply to college EARLY in the senior year. Scholarships are most often given to early applicants.
- ◆ There are several opportunities for students to have direct contact with admission representatives who review applications. At South students are invited to attend two different college fairs. Daemen and Hilbert College host a very large college fair in the evening for families to attend.
- ◆ Many college representatives visit the South Career Center. Make sure to check daily announcements to check dates and times colleges will be in the Career Center.
- ◆ **Students apply for financial aid in December of senior year.**
- ◆ Apply for scholarships and explore college and career websites such as Naviance.
- ◆ Attend College Open House programs, finalizing visits, and college interviews.



How to log into Naviance Student

1st - go to the Naviance student website:

<http://student.naviance.com/willshs>

2nd - click on “single sign on” button:

CONTINUE WITH SINGLE SIGN ON

3rd - Enter your google classroom credentials:

Username: your WITSID@williamsvillek12.org

Password same as Google or WITS login

What can you do with Naviance?

- Research colleges
- Look for scholarships
- Sign up for college visits
- Learn about careers
- Match your interests with careers

Naviance Features to Explore:

College Supermatch (Most used 11th & 12 grade)

- ◆ Students can search for colleges based on criteria of interest (Public vs. Private, Location, Size of school, diversity of campus, etc.)

Career Interest Profiler (recommend completing 10th grade)

- ◆ Complete an approximately 180 question survey which matches personality types with different careers. (Realistic, Artistic, Social, Investigative, Enterprising, Conventional). What stands out for you?

Career Clusters Finder (recommend completing 10th)

- ◆ Helps you learn what Career Clusters may be a good match for you based on activities that interest you, qualities which describe you, and subjects you enjoy studying in school.

Strengths Explorer (recommend completing in 9th grade)

- ◆ Get a full report on what you are good at. This inventory then links to different careers. Strength Explorer can be done only once during your high school career.

Game Plan (can be found in the “About Me” tab) – recommend each year

- ◆ Survey for students to reflect on basic interests and goals. Very helpful to complete before the Career Plans.

Road Trip Nation (recommend for each year)

- ◆ Direct click for all types of Career Videos, click on “Explore More” and choose which path to take and which videos to watch. There are tons of career videos and inspirational clips from successful professionals.

Resume Builder (recommend starting in 9th and updating each year)

- ◆ Students can enter resume information and format a resume for jobs, scholarships, and college applications.

Scholarships (recommend for seniors; there are scholarships out there for underclassmen to explore)

- ◆ South scholarships are listed in Naviance. Students can also complete a National College Search which is directly linked to the SallieMae database of scholarships.

Planner (recommended for each year of high school)

- ◆ Students can enter in goals and create task items to complete.

Spring SAT & ACT Testing Dates

Digital SAT

www.sat.org/register

- **March 14**
 Regular Registration: 2/27
 Late Registration: 3/3
- **May 2**
 Regular Registration: 4/17
 Late Registration: 4/21
- **June 6**
 Regular Registration: 5/22
 Late Registration: 5/26

- August 15th Anticipated
- September 12th Anticipated
- October 3rd Anticipated
- November 7th Anticipated

SAT —\$68

Late Registration \$34 in addition to reg. fee

*Visit the college board website to learn about additional fees for change in test site or cancellation.

ACT

www.act.org

- **February 14**
 Regular Registration: 1/9
 Late Registration: 1/23
- **April 11**
 Regular Registration: 3/6
 Late Registration: 3/24
- **June 13**
 Regular Registration: 5/8
 Late Registration: 5/29

ACT w/no Essay—\$68 ACT

with Essay—\$93

Science Add-on fee \$4

Late Registration \$40 in addition to reg. fee

- **Williamsville South School Code Number is 335982**
- If you are eligible for free/reduced lunch please see your counselor for a form needed for a fee-waiver for the SAT/ACT
- Both SAT and ACT require students to upload a photo as part of the registration process. Review the specifications on the website.
- *ACT students will have a choice to complete an optional Essay. Only highly selected colleges will require the testing with an essay. The colleges determine the need for and use of the optional Essay plan accordingly.*
- Students can choose up to four colleges to receive scores (can be done when registering—nine days after the test). **Fees beyond these dates.**
- **For more information on click on [SAT fees for the SATs](#) or [ACT fees for the ACTs](#).**



ACT or SAT? THE BIG DEBATE

For most 4 year college-bound students, the SAT or ACT test is a necessary part of a college application. Colleges will accept either test and your higher testing scores of the two.

Some colleges will **no longer be test optional** and will return to requiring entrance exams for admissions. **PLEASE CHECK W/ THE COLLEGE FOR REQUIREMENTS**

ACT

The ACT Assessment includes four test areas—English, Math, Reading, and Science Reasoning— which measure what you learned in high school and your ability to perform tasks frequently required in college coursework. ACT offers an optional writing section and science will be optional as of the Fall 2025. In addition to the test areas, the ACT includes an interest inventory to help you choose a college major and identify jobs you may wish to explore. Composite

SAT

The SAT is designed to measure Evidenced-Based Reading and Writing, and Math. Reading passages include topics in History, US & World Literature, and Sciences. Math includes problems-solving, heart of algebra, passport to Advanced Algebra. You will receive an overall score out of 1600. Math and Reading/Writing scores between 200-800 per section.

