

College Prep Information

This section of our website provides helpful information and relevant links to help students prepare for the college admissions process. Many factors will be involved in preparing for the admission process, such as: preparation for college entrance tests; exploring requirements of selected colleges and universities; and, identifying financial aid resources and scholarships. Also, information is included about multiple health care career opportunities in technical and professional fields of the various occupations and professions.

Note: Although the links found in the sections below are useful for placement into the College/University of your choice. This section is for informational purposes and does not imply the endorsement of any individual at this website.

ACT - The ACT is one of two major college entrance examinations. Contact the colleges you are considering to attend to determine if this test is appropriate for you. Also visit with your school counselor for additional information. Below you will find several links you may use to do the following:

<http://www.actstudent.org/index.html>

SAT - The SAT is the oldest of the two college entrance tests. The areas tested and the format of the test are different from those of the ACT. Please check with the colleges you are considering to attend to determine which test is appropriate for you. Consult with your school counselor for more information. To aid you with the SAT, the following links are provided:

<http://sat.collegeboard.org/home>

THEA - In some cases students will need to take the Texas Higher Education Assessment (THEA) as part of the college admissions process for Texas colleges and universities. Students meeting certain guidelines are exempt from having to take the THEA. See your school counselor for more information about the THEA. Below you will find links that lead to details about the THEA:

<http://www.thea.nesinc.com/>

Colleges & Universities

One of the best ways to learn about a specific college or university is to visit the campus. Attending college and university presentations is another method of gathering information about a perspective college or university. There is an abundance of information online that may be found on specific college and university websites, and even virtual tours in some cases. Below are links to useful websites that provide information about colleges and universities:

College and University search engine:

<http://actstudent.org/collegesearch/index.php#>

College Board College and University search engine:

<http://collegesearch.collegeboard.com/search/index.jsp>

Peterson's College Search:

<http://www.petersons.com/college-search.aspx>

Financial Aid

Please consult with your school counselor about available financial aid opportunities at the colleges and universities you are interested in attending. Information related to financial aid may also be found "online" on specific websites for colleges and universities of interest.

Become knowledgeable about the FASFA, the Free Application for Student Federal Aid. Even if you do not meet the financial aid guidelines for this type of assistance, many colleges, universities, and other agencies utilize the FASFA information to award other types of financial, such as scholarships. Completing the FASFA application process may well be worth your time. Students and families may begin to apply in January of the student's senior year.

Learn about the different types of financial aid, especially the differences between money that you do not have to repay, and money you will have to repay at some point in time. Be aware of all the details when it comes to loans, for there will be time lines for repayment, plus the added cost of interest on the loan. College students and their families have had to utilize loans to finance a college education and being aware of the loan requirements is important in choosing the loan options that best fit the needs of your specific situation.

Links to informational websites related to financial aid:

To view the FAFSA information:

<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/#>

To view the financial aid planning information:

<http://www.actstudent.org/finaid/index.html>

To view the College Board financial aid planning information:

<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/pay/index.html?affiliateId=rdr&bannerId=pay>

Scholarships

Scholarships are a type of financial aid that is based upon academic merit or financial need, and most likely both. The academic record and college entrance test performance will both be major factors. For many scholarship applications letters of recommendation, academic records (transcripts), college entrance test scores, essays, and at times the record of school and community service is required. When you ask references to write letters of recommendation,

allow a few weeks for responses to be received. Below are links that will provide more information about scholarships, in addition, to seeking the assistance of the school counselor.

ACT scholarship information:

<http://www.actstudent.org/finaid/grantsandscholarships.html>

College Board scholarship information:

<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/pay/index.html?affiliateId=rdr&bannerId=pay>

FastWeb scholarship search engine:

<http://www.fastweb.com/>

Occupations and Professions

We have listed links below to assist in the awareness and exploration of occupations and professions in healthcare. The websites will provide important information about careers to assist in making personal choices.

