

GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR HANDBOOK FOR U.S. ADMISSIONS



**Education
USA**

Your Official Source on U.S. Higher Education

STEP 1

NARROW
YOUR
SEARCH



Definitions

U.S. Two-Year Colleges

- ✓ Canadian colleges and U.S. two-year colleges are similar in that they offer diplomas or study concentrations in both academic training (for university transfer) and technical training (for entry into the job market).
- ✓ A U.S. two-year college will usually be called a “community college” or “junior college,” and sometimes “state college” or “college.”
- ✓ Community colleges are majority open enrollment, with the exception of a few impacted majors/fields, such as Nursing. A potential student only needs a high school diploma or equivalency (GED) in order to enroll.
- ✓ Community colleges often have transfer agreements with state-funded universities. For example, in California, community colleges have a 2+2 program called Transfer Admission Guarantee (TAG), which guarantees admissions to seven California campuses and many private and out-of-state campuses.
- ✓ Community colleges award Associate’s degrees, known as Associate of Arts (A.A.) or Associate of Science (A.S.). Typically, if the Associate degree is specifically for transfer it will have a “T” at the end, i.e. Associate Degree for Transfer (A.D.T.). These programs require 60 units to graduate and are meant to be completed in two years. Community colleges also offer certificates, which tend to be programs that are 30 units or less.

U.S. Universities (four-years)

- ✓ U.S. universities are similar to Canadian universities in that they grant undergraduate students Bachelor’s degrees, and may also have graduate level programs that grant Master’s degrees, PhDs, and/or professional degrees (MD, JD, etc.)
- ✓ Bachelor’s granting institutions can be called universities or colleges. Typically, colleges only have Bachelor’s programs and are smaller, teaching focused institutions, while universities tend to grant Graduate level degrees as well.
- ✓ U.S. universities have a holistic admissions process that takes into account all of a student’s grades during high school (Grade 9-12), as well as any other activities the student is involved in, like sports, arts, clubs, paid work, volunteering, religious activities, and travel.
- ✓ A difference between the U.S. and Canada is that in the U.S. process students typically apply to the university, rather than the program of study. This means that there is a lot more flexibility in specific prerequisite classes. Rather, the emphasis is put on how the student has performed academically over time, and if they have challenged themselves with AP courses or the IB curriculum, when available.

Public vs. Private Institutions

- ✓ Public institutions are regulated by and at least in-part funded by individual states.
- ✓ Private institutions do not receive public funding. They are mainly funded by tuition, donations, and endowments. Private institutions include research universities, technical institutes, art institutes, religiously-affiliated colleges, and liberal arts colleges.

Liberal Arts Colleges

- ✓ Liberal arts colleges are four-year universities that serve small, undergraduate populations (sometimes with limited or no graduate programs) and have curriculums that encourage exploration and interdisciplinary studies. The goal of liberal arts schools is to provide small class sizes where students have a lot of one-on-one instruction with professors who will challenge students to hone their critical thinking skills.
- ✓ Many liberal arts colleges allow students to wait until the end of their second year to declare a major. While others allow students to be the designers of their course requirements on route to their degrees.
- ✓ Liberal arts colleges consistently top the list as the most generous institutions when it comes to financial aid. Approximately 65 universities in the U.S. meet 100% demonstrated need for international students. For low-income families, these schools are absolutely the most affordable. (See Appendix A)

Can I determine what kind of institution it is by the name?

- ✓ The large, public, research-focused, doctorate-granting institution in any given state is usually called “The University of [state name].” For example, the University of Michigan or the University of Kansas. One big exception is Pennsylvania, where the University of Pennsylvania is a private school in the Ivy League, and the public school system is called Penn State.
- ✓ The medium to large-sized, public, Master’s or doctorate-granting institutions in any given state typically have the word “state” in their name and have a larger focus on career-orientation (such as Education or Criminal Justice majors).
- ✓ Both two-year and four-year institutions can be called “college,” so investigate further.
- ✓ The word “institute” indicates an institution that specializes in either technology or the arts, and is always private.
 - ✓ Technology institutes will have mostly majors in the Natural Sciences, although larger institutes will have some Social Sciences options in order to provide an interdisciplinary approach to science majors.
 - ✓ Art Institutes mostly award Bachelors of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) degrees. B.F.A.’s differ from traditional Bachelors of Arts (B.A.) or Bachelors of Sciences (B.S.) in that the degree focus is more on practical application of the art, rather than theory.

The Right Fit Questionnaire

Initial Parameter questions (academic, location, financial):

1. **What are is your Grade average and test scores?** Every university has an academic profile which includes a middle 50% range of where their current students scored on standardized tests and performed academically in high school. Collegeboard.org publishes a lot of data around this to help students see which schools may be an academic fit.
2. **How far from home do you want to be or is there a specific location you are targeting?** If a student wants to easily be able to come home from holidays, it makes sense to narrow the search to schools within drivable distance or perhaps near an accessible airport. Additionally, there are some students who target a specific location due to affinity for a city or ties to family or friends.
3. **How much financial aid will your family require?** This is absolutely one the most important first questions to ask a student. The more aid a student needs, the more this will restrict their list. The number one place international students receive aid is from the university that they attend, so it is very important to consider the generosity of a university's scholarship policy during the search process. (See Appendix A)

Once initial parameters are established, ask questions to determine what kind of campus environment will best suit the student and their interests.