Releasing Score Reports

Students can select up to four colleges to receive score reports for free at registration through NINE days after the test. **As of the 10th day a fee is charged to release per school.** Colleges will accept the highest SAT/ACT scores from multiple tests. If necessary, you may take the SAT/ACT again early in the fall of the senior year .

***Even though we offer students the opportunity to list scores on transcripts many schools want scores from the testing agency. You can save \$\$ by sending scores to your top four right from the registration process.**

A Glance at the ACT

Each section is scored out 1-36. Students receive scores for each section and a Composite Score.

Students receive points for correct answers. There is no deduction for incorrect answers.

	Current ACT	Changes Starting in the FALL 2025
Timing and number of Questions	<p>English 45 minutes and 75 questions</p> <p>Math 60 minutes and 60 questions</p> <p>Reading 35 minutes and 40 questions</p> <p>Science 35 minutes and 40 questions</p>	<p>English 35 minutes and 50 questions</p> <p>Math 50 minutes and 45 questions</p> <p>Reading 40 minutes and 36 questions</p> <p>Science 40 minutes and 40 questions</p>
Structure	Science is Mandatory	<p>Science will be optional</p> <p>Science will include a couple questions on Engineering and Design</p>
Scoring	<p>Composite=Math+Science+Reading+English</p> <p>STEM= Math+Science</p> <p>ELA=Writing+Reading+English</p>	<p>Composite=Math+Reading+English</p> <p>*No Science</p> <p>*If you take Science it will only come up in STEM score</p> <p>STEM= Math+Science</p> <p>ELA=Writing+Reading+English</p>

A Glance at the ACT Part 2

Section	Question Type
English	Usage/Mechanics (Punctuation, Grammar & Usage, Sentence Structure) Prod. of writing, language knowledge
Mathematics	Number & Quantity, Algebra I & II, Functions, Geometry, Stats & Probability, Integrating Essential Skills; Modeling
Reading	Derive meaning from several texts (three long prose passage and one containing two shorter prose passages) Areas such as Social Studies, Natural Sciences, Literary Narrative or Prose Fiction, Humanities Assesses skills in Key Ideas & details, Craft & Structure, and Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
Science(Optional Starting Fall 2025)	Data Representation (Topics in Biology, Earth Science/Space Sciences, Chemistry, Physics). Conveyed through formats such as graphs, tables, and schematic forms, research summaries, or conflicting viewpoints
Writing Test(Optional)	The test describes an issue and provides three perspectives on the issue. Students analyze and evaluate perspective, state and develop their own perspective, and explain the relationship between their perspective and those given.

INFORMATION ON THE SAT

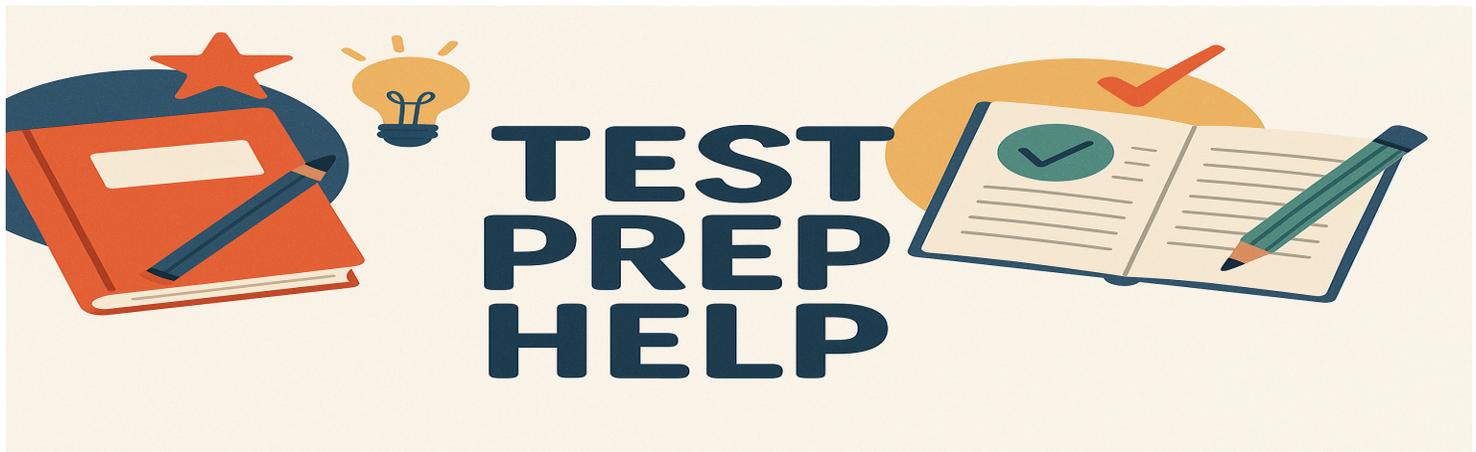
- ◆ The SAT test length is 2 hours and 15 minutes
- ◆ The exam is scored on a 1600 point scale. Evidence-based reading and writing, and Math scores (both up to 800) for the total score of up to 1600.
- ◆ The exam is now ONLY in a digital format.