Occupational Outlook Handbook:

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/>

Health Opportunities in Texas: H.O.T. Jobs:

<http://www.texashotjobs.org/>

Health Care Career Resource Center:

<http://library.thinkquest.org/15569/>

Coastal Work Force Solutions:

<http://www.workforcesolutionscb.org/>

College Board Major and Career Profiles:

http://www.collegeboard.com/csearch/majors_careers/profiles/index.html

Medical Academies/ Healthcare Professional Associations

If you have an interest in medical academies and healthcare professional associations, you can explore what is offered at the following: <http://pohly.com/assoc2.html>.

Academic Institution Websites

Visiting academic institution websites often have a listing of departments and contact faculty members who may be able to provide videos promoting specific health care career occupations and professions.

An excellent locator for American Universities can be found at:

<http://www.clas.ufl.edu/au/>.

For a search engine for Community Colleges, go to:

<http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Pages/CCFinder.aspx>.

“Career One Stop”

“Career One Stop” is a website that provides short video clips viewable online and covers In-Demand Occupations. Contains a wealth of information for students, parents, and career advisors. This website is:

<http://www.careeronestop.org/studentsandcareeradvisors/studentsandcareeradvisors.aspx>.

College Bound Planner for High School Students

This planner can be used by both high school seniors and students interested in college planning to gain a better understanding of when and what needs to be investigated/completed to assure successful admission to a college or university.

Fall Semester = *September*:

- Check your transcripts to make sure you have all the credits you need to get into your college(s) of choice. Find out from the colleges to which you are applying whether or not they need official copies of your transcripts (transcripts sent directly from your high school) sent at the time of application.
- Register for October/November SAT I, SAT II, and ACT tests.
- Take another look at your list of colleges and make sure that they still satisfy your requirements. Add and/or remove colleges as necessary.
- Make sure you meet the requirements (including any transcript requirements) for all the colleges to which you want to apply. Double check the deadlines, and begin your application. Take some time to think about and outline any essays required.
- Give any recommendation forms to the appropriate teachers or counselors with stamped, college-addressed envelopes making certain that your portion of the forms are filled out completely and accurately.
- Most early decision and early action applications are due between October 1 and November 1. Keep this in mind if you intend to take advantage of these options, and remember to request that your high school send your official transcripts to the college to which you are applying.

October:

- Make a final list of schools that interest you and keep a file of deadlines and required admission items for each school.
- Take SAT and/or ACT tests. Have the official scores sent by the testing agency to the colleges/universities that have made your final list of schools. Register for December or January SAT I and/or SAT II tests, if necessary.
- Continue thinking about and beginning writing (if you have not already started) any essays to be included with your applications.

November:

- Submit your college admission applications.

December:

- Early decision replies usually arrive between December 1 and December 31.
- If you haven't already done so, make sure your official test scores are being sent to the colleges to which you are applying.
- Schedule any remaining required interviews.

Spring Semester = *January:*

- Complete and submit your college financial aid application and the Free Application for Student Financial Aid (FAFSA) between January 1 and February 15, and check for other financial aid options. In order to be considered for financial aid, you will need to submit these forms even if you have not yet been notified of your acceptance to the college(s) to which you applied.
- Go to FAFSA on the Web now. You can transfer the data directly to the online FAFSA using the FAFSA Transfer module in TexasMentor.
- Request that your high school send your official transcripts to the colleges to which you are applying.
- Make sure your parents have completed their income tax forms in anticipation of the financial aid applications.
- Contact the admissions office(s) of the college(s) to which you have applied to make sure that your information has been received, and that they have everything they need from you.

February:

- If you completed the FAFSA, you should receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) within four weeks. Make the necessary corrections and return it to the FAFSA processor as soon as possible in order to have your forms processed quickly.
- Complete your scholarship applications.
- Contact the financial aid office of the college(s) to which you have applied to make sure that your information has been received, and that they have everything they need from you.

March/April:

- If this timeline is followed, you will probably hear from the colleges as to whether or not you are accepted by April 15.
- Compare your acceptance letters, financial aid, and scholarship offers.

- When you choose to accept a college's invitation to attend the institution, you will be required to pay a nonrefundable deposit for freshman tuition (this should ensure your place in the entering freshman class).