1. **Do you know what you want to study?** Some students will have a very strong sense of what they want to major and maybe even minor in. Others may be more flexible or completely unsure; liberal arts schools or schools that encourage students to enter undecided can be a good fit these students.
2. **Do you have a narrow focus or do you want to explore?** Students who want to do coursework solely in their field may be more attracted to institutes or universities with specialty colleges for their field, while students who want to explore will appreciate a liberal arts approach.
3. **Big classes or small classes?** Do you mind classrooms with hundreds of students, or would you prefer more intimate conversations with professors? Public universities tend to have much larger class sizes, while private schools have smaller class sizes.
4. **What campus activities do you want to be involved in?** Do you want the atmosphere of the "big game?" The opportunity to join Greek life? Do you prefer quirky traditions? A more "artsy" vibe? A political leaning? Is there a specific club you want to join?
5. **Would you like your campus to have a religious affiliation?** Many private colleges are currently or were once affiliated with specific religions. Understanding the denomination of an institution (if it has one) and what role religion currently plays in the everyday lives of students will help narrow your search. All public universities are unaffiliated with religion.
6. **Would you like a women's only or a historically black college or university (HBCU)?** Gender only colleges and institutions with a strong link to the African American community began out of necessity, when education was segregated by gender and race. Now, these campuses with a very unique history provide a learning environment unavailable in Canada.

A wide, gravel-paved road stretches from the foreground into the distance, curving slightly to the right. The landscape is desolate and mountainous, with brownish-yellow fields and patches of snow on the hillsides. The sky is a uniform, overcast grey. A large black rectangular box is centered over the road, containing white text.

STEP 2

FINANCE
YOUR
STUDIES

Financial Aid Options

The reality for 80% of undergraduate students is that the majority of their funding will be coming from out of pocket with family savings or loans. However, that means that 20% of international students are able to get the majority of their U.S. higher education funded through another source. Here is what is available to Canadians.

1. University Scholarships – this is the top place a student will receive funding, so it is important to research schools that meet a student’s financial expectation.
 - a. Needs-based scholarships – funding given based on financial need. Universities that meet full demonstrated need (see Appendix A) charge families tuition based on their income level and assets.
 - b. Merit-based scholarships – funding given based on a student’s grades, test scores, and sometimes leadership and community service.
 - c. Talent-based scholarships – given in the arts or for athletics (see next page)
 - d. Residence-based scholarships – there are a number of scholarships or fee waivers given to students with Canadian citizenship or specific provincial residency (see Appendix A)
 - e. EducationUSA scholarships – some universities give specific scholarships to students who work with an EducationUSA advisor (see Appendix A)
2. Provincial funding – students may apply for provincial scholarships and loans to use towards their U.S. study. This funding will cap out based on expected local costs, not on the total cost of the student’s tuition. For example, OSAP in Ontario will give up to approx. \$11,000 CAD, while Quebec gives around \$3,000 CAD.
3. External Scholarships – it is very challenging to find external scholarships that will make a large dent in the overall cost. For very focused students, they can spend time applying to small scholarships worth around \$500-\$1000 using some of the following websites:
 - a. Scholarshipscanada.com
 - b. Yconic.com
 - c. Scholarsnapp.org
 - d. Fundingusstudy.org

American students

Students with American citizenship can apply to any funding opportunities or scholarships based in the United States.

- FAFSA.gov is where families can apply for government scholarships and loans
- Fastweb.com is one of the largest external scholarship databases

International students

For students with nationalities other than Canadian or American, direct them to the main EducationUSA page, where they can connect with an advisor from their home country to see if there are any other citizenship-based scholarships they can apply for.

- EducationUSA.state.gov

How to Get an Athletic Scholarship

Athletic Organizations that give scholarships

- ✓ National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) – small universities
 - ✓ Eligibility Center at PlayNAIA.org
 - ✓ Meet two of the following criteria
 - ✓ Graduate in top half of high school class
 - ✓ Minimum SAT (860) or ACT (16)
 - ✓ Minimum GPA – 2.0
- ✓ National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) – two-year colleges
 - ✓ Eligibility Center at eligibilitycorner.njcaa.org
 - ✓ Open to all high school graduates
- ✓ National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) – largest governing body for collegiate athletics in the United States.
 - ✓ Eligibility Center at eligibilitycenter.org

The Three NCAA Divisions

- ✓ Division I: These schools spend the most money on sports and are the most competitive. Athletic scholarships available.
- ✓ Division II: These schools spend a little less on sports and are still quite competitive. Athletic scholarships available.
- ✓ Division III: These schools place more emphasis on academics and tend to play in more regional competitions. Only provide academic and needs-based funding.

What is the NCAA's role?

- ✓ During the recruiting process, a student needs to use the NCAA website (ncaa.org) as a guide to help them with the following:
 - ✓ Register for the Eligibility Center
 - ✓ Understand eligibility requirements
 - ✓ Discover which classes will count towards your 16 Core Courses in your province
 - ✓ Research teams in your sport (including their division, news updates, rankings)
 - ✓ Download your sport-specific recruitment calendar and amateurism requirements
 - ✓ Download the [NCAA "Guide for the College-Bound Athlete"](#)
- ✓ The NCAA is a clearinghouse. They are not a matching service. The NCAA does not help match athletes with coaches or universities.

The NCAA Eligibility Center

- ✓ Interested athletes need to create an account at eligibilitycenter.org
- ✓ Register as early as Grade 9.
- ✓ Cost of registration: around \$80 USD

NCAA Eligibility – Amateurism

- ✓ Students need to make sure they remain an unpaid, non-professional athlete. Once this is breached, the student is no longer eligible to compete in the NCAA.