- ◆ Students do NOT lose points for wrong answers. Maximize their potential score.

Section	Length	Question Type
Evidence Based Reading & Writing & Lang.	64 minutes 54 questions	Command of Evidence, Words in Context. Assesses skill in revising and editing a range of text in a variety of subjects, correct grammar, usage, and punctuation.
Math	70 min. 44 questions total All questions with calculator	Math typically learned first 3 years of HS (Algebra I/II, Problem Solving, etc.)

SAT provides students with a breakdown of test scores and cross-tests scores for additional student information.

- Fee waivers are available in Guidance for both SAT & ACT if you are on Free or Reduced Lunch.
- ACT or SAT? Check out both as they are both equally accepted by colleges.
- The College Board is partnering with [Khan Academy](#) to provide practice questions based on results. In addition you can find practice exams on the [Bluebook App](#).
- The PSAT is offered to both Sophomores and Juniors to take in October only.
- The SAT and/or the ACT should be taken in the spring of your Junior year.



******This list is collected to assist our students in finding opportunities available for SAT/ ACT preparation. Students and their parents should research each program carefully. Williamsville South High School does not endorse an individual program.**

Kaplan	1-800-Kap-test	www.KapTest.com
Williamsville Community Education	626-8080	williamsville.augusoft.net
Test Preps (Melissa Cook)	574-7349	www.testprepsbuffalo.com
Strategies for Success Jantzi Test Prep, Inc	1-800-881-4SAT or 843-881-4SAT	www.4satprep.com
Ellen G. Palmer	636-0342	LNPalmer@aol.com
The Princeton Review	212-874-8282	www.princetonreview.com
Trocaire College	716-827-2435	
Atlas Test Prep	716-361-6413	www.AtlasTestPrep.com
Sylvan Learning	565-0572, 1-800-240-1124	sylvanwny@aol.com www.educate.com/centers/14226
Huntington Learning Center	716-633-4565	www.williamsville.huntingtonlearning.com
Wilson Daily Prep	851-1800	www.wilsondailyprep.com
M & M FastTrack	677-4324	
All Pro Tutoring/Test Prep	400-2767/310-3319	www.allprotutoring.com

Tips for Finding Your College Match

Location

Do you want to visit home frequently, or do you see this as a time to experience a new part of the country? Do you want an urban setting or easy access to the outdoors or the serenity of a small town?

Cost

Today's college price tag makes cost an important consideration for most students. Look at scholarship opportunities and apply for financial aid early in October of the senior year. Weigh the cost of private versus state school and how much aid and scholarships will be available to you.

Search

Campus Life

Coed dorms? Diversity of student body? Find out the answers to these questions:

- What extracurricular activities, athletics, and special interest groups are available?
- Does the community around the college offer interesting outlets for students?
- Are students welcomed by the community?
- Is there an ethnic or religious group in which to take part?
- How do fraternities and sororities influence campus life?
 - Is housing guaranteed?
 - How are dorms assigned?
 - Is there Division sports?

Search

Academic Program / Admissions

If you're undecided, relax and pick an academically balanced institution that offers a range of majors and programs.

Keep in mind that colleges are looking at the strength of your high school record. This includes challenging courses, Honors and AP classes taken, and reference to your GPA, SAT or ACT scores .

Extracurricular activities and volunteer work are considered in admission decisions.

Continually ask yourself the following questions: What do I like? What am I good at?

Establish goals and review career options

Type of School

- 4 Year College or Universities: Vary in size and types of majors they offer, athletics, and so much more. Students will leave after completion of about 120 hours of study and receive a Bachelors degree.
- 2 Year or Community : Offer an Associates Degree after the completion of two years of full-time study in a particular program. They frequently offer technical programs that prepare you for immediate entry into the job market. Many community colleges offer Certificate Programs for a variety of vocations.
- State vs. Private State schools are usually less expensive, particularly for in-state residents. They get most of their money from the state or local governments. Private colleges rely on tuition fees, endowments, and other private sources. Private colleges are usually smaller and can offer more personalized attention. Private schools can narrow the cost with scholarships and aid.

College Search

Web Resources

While this list is certainly not inclusive of all college-related web sites, we have found that these sites are particularly helpful.

- **Naviance** (<http://student.naviance.com/willshs>) The school districts on-line college search engine, career exploration inventories, resume and portfolio builder. (login required)
- **College Board Online** (www.collegeboard.org)
SAT I and SAT II information, college search, scholarship search, financial aid, AP exams
- **ACT, Inc.** (www.act.org)
College planning, financial aid need estimator, career information, ACT testing.
- **KhanAcademy** (www.khanacademy.org) SAT preparation for the New SAT.
- **State University of New York** (www.SUNY.edu)
Information regarding the SUNY application process, colleges, online applications
- **New York's Private Colleges and Universities** (www.nycolleges.org) Admission and financial aid information for New York State independent colleges
- **WNY College Connection** (www.nycollegeconnection.com) Info on colleges in Western New York
- **Campus Tours and Maps** (www.ecampustours.com)
Create a login to access virtual tours, college links, career exploration and much more.
- **The Common Application** (www.commonapp.org)
The Common Application—college application website used by over 500 colleges
- **NYS Career Zone** (www.careerzone.ny.gov)
- **Finding a Career that is right for you** (www.learnhowtobecome.org)
- **Occupational Outlook Handbook** (www.bls.gov.ooh)
- **O*Net Online** www.onetonline.org
- **Career/Apprenticeship information** www.careeronestop.org
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- **Dept. of Labor information on apprenticeships** www.apprenticeships.gov
- **NCAA Clearinghouse** (www.eligibilitycenter.org)
Clearinghouse for registration and information on NCAA Division I & II athletics