May:

- Take exams for any AP and other honors-level subjects you studied in high school.
- You should make a decision by May 1st as to which college you will be attending and notify the school by mailing your commitment deposit check. Many schools require that your notification letter be postmarked by this date.
- If you were placed on a waiting list for a particular college, and have decided to wait for an opening, contact that college and let them know you are still interested.

June:

- Have your school send your final transcripts to the college that you will be attending.
- Contact your college to determine when fees for tuition, room and board are due and how much they will be.

Senior Year Summer:

- Participate in any summer orientation programs for incoming freshmen.

The College Board

College Board is the organization responsible for producing such widely known assessments as the SAT, PSAT, and AP. They have also compiled one of the most extensive Web sites dealing with college and career preparation on the internet. Check out this website at: <http://www.collegeboard.com/splash/>

Educational and Career Planning

This is a section of the ACT - sponsored Web site. It provides connections between occupations and programs of study in colleges and universities. It also includes testimonials from students who have attended various colleges. This is a helpful place to go if you want to learn from the experiences of older students: www.act.org/edcareer/index.html

JobHunter's Bible.Com

This site is produced by the writers of the popular career planning book "What Color is Your Parachute?" It is rich in career assessments and planning and exploration tools. <http://www.jobhuntersbible.com/>

CareerShip

This Web site is primarily a source for information to career exploration. It includes excellent information and tools to help students make important career decisions and plan ways to reach career goals: <http://mappingyourfuture.org/planyourcareer/careership/>

My Future.com

A military sponsored site, Myfuture.com provides numerous helps for financial, educational, and career planning. It also includes good information on careers in the military: www.myfuture.com

O Net

This site is a collection of assessments, data, guides, and just plain good information related to career planning. It is a government Web site which caters more to adults than to students, but it can still be very helpful to students who are serious about getting accurate and up-to-date career information: <http://online.onetcenter.org>

The Career Key

Sponsored by the College of Education at North Carolina State University, this site provides a free career assessment, which will aid you in choosing a career pathway: www.careerkey.org

Virtual Job Shadowing

Want to spend part of your day experiencing a job first-hand? While you are in school, that can be a challenge, but not with this site. Here you can see and hear what is happening at the job-site of many favorite occupations on the net. It requires the assistance of a counselor, teacher, or other adult mentor to set up the job shadow experience, but it could really help you decide whether a specific occupation is for you or not: <http://www.jobshadow.com/>

Preparing for College

Collegenet.com

This site boasts a database of over 600,000 awards worth over \$1.6 billion. They also claim that you can use the site without the risk of receiving tons of junk-mail later on. Check it out. www.collegenet.com/mach25

Fastweb

This is perhaps the largest and most well known of all scholarship-search sites on the web. In addition to a listing of over 600,000 scholarships, Fastweb also provides articles and guides that may be helpful in the process of finding money for college. www.fastweb.com

Finaid.org

This is an excellent source for guides, calculators, and general information on financing a college education. This site actually uses Fastweb as a link for the scholarship search process. www.finaid.org

Kiplinger.com

This is an excellent site for mapping out a strategy to pay for college. It poses many of the important questions and provides solid answers. <http://www.kiplinger.com/money/college/>

Myroad.com

In order to enjoy all of the features of this College Board Web site, you have to pay to obtain a password. However, there are several free services that are very helpful in preparing for/selecting a college. www.myroad.com

"Preparing Your Kids for College" An online recourse book for parents

This document, produced by the US Department of Education, is an excellent source for parents, especially for those who are preparing their first child for college. www.ed.gov/pubs/Prepare

Colleges, College Scholarships, and Financial Aid

This is primarily a directory of sites that may be helpful to you if you do not find what you are looking for in this list from Jordan School District. www.college-scholarships.com

Sallie Mae

Sallie Mae is the nation's leading provider for student financial aid. Their Web site contains lots of valuable information to guide students and parents through the financial aid process. <http://www.salliemae.com>