NCAA Eligibility – Academics

- ✓ Maintain a minimum GPA of 2.3 (for Division I) or 2.2 (for Division II)
 - ✓ A student's GPA is calculated in the following way
 - A = 4 points
 - B = 3 points
 - C = 2 points
 - D = 1 point
 - F = 0 points
 - ✓ Use province's grading scale when calculating grades. For the purposes of the NCAA, they will want the GPA of the 16 Core Courses.
 - ✓ If a student takes all 16 Core Courses, but falls short on their GPA, they can still be recruited as an Academic Redshirt.
- ✓ Complete 16 Core Courses
 - ✓ 16 Core Courses vary between Division I and II. Division III does not have a Core Course requirement.
 - ✓ 16 Core Courses are the minimums needed to be eligible to play NCAA athletics. Each university will have their own academic requirements for admissions.
- ✓ Finish on time
 - ✓ Once beginning high school, students must graduate in four years
 - ✓ Students must have completed 15 out of 16 Core Courses by their graduation. Only one Core Course can be taken after graduation.
- ✓ Take the SAT or ACT and submit official scores
 - ✓ The NCAA requires submission of official SAT or ACT scores even if the student's intended university does not require it.
- ✓ Submit official transcripts
 - ✓ Guidance Counsellors need to upload official transcripts into the Eligibility Center during the recruiting process.
 - ✓ Guidance Counsellors need to send in the final transcript after graduation.

How Do Students Get an Athletic Scholarship?

- ✓ To be recruited for an athletic scholarship, a student must be a very competitive athlete.
- ✓ Receiving a full athletic scholarship is reserved for the truly elite athletes, typically competing at the provincial level or higher.
- ✓ One of two things will happen during the recruitment stage:
 - ✓ Students will be contacted by interested coaches as early as Grade 9 or
 - ✓ Students will need to instigate contact with coaches
- ✓ Students should reach out directly to any university they are keen to play for, and keep a spreadsheet tracking contacts and any promises made. As students enter Grade 11, offers

will get more serious. Students need to ask coaches what they are offering, as scholarship amounts range dramatically.

- ✓ Students who are not being not actively recruited need to promote themselves to get on a coaches' radar:
 - ✓ Research programs using the university's website
 - ✓ Complete a university's Recruiting Questionnaire (if available)
 - ✓ Retrieve the coach's name, email, and phone number and contact them
 - ✓ Keep a spreadsheet with program information and all contacts made (with dates)
 - ✓ Create an online athletic resume or profile
 - ✓ Post game tape and highlight videos on Youtube
 - ✓ When emailing coaches, share game tape and athletic resume/profile
 - ✓ Attend showcase tournaments and/or elite sports camps in the U.S.

Making Their Choice

- ✓ Questions students should consider as they make their final choice:
 - ✓ Does the school have the academic major that you are looking for?
 - ✓ What is the overall reputation of the department of your major and what opportunities do they have for internships, co-ops, and job placements?
 - ✓ Did you get along with team during your unofficial or official visit?
 - ✓ How do you like the coach? Their coaching style? Their interactions with you?
 - ✓ What types of financial aid are being offered to you? Value of scholarships vs cost of institution?
- ✓ A coach may ask a student to make a "verbal commitment" to their school during Grade 11. If a student has indeed made their choice, they can move ahead with a verbal commitment. This is not legally binding and either party can back out. Students should still plan on applying to multiple interested institutions, while honoring their commitment.
- ✓ All recruitment ceases when a student signs a [National Letter of Intent \(NLI\)](#) with a university, which is legally binding for one full academic year.
 - ✓ First NLI signing session in November, concurrent with Early admissions
 - ✓ Second NLI signing session in April, concurrent with Regular admissions

● Ideas

ideas

STEP 3

COMPLETE
YOUR
APPLICATION

IDEAS

IDEAS

ideas



Understanding Grade Point Average (GPA)

Calculating GPA

- GPA is a calculation produced by U.S. high schools and universities to indicate the relative value of the alphabetical grade scale (A - F) to a numeric value on a 4.0 scale.
- Generally, the formula for calculating a GPA for U.S. students is based on the principle that an A grade equals 4.0, a B equals 3.0, a C equals 2.0, a D equals 1.0 and an F equals 0. All course letter grades on an academic transcript are converted using the above, added together and then divided by the total number of classes taken by the student in a given term. As an example, the below represents a one year fictional high school course load for a student at a U.S. school with a calculated GPA provided:

| Course | Term | Unweight. | Weight. |
|--------------|------|-----------|---------|
| English | Fall | A (4.0) | A (4.0) |
| Math | Fall | C (2.0) | C (2.0) |
| History | Fall | A (4.0) | A (4.0) |
| AP Chemistry | Fall | B (3.0) | A (4.0) |
| Art | Fall | B (3.0) | - |
| | GPA | 3.2 | 3.5 |

| Course | Term | Unweight. | Weight. |
|------------|--------|-----------|----------|
| AP English | Spring | A (4.0) | A+ (5.0) |
| Math | Spring | B (3.0) | B (3.0) |
| History | Spring | B (3.0) | B (3.0) |
| P.E. | Spring | B (3.0) | - |
| Journalism | Spring | A (4.0) | - |
| | GPA | 3.40 | 3.67 |

Academic Year Unweighted GPA: 3.30

Academic Year Weighted GPA: 3.57

Unweighted GPA: Takes into consideration the average of all course work, including electives.