- **Next Step Magazine** (www.nextstepu.com)
Various articles & college information. Nice info. from the student perspective as well.
- **FAFSA** (www.fafsa.ed.gov)
Online form to complete Free Application for Federal Student Aid
- **FastWeb** (www.fastweb.com)
Scholarship search, college directory and links to college sites.
- **FINAID** (www.finaid.org)
Comprehensive free resources for student financial aid information. Free scholarship search, financial aid calculator, glossary and bibliography.
- **Higher Education Services Corporation** (www.hesc.ny.gov) State and federal aid information, link to other college or lender web sites.
- **Cappex** (www.cappex.com)
Create a login. Access info. on college admission, scholarships, and much more.
- **Chegg** (www.chegg.com)
Directory of colleges, scholarships, study abroad, and much more.
- **RaiseMe** (<http://raise.me>)
Create a profile, micro-scholarships are listed by colleges for different sets of criteria.
- **Peterson's Education Center** (www.petersons.com) Valuable resources on schools from k-12 through graduate study.
- **Princeton Review** www.princetonreview.com
Advice on colleges, careers and graduate school, with a yearly ranking of colleges as determined by college students themselves.
- **College Express** www.collegexpress.com
Information on Colleges, Scholarships, college rankings, and much more.
- **Go See Campus** www.goseecampus.com
College Trip Planner, College Search, College Resources and Advice
- **CollegeWeekLive** www.collegeweeklive.com
Live chat's with college admission, insider advice, live presentations.
- **U.S. Airforce** www.airforce.com **Air Force Academy** <https://www.usafa.af.mil/>
- **U.S. Army** www.goarmy.com
- **U.S. Marines** www.marines.com
- **U.S. Navy** www.navy.com **Naval Academy** <https://www.usna.edu/homepage.php>
- **U. S. Merchant Marine Academy:** <https://www.usmma.edu/>

Scholarship Web Sites

Many Scholarships are sent directly to Williamsville South from local organizations. The first place you should begin looking for scholarships is in the WSHS Career Center or on-line through Naviance.

1. <http://student.naviance.com/willshs>
2. www.fastweb.com
3. www.collegeboard.org
4. www.finaid.org/scholarships
5. www.findtuition.org/scholarships
6. www.kaplan.edu/scholarships
7. www.findtherightscholarship.com (trades)
8. www.unigo.com/scholarships
9. www.scholarships.com
11. www.studentscholarships.org
12. <http://www.wnyschoolcounselor.org>
13. www.cappex.com
14. www.freschinfo.com
15. www.collegedata.com
16. www.scholarshipamerica.org
17. www.supercollege.com
18. www.meritaid.com
19. www.mycollegescholarships.org
20. www.collegescholarships.org
21. www.peterson's.com
22. www.nextstudent.com
23. www.salliemae.com

Scholarship Scams; What to Look For

The following are some tell-tale signs a prospective scholarship is less than reputable.

The scholarship requires an application fee - No matter how upstanding the organization awarding the scholarship appears at first glance, if they're asking for money up front with your application, be wary. You should never have to give money to get money for scholarships.

The scholarship is "guaranteed" - There are no guarantees in life, and the realm of scholarships is no exception to this rule. Be instantly suspicious if anyone tries to tell you that you're guaranteed financial help.

The "free seminar" scam - You may come across opportunities for "free" seminars providing scholarship information. They will proclaim that "you can't get this information anywhere else" and will only provide it to you after you've paid a fee.

There are two big problems with this situation. For one, you can always get the information somewhere else. The Internet is a great resource for finding information about scholarships, and it can connect you with specific people who can answer your questions. Also, don't underestimate the knowledge of your school counselor. They are there to help you and may have scholarship information you will find useful.

The second problem with this situation goes back to the first point illustrated here: you should not have to pay to get the information, when there are plenty of free resources out there.

"We'll do the work for you" - Few people enjoy filling out scholarship applications and writing essays for them, but it's a necessary evil. If anyone—an organization, consultant, individual, or other—offers to do the work for you, stay away. Nothing worthwhile in life comes without a little elbow grease on your part.

You've been selected as a finalist for a contest you never entered - If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

What to do if you suspect scholarship fraud - If you come across a scholarship you believe to be a scam, or you're a victim of scholarship fraud, you can report it to the Federal Trade Commission (FDC) or go to [Fraud.org](http://www.fraud.org).

Go to the college website, click on VISIT and schedule

- Arrange to meet with a profession in the major you're interested in prior to the visit.
- Talk to coaches of sports in which you might participate.
- Get business cards and names of people you meet for future contacts.
- Pick up financial aid brochures.
- Participate in a group information session at the admissions office.
- Sit in on a class of a subject that interests you.
- Talk to a student or counselor in the career center.
- Spend the night in a dorm
- Read the student newspaper
- Try to find other student publications—department newsletters, alternative newspapers, literary reviews.
- Scan bulletin boards to see what day-to-day student life is like.
- Eat in the cafeteria.
- Ask students why they chose the college.
- Wander around the campus by yourself.
- Read for a little while in the library to see what it's like.
- Search for your favorite book in the library.
- Ask students what they hate about the college.
- Ask students what they love about the college.
- Browse in the college bookstore.
- Walk or drive around the community surrounding the campus
- Ask students what they do on weekends.
- Listen to the college radio station.
- Try to see a dorm that you didn't see on tour.
- Imagine yourself attending this college for four years.

Go to the college website, click on VISIT, and schedule

Questions

Make the most out of Your college trip!!!

Admissions

- What are admission requirements
- What majors are offered? Which are the most popular?
- What are the application deadlines for admission? Is there an interview?
- How can I arrange a campus visit?

Financial Aid

- What are the costs?
- What financial aid options are offered? When is the financial aid deadline?

Classroom

- What is the average class size?
- How accessible are professors outside of class?
- Will professors or grad students teach my classes?
- When must I choose a major?
- What student services are offered? (tutoring, career counseling, study workshops)
- How are the libraries? Computer labs?

Housing

- What type of housing is available?
- Is student housing guaranteed for four years?
- Would I have a roommate? How are they selected?
- How safe is the campus and the surrounding neighborhood?
- What type of meal plans are available?

Student Life

- What clubs, organizations, activities are there?
- What sports opportunities are offered? (intramural, varsity, etc)
- Are there programs to help students adjust to college life?
- How are the sports facilities?
- What's it like on campus on the weekends

Not sure what you want to be...Take an interest inventory on Naviance

Choosing Your Major

Choosing Your College Major

So, What Are You Going to Do With Your Life?

Some students start college knowing exactly what they'd like to major in. Others don't know what to major in, or have a career goal but no knowledge of what majors will get them there. Most find themselves switching majors during college. Here are some tips, no matter where you fall in this range.

What is a college major?

You're required to major in a specific academic subject (or professional field) to demonstrate sustained, high-level work in one field. Depending on the college, you might be able to major in two fields, have a major and a minor, or even create your own major.

When should I declare a major?

At most colleges, you aren't required to declare a major until the end of your sophomore year. If you're in a two-year degree program, you'll probably select a major at the start because your course of studies is much shorter.

How do I choose?

First and second-year students usually take more general courses while they try and decide on a major. After this initial shopping period, coursework becomes more focused and specific. Make sure that you have genuine interest, though. You don't want to choose a major by process of elimination—that could take a while.

Take courses in areas that appeal to you, then try and focus on a subject that will interest and motivate you. You'll do better, and your motivation will continue through college and into a job.

What if I want to go to grad school?

If you think law school, medical school, or grad school is in your future, some schools offer pre-professional advising programs (such as premed or prelaw). These programs are not the same as majors—you'll still need to choose a major in another subject. As long as you fulfill a grad school's course requirements, it really doesn't matter what you major in.

Does my major dictate my profession?

Sometimes. If you specialize in something like nursing, accounting, or engineering, you're learning a specific trade and will likely continue with that. Most majors, however, prepare you for a range of careers that you can be trained to handle once you graduate. For most students, picking a college major is not the same as picking a career. It will be up to you to pursue what you like.

Remember, you're not alone. Choosing a major is usually done with the help of academic and peer advisors.

Why Your College Major Matters

And How Do You Choose Just One?

There's considerable debate as to how important this decision really is. Some say it doesn't matter because the skills you build are universally valued. Others say it does matter because the major you choose can dictate the scope of your opportunities. Which point of view is right depends on your time frame.

In the Long Run

As you progress in your career, you build skills and knowledge that transcend your choice of major. After about three years of work experience, your degree begins to fade into the backdrop of your resume, and after about five years, it is relegated to the fine print. At that point, a degree is more a minimum requirement for employment rather than a testament to your knowledge. So, in some ways, your choice of major is not so important.

In the Near Future

Wait a minute! You still need to begin your career somewhere, gaining the work experience that will be valued more highly than your degree. A series of unrelated jobs won't help launch your career nor will a career in a field in which you have no interest. Think of it as a rocket trajectory—at launch, you need to be pointed in the right direction; otherwise, it will take considerable energy to change your course later on. The major you choose can help to direct your career.

Your Major Matters

Here are some reasons for taking the decision seriously:

- You're about to invest several years of your life in studying a subject in great detail. You'll be most successful in your major, and subsequent career, if you're truly interested.
- College can be a big investment of your time and money, so to maximize your psychological and financial payback make sure the major you choose points you in the right direction.
- There are many careers that favor or even require one degree over another. If you're interested in a particular career, find out which majors are required or recommended before you choose one.

Despite the importance of choosing a major, the vast majority of students still make the decision haphazardly. Frequently, students find the sheer number of options is overwhelming, which makes it easy to postpone the decision until well into college. Putting off your decision for too long can result in a choice that's convenient but unwise or can delay graduation.

Take Your Time and Do the Research

Choosing a major is not a decision that should be made in two hours, two days, or even two weeks. Research all your options and keep an open mind. Once you've narrowed the list of majors and careers that seem interesting, try each of them on for a while.