Weighted GPA: Typically take into consideration only core subject work, removing electives and Physical Education. Grades earned from honors, AP or IB coursework are weighted because the academic rigor is higher in these classes. Typically, a grade out of 100 is given 10 more points, increasing the grade a full letter grade. (ex. 78 becomes an 88; B becomes A)

Admissions Standards:

- As each province across Canada has a separate Ministry of Education and grading system, admissions offices at U.S. universities will review a student within the standard of the province in which they are educated. Admissions officers will use tools such as AACRAO Edge, which provide a database of general transcript information for the province, and what a grade on that transcript would mean in the creation of a U.S. style GPA.
- Admissions officers also utilize transcript information provided by the high school. Providing a grading scale, including not only the score ranges, but also a general category

(i.e. excellent, above average, average) will help admissions officers assess the academic rigor of the school in comparison to the provincial standard.

- The School Profile is critical in helping admissions officers understand your school's grading and range of academic performance. (Template: Appendix C)

Transcript Evaluation

- Some universities will require that a student pay to have their transcript evaluated by a third party service. Options include:
 - World Evaluation Services: wes.org/ca
 - Educational Credential Evaluators, Inc: ece.org

Additional Information

- The Canadian system is considered very academically rigorous, and that rigor will be considered if grades are being converted.
- Use an online conversion scale to get a sense of a student's GPA out of 4.0.¹
- The advanced status of AP or IB courses is often acknowledged by U.S. universities as equivalent to college level credit and can count toward the overall credits a student needs to graduate with their Bachelor's degree. Exceptional IB students can sometimes earn enough credits to cover the requirements of their first year of study at a U.S. university. Refer to a university's website for a table of their conversions.

¹ <http://www.foreigncredits.com/Resources/Grade-Conversion/>

Standardized Test information

SAT: collegeboard.org

- Purpose: admissions requirement for many U.S. universities (SAT or ACT)
- Sections: Math, Evidence-Based Reading and Writing, Essay (optional)
- Length: 3 hours (plus 50 minutes if taking the optional Essay)
- 2019 Cost: \$88.50 without essay or \$105.50 with Essay + tax
- Maximum Score: 1600 (200-800 per section)
- 50th percentile: 1010; 90th percentile: 1290

SAT Subject Tests: collegeboard.org

- Purpose: admissions requirement for some U.S. universities
- Subjects available: 3 Science tests (Chemistry, Biology, Physics), English Literature, 2 Math tests (Math I, Math II), 2 History tests (U.S., World), 12 Language tests (French, Spanish, Chinese, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Latin)
- Length: 1 hour per test (up to 3 tests in on one test day)
- 2019 Cost: \$26 registration, \$22 per additional test (or \$26 for listening tests)
- Score range: 200-800

ACT: actstudent.org

- Purpose: admissions requirement for many U.S. universities (SAT or ACT)
- Sections: English, Math, Reading, Science, Writing (optional)
- Length: 2 hours, 55 minutes (plus 40 minutes if taking ACT with writing)
- 2019 Cost: \$50.50 without writing or \$67 with writing
- Maximum Score: 36 per section; Composite score averages 4 sections out of 36
- 50th percentile: 20; 90th percentile: 29

TOEFL iBT: ets.org/toefl

- Purpose: admissions requirement for non-native English Speakers (TOEFL or IELTS)
- Sections: Reading, Speaking, Listening, Writing
- Length: 4 hours
- 2019 Cost: \$245
- Maximum Score: 120

IELTS: ieltscanada.ca

- Purpose: admissions requirement for non-native English Speakers (TOEFL or IELTS)
- Sections: Reading, Speaking, Listening, Writing
- Length: 2.5 hours (Reading, Listening, Writing) + Speaking interview (11-14 minutes)
- 2019 Cost: \$319
- Maximum Score: 9

Essay Writing Tips

The personal essay is a significant feature of the U.S. college application process for most four-year institutions. The essay is not a cover letter or a summary of student achievements. Rather, the admissions staff is asking students to “tell them who you are” in 650 words or less. Here is a structure to support your student through their writing.

Identify the Timeline

- Have your student make a spreadsheet of fall deadlines and a list of essays that they need to write to help them stay on target.
- Ideally, a student will approach you in Grade 11 or even earlier. In this case, they can begin to work on their essays over summer.
- Unfortunately, you will have Grade 12 students coming into your office at the last minute to let you know they plan to apply to U.S. schools. Organization is key! You need to know the deadlines and essay topics immediately, so you can focus on the earliest deadlines and then work your way through each requirement.

Understand the Prompts

- The Common Application has seven varied prompts with a 650 word limit. Updated prompts are available each Spring so that students can write during the summer.
- Your student will likely apply to some schools that do not use the Common Application. It is imperative that the student writes a new essay each time they are faced with a different prompt. Some Common App essays can be used for non-Common App schools easily or with some adjustment, while others cannot.

Brainstorm

- Invite students to brainstorm anything that they would like to write about. Encourage the student to write down every idea and use a whiteboard or poster paper to help them get away from the officialness of digitizing their responses.
- To shape the brainstorm, your student should focus on these questions: What are you proud of? What are some positive adjectives that your friends would use to describe you? What is an interesting thing about you that you don't tell many people? What do you care about? What do you believe are the most important things about you?
- Next, review essay prompts to begin triggering additional ideas.