For example, take classes in the major and talk to your professors about the possibilities. Pursue internships and jobs where you can get hands-on experience and talk to people working in the field. If you're not excited by the subject matter or can't see yourself in that type of career, then move on to others. After all, if you start early, you have plenty of time.



College Interview Checklist – 2025 Edition

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Schedule the interview with the college(s) you're interested in — be sure to check whether it's in-person, virtual, or phone-based

Add the date and time to your digital calendar (Google Calendar, iCal, etc.) with a reminder 24 hours in advance

Research the college:

- Explore the college's official website, especially "About," "Academics," and "Student Life" pages
- Take a virtual tour or watch student life videos
- Review the course catalog for programs of interest
- Check the school's social media (Instagram, YouTube, TikTok)

Make a list of 3–5 reasons you want to attend, and be specific (e.g., “neuroscience research with faculty,” “collaborative student culture”)

Practice with mock interviews (with a teacher, counselor, friend, or even AI-based tools)

Review common questions and prep answers for:

- Why this college?
- What's your greatest strength?
- Tell me about a challenge you overcame
- What are you passionate about?

Prepare 2–3 meaningful questions to ask your interviewer (avoid things easily found online)

Test your tech (if it's virtual):

- Check Zoom/Google Meet links
- Test mic, camera, and internet connection
- Set up a quiet, well-lit interview space

Plan your outfit: neat, clean, and professional (business casual is ideal — even for virtual)

Gather any materials (optional but helpful):

- Resume or activities list
 - Portfolio (for arts or design programs)
 - Unofficial transcript or test scores (if applicable)
-

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- Be friendly, authentic, and confident — be yourself!
 - Talk about your academic strengths and interests
 - Share your activities, leadership, community service, work experience, or hobbies
 - Speak clearly and maintain eye contact (or look at the camera if virtual)
 - Don't be afraid to pause and think before answering
 - Use calming techniques like deep breathing if you feel nervous
 - Show enthusiasm and curiosity — this is a conversation, not a test
-

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Send a thank-you email within 24–48 hours:
 - Mention something specific from the conversation
 - Reaffirm your interest in the college
- Jot down notes for future reference (especially if you're applying to multiple colleges)
- Download or ask about financial aid resources if they weren't discussed
- Save the interviewer's contact info (email or business card) for future communication



ESSAY TIPS!

Be Creative. But stick to your true personality.

Admission counselors read hundreds of essays and you want to grab their attention and show another dimension of yourself. If you have a great sense of humor and can communicate it well, do so. If you're normally a serious person, create something more insightful.

Bring something new to the table.

By the time an admissions counselor gets to your essay, he or she will have already read a detailed description of your accomplishments, test scores, etc. Make sure your essay gives more insight into you. Did you overcome unusual circumstances? Do you have a unique take on a classic movie and how it relates to the world? Were you raised in a foreign country that gives you a different perspective? Any interesting topic that allows you to expand on what you think and who you are.

Address your imperfections head on.

You're not perfect, no one is. Admission counselors don't expect you to be. If you feel you need to explain why your test scores are not a true reflection of your ability or that you struggled in physics because you are not cut out for a career in quantum physics, now's the chance to do so. Address your imperfections clearly and honestly and explain how you have dealt with them. This will demonstrate that you are really ready for college. Finally explain why this college is a perfect fit for you and what you will bring to its community.

When you have finished proofreading your essay, proofread it again.

Submit your essay only when you are certain that it has no grammatical errors or typos. Write a first draft and proofread it carefully. Then ask a friend, parent, teacher, or school counselor to take a look. Sometimes it may be difficult to catch our own mistakes and a fresh pair of eyes and a different perspective can prevent you from submitting an essay with unnecessary mistakes.

Current Essay Questions posed on Common Application & SUNY Application:

- ◇ Some students have a background, identity, 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.
- ◇ 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?
- ◇ Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
- ◇ Describe a problem you solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma—anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
- ◇ Discuss an accomplishment or event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
- ◇ Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
- ◇ Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you have already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

**Essays have a maximum of 650 words and minimum of 250 words.*

**Some colleges will have an additional supplemental application which could include additional essay prompts or a personal statement. These will range in topic and word limit as well.*

Important College Terms

ACT (American College Test): This is a college admissions test that measures the knowledge, understanding, and skills acquired throughout high school. It is a battery of tests in four areas: English, math, reading, comprehension, and natural sciences. It yields a score of 1-36 in each area and a composite score.

SAT :*The SAT is a college admissions test that provides a standard of the verbal, mathematical, and written abilities of candidates for college admissions. The score range is 200 to 800 for each of the three sections.*

Career Program: A certificate, diploma, or Associate Degree program of study to prepare a student for employment. Career programs generally are not designated to transfer.

Credentials: The documentation which accompanies the college application. These usually include a transcript with rank and average as well as SAT, ACT, and AP test scores.

Curriculum: Major course of study

Early Action: A plan whereby a student who submits an application by a specific date prior to the regular application deadline will be notified of the admissions decision within 30-45 days after the application is complete. Students are usually accepted or deferred into the regular pool of applicants, but some are denied. Students who are denied admission are not reevaluated with the regular decision applicant pool. This plan differs from the Early Admission in that applicants are not obligated to enroll if accepted.