Choosing the Topic

- Encourage your student to talk to you about the ideas that they have come up with. Through verbalizing their ideas, the students will begin to make additional connections, and may potentially find what they want to write about. Ask questions. Help students land on ideas that make the most sense.
- Admissions officers want to see a new side of the applicant that is not expressed anywhere else in the application.
- Strong topics include hobbies, family lore, identity transformation, and/or self-realization

Outline

- Students can structure their essays any way they choose, however, most will choose (or at least start with) the standard five paragraph essay. Students should begin by making an outline that looks like this:
 - I. Essay question (exact wording)
 - II. Thesis
 - III. Idea 1
 - IV. Idea 2
 - V. Idea 3
 - VI. Conclusion
- First, the student needs to write a thesis that directly answers the prompt. This will set the student up for success as it ensures they will answer the question properly and write an essay that stays on point.
 - a. Each supporting paragraph should have their own purpose in supporting the story.
 - b. The conclusion paragraph is an opportunity to be about their next steps in life or as a college student.
 - c. The introduction is the last thing the student should write. The best introduction should drill down to a specific moment that is illustrated later in the essay. It is usually best to write the main paragraphs first to find out where the essay is going, then determine which moment will make the best hook.

First Draft

- The goal here is to encourage students to just get all their ideas on paper. It is okay for those ideas to be not fully realized or for the structure to be incomplete.
- Do not spend time editing grammar. Focus only on the big ideas. You should be able to spend only a few minutes reading to get a sense of what ideas jumped out and which ones fell flat.

Subsequent and Final Drafts

- Enlist other adults to help your students, including EducationUSA.
- Before your student hits upload and send, make sure that the grammar is polished, the prompt has been answered, they are within the word limit, and that they have made their main point. If the student is successful, they will bring an interesting additional piece of themselves to the admissions process.

Supplementary Essays

- Many schools ask for supplementary essays where the student is asked to write specifically about the university that they are applying to. Such as:
 - a. “Why do you want to attend University X?”
 - b. “Why did you choose this major?”
 - c. “How do you see yourself as part of this campus community?”
- It is important for the student to really connect who they are with why this campus is a best fit for them.

Application Resources

Common Application:

1. High School Details Information Sheet
 - a. “The sheet will help you collect and easily share those details with your students so they have the information they need at their fingertips.”
 - b. <https://www.commonapp.org/resource/high-school-details-information-sheet>
2. Recommendation Process
 - a. “From inviting and assigning recommenders to the FERPA authorization, use this set of slides to help guide applicants through the recommendation process.”
 - b. <https://www.commonapp.org/resource/recommendation-process>
3. A Quick Guide to the Counselor Recommendation
 - a. “This guide previews the different sections of the Common Application Recommender system for counselors so you will be ready to get started as soon as you have an account.”
 - b. <https://www.commonapp.org/resource/quick-guide-counselor-recommendation>
4. Naviance eDocs and Common App
 - a. “This guide provides an overview of the two systems used to complete recommendations. It will also review some commonly asked questions to help both you and students.”
 - b. <https://www.commonapp.org/resource/naviance-edocs-common-app>
5. A Writing Guide for Counselors and Students
 - a. “Counselors and teachers are powerful advocates in this effort, each poised to share unique and valuable insights. The context they offer helps clarify, support, and build upon information provided by the student.”
 - b. <https://www.commonapp.org/resource/writing-guide-counselors-and-teachers>

UC Application: <http://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/counselors/downloadable-guides/index.html>

Universal Application: <https://www.universalcollegeapp.com/resources>

Coalition Application: <http://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/supporter.html>

Other Helpful Websites and Books

U.S. Government resources

Educationusacanada.ca
Educationusa.state.gov
[ca.usembassy.gov/education-culture/
studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students](http://ca.usembassy.gov/education-culture/studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students)

Studying for standardized tests

Collegeboard.org
Actstudent.org
Kaptest.com
Princetonreview.com
Khanacademy.org/test-prep/sat

Popular book publishers: Kaplan, Princeton Review, Barron's

Student-athletes

NCAA.org and ncaa.com
The Student-Athlete's Guide to Getting Recruited, Stewart Brown

Narrowing your Search

Collegeboard.org
College Match: Choosing the Best School for You, Steven Antonoff
Colleges that Change Lives, Loren Pope
Creative Colleges, Elaina Loveland
Fiske Guide to Colleges, Edward Fiske
The Hidden Ivies, Howard Greene and Matthew Greene
The Insider's Guide to the Colleges, The Yale Daily News



STEP 4

PREPARE
FOR
DEPARTURE

Your Roadmap to Study and Exchange in the United States

1
RESEARCH
and apply to
program(s)

STUDY

Research and apply to a SEVP-certified schools or programs. Check out **EducationUSA**.

- University/college
- High School
- Private elementary school
- Seminary
- Conservatory
- Other academic institution (language school)

Vocational or other recognized nonacademic institution, other than a language training program

F-1 (Student)

M-1 (Vocational)

EXCHANGE

Find a program and designated sponsor. Your sponsor will assist you throughout the visitor exchange program.

Check out **J1Visa.state.gov**.

- Au pair and EduCare
- Short-term Scholar
- Summer Work Travel
- Student, college/university
- Professor & Research Scholar
- Camp Counselor
- International Visitor (Dept. of State Use only)
- Specialist
- Intern
- Physician
- Teacher
- Trainee
- Student, secondary
- Government Visitor

J-1 (Exchange Visitor)

2
IDENTIFY
your visa
category

3
OBTAIN

Once you are accepted, your school will send you a **Form I-20**, "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Status."

Your sponsoring organization will send you a **Form I-2019**, "Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status."

4
PAY

Pay the **I-901** Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (**SEVIS**) Fee.

5
APPLY
for your visa
and/or entry

CANADIANS

No visa required*
Process visitor status at border

Bring completed I-20 (student) or I-2019 (exchange) and supporting documentation when travelling.