Early Admission: A plan whereby a student may begin course work before completing all requirements for a high school diploma.

Early Decision: A plan whereby a student who applies by a certain date prior to the regular application deadline will receive the admissions decision before the regular notifications. This plan differs from Early Action in that applicants are committed to attend that college, if accepted. Some colleges require that a candidate file no other applications during this period. Others require that other applications be withdrawn if accepted. Only exceptionally well-qualified candidates who are willing to make this commitment should consider this option.

Deferred Admission: The practice whereby some colleges allow an accepted student to postpone enrollment for one year.

Joint Admissions: A program designed to enable students to transfer to a 4 year institution as a full time junior after completing two years at a community college.

Open Admission: The policy that some college acceptances are offered with the provision that the applicant maintain the same standard of character, personal involvement, and academic performance agreed upon successful completion of high school.

Rolling Admissions: The practice whereby some colleges process applications as soon as all credentials are received and immediately notify the candidate of the committee's decision.

Wait List: A practice whereby schools delay accepting some admissible candidates until they know how many of the accepted students will enroll. If additional students are needed, wait listed candidates will be offered admission.

Honors Program: A program designed to give outstanding students an opportunity to enrich their educational experience through independent research, acceleration or advanced study.

Liberal Arts College: A college that offers a bachelor's degree upon completion of a program of study primarily limited to four years of undergraduate work. Although the student in a liberal arts college takes a concentration of courses in his/her special field or major, he/she also takes many more elective courses than the student in specialized schools such as a School of Engineering.

Transcript: An official record of high school; showing final grades, final exam scores, credits earned, SAT/ACT/AP scores (if requested) .

Grade Point Average (GPA): The GPA is computed by totaling the final grades earned in each course (since PE and half-year courses are only a half credit we only add in half of the grade), then divide the sum by the total number of credits.

Rank: The relative stand of all students in a particular class. The calculation takes into account the strength of a student's program, weighting those grades by their level (Regents, Honors, AP).

SUNY: The State University of New York is composed of 4 university centers, 13 colleges of the arts and sciences, 4 centers for the health sciences, 6 agricultural and technical colleges, 10 specialized colleges, and 29 community colleges.

University: An institution chartered by its respective state that usually has undergraduate, graduate, and professional schools grouped under one administrative structure. Within a university there are separate colleges, such as the School of Management.

Transfer Program: A course of study designed to allow a student to transfer credit earned at a 2 year college to a bachelor's degree program at a 4 year school.

Work Study Program: A college work study is a government supported financial aid program whereby a needy student may work (usually a college related job) while attending classes at least half time.

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using Naviance

Sample Resume

AL

ANDY LANG

example@example.com | 555-555-5555

Ann Arbor, MI 48611

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Focused Customer Service Manager offering years of combined experience in sales management, office administration and customer service. Proven success in developing high-performance teams and streamlining day-to-day office activities. Well-versed in accounting functions with proficiency in QuickBooks.

WORK HISTORY

Customer Service Manager | BAK - Ann Arbor, MI 09/2017 - CURRENT

- Supervised and trained 10 customer service team members to provide exceptional service throughout the entire experience.
- Exceeded specific team goals and resolved issues by partnering with staff members to share and implement customer service initiatives.
- Reduced process laps and effectively trained team members on best practices and protocol.

Customer Service Manager | IntelliTech - Ann Arbor, MI 11/2014 - 08/2017

- Increased employee productivity by establishing and monitoring customer care performance indicators, service level metrics and goal achievement.
- Provided detailed monthly departmental reports and updates to senior management.
- Escalated customer satisfaction ratings by offering valuable insights to customers needs and expectations.

Customer Service Representative | Vita Software - Ann Arbor, MI 05/2011 - 10/2014

- Made customers top priority and employed active listening skills to understand needs and deliver first-rate service.
- Documented customer inquiries and implemented information, including remediation suggestions in company database.
- Provided primary customer support to internal and external customers in fast-paced environment.

SKILLS

- Conflict resolution techniques
- Training and development
- Deadline-oriented
- Team management
- Process improvements
- Superior computer skills
- Focused on customer satisfaction
- Client relations and retention