*Entry into the US is at the discretion of US Customs and Border Patrol (CBP).

NON-CANADIANS

Apply for a U.S. visa
at designated U.S. embassy or consulate

Complete Form DS-160 online (canada.usembassy.gov) and pay visa fee.

Schedule an interview at U.S. embassy or consulate. Bring completed I-20 (student) or I-2019 (exchange visitor), valid passport, one 2x2 photo, and other supporting documentation. Interns and trainees also require form DS-7002. Refer to J1Visa.state.gov for specific requirements.*



APPENDIX

U.S. Universities that meet full demonstrated need

Needs-Aware

Universities who consider financial need into their admissions decision

Bard College (**New York**)
 Bates College (**Maine**)
 Bennington College (**Vermont**)
 Bowdoin College (**Maine**)
 Brandeis University (**Massachusetts**)
 Brown University (**Rhode Island**)
 Bryn Mawr College (**Pennsylvania**)
California Institute of Technology
 Carleton College (**Minnesota**)
 Colby College (**Maine**)
 Colgate University (**New York**)
 College of Holy Cross (**Maine**)
 College of the Atlantic (**Maine**)
Colorado College
 Columbia University (**New York**)
Connecticut College
 Cornell University (**New York**)
 Dartmouth College (**New Hampshire**)
 Davidson College (**North Carolina**)
 Deep Springs College (**California**)
 Duke University (**North Carolina**)
 Franklin and Marshall College (**Pennsylvania**)
 Grinnell College (**Iowa**)
 Hamilton College (**New York**)
 Hampshire College (**Massachusetts**)
 Harvey Mudd College (**California**)
 Haverford College (**Pennsylvania**)
 Johns Hopkins University (**Maryland**)
 Kenyon College (**Ohio**)
 Lafayette College (**Pennsylvania**)
 Lehigh University (**Pennsylvania**)
 Macalester College (**Minnesota**)
 Middlebury College (**Vermont**)
 Mount Holyoke College (**Massachusetts**)
 Northwestern University (**Illinois**)

Needs-Aware (cont.)

Universities who consider financial need into their admissions decision

Oberlin College (**Ohio**)
 Occidental College (**California**)
 Pitzer College (**California**)
 Pomona College (**California**)
 Reed College (**Oregon**)
 Skidmore College (**New York**)
 Smith College (**Massachusetts**)
 Soka University of America (**California**)
 St. Lawrence University (**New York**)
 Stanford University (**California**)
 Swarthmore College (**Pennsylvania**)
 Trinity College (**Connecticut**)
 Tufts College (**Massachusetts**)
 University of Chicago (**Illinois**)
 University of Notre Dame (**Indiana**)
 University of Richmond (**Virginia**)
 University of Rochester (**New York**)
 Vanderbilt University (**Tennessee**)
 Vassar College (**New York**)
 Washington University in St. Louis (**Missouri**)
 Wellesley College (**Massachusetts**)
 Wesleyan University (**Connecticut**)
 Williams College (**Massachusetts**)

Needs-Blind

Universities who don't consider financial need into their admissions decision

Amherst College (**Massachusetts**)
 Harvard University (**Massachusetts**)
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
 Minerva Schools at KGI (**California**)
 Princeton University (**New Jersey**)
 University of **Pennsylvania** - North Americans only
 Yale University (**Connecticut**)

Other side: Scholarships and Reduced Tuition for Canadians

Scholarships and Reduced Tuition for Canadians

In-State Tuition (Canadians)

Tuition at public institutions that is offered to residents of that state

Dakota College at Bottineau (**North Dakota**)
Ferris State University (**Michigan**)
Lake Region State College (**North Dakota**)^{^▽}
Maine Community College (7 campuses)[◦]
Mayville State University (**North Dakota**)^{^▽}
University of **Alaska** Fairbanks[◆]
Wayne State University (**Michigan**)[△]

Statewide Spotlight:

Manitoba-**Minnesota** Reciprocity[^]
gov.mb.ca
Residents of Manitoba are eligible for in-state tuition at any of Minnesota's 41 public universities or colleges.

In-State Tuition (all)

Public institutions that provide fee waivers for in-state tuition

Boise State University (**Idaho**): *scholarship*
McNeese State University (**Louisiana**): *scholarship*
Saginaw Valley State University (**Michigan**): *scholarship*
University of **Minnesota** Crookston: *all students*
Minot State University (**North Dakota**): *all students*
North Dakota State College of Sciences: *all students*
University of **Wisconsin**, Superior: *scholarship*

Statewide Spotlight:

Texas Good Neighbor Scholarship
www.collegeforalltexans.com
Canadian citizens are eligible for one year of in-state tuition at any of Texas' 106 public universities or colleges.

Scholarships

Competitive funding based on merit and/or need for Canadian citizens

Canisius College (**New York**): *up to \$14,000 annually*
College of St. Joseph (**Vermont**): *\$1,500*
Davenport University (**Michigan**): *up to \$6,000 annually*
Houghton College (**New York**): *up to full tuition*
MCPHS University (**Massachusetts**): *\$45,000 (PharmD only)*
Oakland University (**Michigan**): *in-state*
St. Lawrence University (**New York**): *\$32,000 annually+*
University of **Kentucky**: *\$9,000 annually*
University of **Michigan**-Dearborn: *in-state*

Statewide Spotlight:

Florida Canada Linkage Institute
fcli.intl.ucf.edu
Canadian citizens who have been accepted to one of Florida's 40 public universities or colleges may apply for a scholarship which reduces tuition to the in-state rate.

Reduced Tuition

Reduced tuition rates based solely on Canadian citizenship/residency

Bismarck State College (**North Dakota**)^{^▽}
D'Youville College (**New York**)
Dickinson State University (**North Dakota**)^{^▽}
Liberty University (**Virginia**)
Maine Community College
Miles Community College (**Montana**)[▽]
North Dakota State University^{^▽}
University of **Maine**, Augusta
University of **Maine**, Orono
University of **Maine**, School of Law
University of Southern **Maine**
University of **North Dakota**^{^▽}
Valley City State College (**North Dakota**)^{^▽}

Statewide Spotlight:

The **North Carolina** Promise
northcarolina.edu/wepromise
Three public institutions have promised to charge only \$5,000 annually to all out-of-state applicants.

Funding available through an EducationUSA Advisor nomination

Colorado State University, Fort Collins: *1/3 off tuition*
Concord University (**West Virginia**): *\$6,000 annually*
Syracuse University (**New York**): *1/2 off tuition*
University of Findlay (**Ohio**): *full tuition*
University of **Wisconsin**-Whitewater: *\$300*

Important:

Your EducationUSA advisor must write you a recommendation for these funding opportunities. (Contact info on front side)

Key

- [^] Manitoba residents only.
- [◦] New Brunswick residents only.
- [◆] Cities of Inuvik, Northwest Territory and Whitehorse, Yukon Territory residents only.
- [△] Ontario residents only.
- [▽] Saskatchewan residents only.
- ⁺ Select schools in Ontario and Quebec.



Name:

Grad Year:

School Names

| School Names | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Applications | | | | | | | | |
| Application Deadline | | | | | | | | |
| Early Action | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Early Decision | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Application Form Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Essay Completed | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Application Submitted | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Financial Aid Deadline | | | | | | | | |
| Financial Aid Submitted | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Standardized Tests

| Test Results | | | | | |
|------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Test Date | | | | | |
| Score | | | | | |
| Maximum Score Possible | | | | | |

Position

Subject

Organization

Names of Recommenders

| Names of Recommenders | Position | Subject | Organization |
|------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

| | | | Timeline |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Early | Regular | Counsellor | |
| | July 1 | | Schedule TOEFL or IELTS (if applicable) |
| | August 1 | | Applications open |
| | August 2 | | Register for September SAT (if applicable) |
| | August 15 | | Brainstorm essay topics, begin outlines and first drafts |
| | August 30 | | Complete profile, family, and education information in the Common App |
| | September 1 | | Register for October SAT or SAT Subject tests (if applicable) Complete TOEFL or IELTS (if applicable) |
| | September 5 | | Make Guidance Counsellor appointment, prepare school list, consider fall standardized test dates |
| | September 15 | | Guidance Counsellor appointment to finalize list of schools, review admissions timeline for fall |
| | September 16 | | Register for October ACT (if applicable) |
| September 20 | November 1 | | Ask recommenders to write letters |
| | October 1 | | Register for November SAT Subject Tests (if applicable) |
| October 1 | November 1 | | First drafts of essays completed, ready for review |
| October 15 | November 15 | | Counsellor appointment to review application progress |
| | October 15 | | Register for December ACT, SAT, or SAT Subject Tests (if applicable) |
| October 28 | December 1 | | Final Counsellor appointment to submit application |
| November 1 | January 1 | | Deadline for application submission |
| November 7 | February 1 | | Deadline for financial aid submission (CSS profile) |
| | February 15 | | Counsellor submits students' mid-year report |
| February 15 | April 1 | | Receive admissions decisions |
| | May 1 | | Candidates deadline to accept admissions |
| | July 1 | | Counsellor submits students' mid-year report |



**Education
USA**

Let's Get Started...

Applying for Undergraduate Study

GRADES 9 TO 11

- Obtain a valid [passport](#)
- Determine your top priorities
 - Use the [EducationUSA website](#) to begin your search
 - Schedule a free advising session with an EducationUSA advisor
 - Create a budget using a college cost [calculator](#)
 - Use EducationUSA Canada resources and follow on social media
 - Find EducationUSA [events](#) online and in your area
 - Follow EducationUSA on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), & [Instagram](#)
 - Subscribe to our [e-newsletter](#)
 - Read the [Study South of the Border](#) blog
 - Research and narrow your choices
 - Use college search engines (see purple box)
 - Attend an [education fair](#) near you
 - Explore college websites and take virtual campus tours
 - Schedule on-campus tours (if possible)
- Work with your Guidance Counselor to ensure prerequisite requirements are met
 - Take challenging, but achievable, coursework (AP, Honors, or IB classes when offered)
- Prepare for and complete standardized testing
 - Take a PSAT for practice (optional- Grade 10 or 11)
 - Determine which tests you need to take for admissions
 - [SAT](#) or [ACT](#) (most schools); [SAT Subject Tests](#) (highly competitive admissions)
 - Non-native English speakers: [TOEFL](#) or [IELTS](#)
 - Register for an upcoming test date
 - Create a study plan
 - Sign-up for free online resources (like [Khan Academy](#))
 - Consider enrolling in a class or hiring a tutor
- Commit to extracurriculars you care about
 - Take on leadership roles in clubs or sports
 - Develop work or volunteer experience
 - Feed your intellectual curiosity
- Apply for external scholarships (see box page 2)

JENIKA HEIM
EducationUSA Advisor
educationusacanada.ca

Search Tools
collegeboard.org
admitster.com
petersons.com
aacc.nche.edu
cappex.com
princetonreview.com
hotcoursesabroad.com

Test Websites
SAT: collegeboard.org
ACT: actstudent.org
TOEFL: etscanada.ca
IELTS: ieltscanada.ca



Education
USA

Let's Get Started...