EDUCATION

Washtenaw Community College, Ann Arbor, MI

Associate of Arts: Communication Studies



ADMISSIONS INFORMATION SUMMARY - 2025

Campus Name	REGULAR ADMISSION		HONORS ADMISSION		EOP ADMISSION	
	Undergraduate Enrollment	H.S. GPA	Freshman Enrollment	H.S. GPA	Freshman Enrollment	H.S. GPA
University Centers and Doctoral Degree Granting Institutions						
University at Albany +	12,666	89-96	384	92-98	160	83-89
Binghamton University	14,668	93-98	535	95-99	175	90-94
University at Buffalo	20,362	91-98	590	97-100	230	84-88
Stony Brook University +	18,233	92-98	395	96-99	209	85-89
NYS Ceramics at Alfred University +	449	85-95	21	90-99	36	77-81
SUNY Polytechnic Institute	1,973	89-94				79-82
College of Optometry	Graduate only					
Cornell University:						
Agriculture & Life Sciences +	4,110				29	92-97
Human Ecology +	1,311					
Veterinary Medicine +	Graduate only					
Industrial & Labor Relations +	1,015					
Environmental Science & Forestry	1,843	89-96	37	96-99	17	82-86
SUNY Downstate Health Sciences Univ	293					
Upstate Medical University (Syracuse)	166					
University Colleges						
SUNY Brockport	5,816	86-94	150	95-98	75	82-87
Buffalo State University +	5,205	83-92	201	92-96	123	79-82
SUNY Cortland +	5,911	92-96	30	98-100	44	80-84
SUNY Fredonia +	2,771	85-95	110	95-99	30	75-85
SUNY Geneseo	3,881	92-98			128	74-89
SUNY New Paltz +	6,197	90-96	36	94-99	150	81-88
SUNY Old Westbury	4,260	82-92			79	74-78
SUNY Oneonta +	4,681	88-96			120	80-84
SUNY Oswego	5,517	88-97	148	93-99	130	76-81
SUNY Plattsburgh +	3,825	83-94	80	93-98	89	75-81
SUNY Potsdam	1,831	85-95			28	77-79
Purchase College	3,257	88-96			80	79-83
Empire State University	8,395				20	
Colleges of Technology						
Alfred State +	3,572	82-92			50	76-81
Baccalaureate only	1,701	84-93				
SUNY Canton +	2,861	82-91	15	89-95	32	72-79
Baccalaureate only	2,173	83-92				
SUNY Cobleskill	1,889	80-91	50	90-97	32	73-76
Baccalaureate only	1,467	82-92				
SUNY Delhi	2,809	82-90	50	90-93	80	71-74
Baccalaureate only	458	82-90				
Farmingdale State College +	10,007	82-91	26	91-97	40	75-83
Baccalaureate only	8,217	84-92				
Maritime College	1,285	86-93			17	82-90
Baccalaureate only	91	87-95				
SUNY Morrisville	2,044	80-88			110	71-77
Baccalaureate only	935	81-87				

The GPA ranges shown in the chart are estimates. Students who fall outside these ranges should not be discouraged from applying.

2026-27 EOP Income Eligibility

Household Size	Eligible Income
1	\$28,953
2	\$39,128
3	\$49,303
4	\$59,478
5	\$69,653
6	\$79,828
7	\$90,003
8	\$100,178*

*For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$10,175 for each additional person.

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+Contains 2024 Data.
 Not Offered



ADMISSIONS INFORMATION SUMMARY - 2025 COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Campus Name	ENROLLMENT		STUDENT ONLY HOUSING	HONORS PROGRAM	EOP ADMISSION	
	Full-time	Part-time			Projected Freshman Enrollment	H.S. GPA
SUNY Adirondack	1,274	1,302	On Campus	No	30	70-84
SUNY Broome	2,211	3,116	On Campus	No	35	72-83
Cayuga +	819	2,761	No	Yes	20	70-84
Clinton	317	750	Off Campus	Yes		
Columbia-Greene	464	1,152	No	Yes		
Corning +	1,240	2,481	On Campus	Yes	20	72-85
Dutchess	2,645	3,961	On Campus	Yes	50	74-82
Erie	4,540	3,550	Off Campus	Yes	90	75-88
FIT +	6,817	1,026	On Campus	Yes	70	80-86
Finger Lakes	2,256	3,748	On Campus	Yes	20	79-86
Fulton-Montgomery	622	1,243	No	No	40	68-87
Genesee +	1,494	2,746	On Campus	Yes	25	70-85
Herkimer	943	1,028	On Campus	Yes		
Hudson Valley +	4,801	4,426	Off Campus	Yes	45	75-86
Jamestown	1,535	2,519	On Campus	Yes		
Jefferson	1,145	1,174	On Campus	Yes		
Mohawk Valley	2,434	3,506	On Campus	Yes	27	75-87
Monroe	4,559	4,082	On Campus	Yes	35	70-85
Nassau +	6,764	5,537	Off Campus	Yes	44	76-82
Niagara +	2,326	2,221	On Campus	Yes	15	75-81
North Country	738	920	On Campus	No		
Onondaga	3,264	5,273	On Campus	Yes	80	72-86
SUNY Orange	2,284	3,429	No	Yes	25	70-84
Rockland	2,417	2,947	Off Campus	Yes	35	70-84
SUNY Schenectady +	1,089	2,440	Off Campus	No	25	70-84
Surfolk +	9,410	10,563	No	Yes	42	72-80
SUNY Sullivan	573	954	On Campus	No	20	73-81
Tompkins Cortland	1,104	3,855	On Campus	Yes	20	
SUNY Ulster	1,096	1,995	No	Yes	20	77-85
SUNY Westchester +	4,614	4,745	No	Yes	30	75-85

Transfer. Guaranteed.

Start your education at one of our community colleges. Once you graduate, SUNY will help you transfer seamlessly to one of our four-year colleges.

Your SUNY AA or AS degree will come with guarantees.

- Guaranteed acceptance to a SUNY four-year college
- Guaranteed junior standing in a parallel program
- Satisfaction of completed general education requirements
- Maximum acceptance of core courses in your SUNY Transfer Path

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1	\$28,953
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Not Offered