Applying for Undergraduate Study

ADMISSIONS TIMELINE - GRADE 12

September-October

- Finalize your list of universities
- Open and work on applications
- Work closely with guidance counsellor and EducationUSA advisor
- Ask recommenders to write letters
- Write and rewrite your essays
- Take or retake standardized tests (if not completed in Grade 11)

November-December

- Early Action and Early Decision applications due (approx. Nov 1, optional)
- Early Action and Early Decision admissions received
- Some Regular admissions due

January-February

- Most Regular admissions due (approx. Jan 1)
- [CSS profile](#) for needs-based financial aid due

March-April

- Admissions decisions received (approx. Apr 1)

May 1

- Select your university; deposit required to secure your attendance

Application Requirements

(varies by institution)

Application
Application fee
Official transcripts
Standardized test scores
Personal essays
Letter(s) of recommendation
Proof of financial support

Scholarship Resources

fundingsstudy.org
yconic.com
scholarshipscanada.com
college-scholarships.com
iefa.org
internationalscholarships.com

PREPARE FOR YOUR DEPARTURE

- Review your financial aid
 - University-provided aid (usually with admissions decision)
 - Provincial Loans and Scholarships
 - External scholarships (see box)
- [Watch](#) or attend an EducationUSA Pre-Departure orientation
- [Canadian citizens](#) do not need to apply for a student visa
 - Receive I-20 from your university and pay [SEVIS fee](#) online
 - Non-Canadian citizens, [apply for an F1 visa](#)
- [Work options](#)
 - International students can work up to 20 hours per week on campus
 - [Optional Practical Training](#) time available for 12 months or 36 months ([STEM fields](#))

Crossing the Border

Passport
I-20 or DS-2019
Proof of SEVIS payment
Driver's License
University contact info
Your new address



Let's Get Started...
Becoming a U.S. Collegiate Athlete

ATHLETIC ASSOCIATIONS WITH SCHOLARSHIPS

NCAA: National Collegiate Athletic Association (ncaa.org)

Division I and Division II (No sports scholarships in Division III)

Eligibility Center at eligibilitycenter.org

NAIA: National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics

Eligibility Center at PlayNAIA.org

NJCAA: National Junior College Athletic Association

Eligibility Center at eligibilitycorner.njcaa.org

JENIKA HEIM
EducationUSA Advisor
educationusacanada.ca

NCAA Eligibility

Review ncaa.org for specific rules on the following:

Amateurism

Academic minimums:

Minimum 2.3 GPA for Division I; 2.2 GPA for Division II in 16 Core Courses

Official SAT or ACT scores

GRADES 9 & 10

- Create a resume that includes [academic](#) and [athletic](#) information
 - Academic: Grade average (since Grade 9), test scores, major of interest
 - Athletic: Number, position, statistics, tournament wins and accolades
- Create a 5-8 minute highlight video demonstrating your technical skills and team performance
 - Intro with your demographics and statistics
- Build an online presence by creating an online player profile
 - Use a player profile site, YouTube, Twitter, or build your own website
 - Scan newspaper mentions, list championship titles, and upload your highlight video
- Meet with your guidance counselor and plan to meet all athletic association eligibility requirements
- Create a spreadsheet to monitor contact with coaches and to track schools you are interested in
- Reach out to universities
 - Send your resume or transcript to coach/school
- College coaches may contact you to...
 - Send materials about camps and general educational info
 - Complete an athletic questionnaire
- Register for the NCAA Eligibility Center

Player Profile Sites
berecruited.com
smarthlete.com
gobigrecruiting.com
ncsasports.org
athleterecruitingervices.com
recruitmenow.org



Let's Get Started...

Becoming a U.S. Collegiate Athlete

GRADE 11

- Consider taking the PSAT (Oct). This is just for practice, but you can also send the score to coaches.
- Ensure you are on track to meet athletic association eligibility requirements
- Ensure you are on track to meet admissions criteria of potential schools
 - Take challenging courses that you can balance with your sport
- Continue researching and contacting universities
 - Very competitive athletes will have heard from Division I coaches by now
- Starting Sept 1 (most sports) coaches may contact students directly
- Register, study for, and take the [SAT](#) and/or [ACT](#)
 - Submit test results to schools of interest and to eligibility center
 - Coaches will let you know the minimum needed to be eligible for their universities
 - You may not schedule an official visit until you have taken an official SAT or ACT
- Research additional funding for your education
 - Many athletic scholarships are not full scholarships
- Update your online player profile often to include statistics, highlights, photos, and videos
- Schedule and attend unofficial visits
- Potentially make a verbal commitment, if you get a top offer

Know the Rules
The rules and deadlines can be different for each specific sport, and coaches have rules too!

GRADE 12

- Schedule and attend official visits
- Complete and monitor your online player profile
- College coaches have few contact restrictions
 - Most coaches have made verbal commitments to scholarship receiving athletes
- Be ethical and honest in all communications with coaches
- Apply to your top choice universities - contact EducationUSA with application questions
- After receiving acceptance letters, determine which university or college best fits your needs
 - Consider your academic, athletic, and financial needs
 - Would you attend this school even if you weren't playing sports?

SCHOOL DECIDED

- Sign a [National Letter of Intent](#) (NLI)
- Submit your final transcript to the eligibility center and your new university
- Contact your coach for a summer workout plan and get ready to move to the United States