The College Board Scholarship Search

The College Board provides SAT, PSAT, & AP tests and developed this site. The database of scholarships is a very reliable source and one worth checking out. <http://cbweb10p.collegeboard.org/fundfinder/html/fundfind01.html>

U.S. News and World Report - Education

This is a news magazine Web site and provides one of the most extensive sources of college information available on the internet (includes annual rankings of best colleges and universities). This page of their site will connect you to numerous sources of scholarships. <http://www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/dollars/dshome.htm>

State and Federal Government Resources

FAFSA

This is a direct connection to the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).
www.fafsa.ed.gov

Federal Student Aid Home Page

Here you will find complete information on federal programs such as grants and loans as well as online access to the FAFSA or Free Application for Federal Student Aid.
www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/fsa/index.html

Utah Educational Savings Plan Trust (UESP)

At this important site, parents who are looking to save now for their children's college down the road, will find all the information they need to take advantage of tax breaks and low-fee incentive savings plans. www.uesp.org

Study Skills Resources

Cook Counseling Center, Virginia Tech

This site provides a nice study skills inventory which students can take to identify their strengths and weaknesses. There are other helpful guides available at:
www.ucc.vt.edu/stdyhelp.html

How-To-Study.com

This site helps develop effective study skills:
<http://www.how-to-study.com/Preparing%20to%20Study.htm>

Test Preparation Resources

College Board

The college Board is the single best source of information on almost all aspects of college preparation. A free, interactive PSAT practice test is available at this site.
www.collegeboard.com/psat/student/html/indx001.html

Kaplan

Kaplan is a national leader in the test preparation arena. At this site, you can sign up for services that range in cost from free to over \$600. www.kaplan.com

Number 2.com

This Web site provides free test-prep programs. If you are seeking the best free program available via the internet, this is the one. www.number2.com

Princeton Review

Another national leader in test preparation programs, Princeton Review offers a variety of services with a wide array of costs. The site also includes college search capabilities.

www.princetonreview.com

The ACT

The ACT is the college admissions exam most commonly used by colleges and universities in the west. This site provides a large number of helps for students who are planning on taking the assessment. (It is also a very helpful site for parents.) www.act.org

COACH – Educate, Inspire, Empower

This site offers various test preparation services including what they call the "Coach Series", a computer software program with prices in the \$160 range. You can pick your state and work from there on coaching software programs to assist your student. www.testprep.com

The Educational Testing Service Network (ETS)

ETSN oversees the actual testing of several national tests such as Advanced Placement. You can learn more about the tests as well as access practice tests and other test preparation tools at: www.ets.org

Texas Higher Education Assessment

Its purpose is to assess the reading, mathematics, and writing skills that entering freshman-level students should have if they are to perform effectively in undergraduate certificate or degree programs in Texas public colleges or universities.

<http://www.thea.nesinc.com/>

COLLEGE INFORMATION RESOURCES

Adventures in Education (AIE)

Helps students plan and complete their journey through higher education by providing a Web site and other free resources to students, parents, counselors, educators, and encourages individuals to discover and pursue educational opportunities.

<http://www.adventuresineducation.org/>

College Answer

Using this site can assist with planning for your college destination (preparing, selecting, applying, paying, deciding, and financing college).

<http://www.collegeanswer.com>

Campus Tours

From here, you can tour college campuses that you might be interested in for your education.

<http://www.campustours.com/>

College for Texans

Everything a Texas needs to know about preparing for, applying for and paying for college or technical school.

<http://www.collegefortexans.com/>

Kuder

This site is a career planning system can help answer the questions throughout your life.

<http://www.kuder.com/>

The Princeton Review

You can explore schools and career; improve your scores and skills; find scholarships and aid.

<http://www.princetonreview.com/home.asp>

CAREER RESOURCES

America 's Career InfoNet

This site is a resource for making informed career decisions to support a demand-driven workforce investment system.

<http://www.acinet.org/acinet/>

Occupational Outlook Handbook

For hundreds of different types of jobs this site tells you: the training and education needed; earnings expected job prospects; what workers do on the job; working conditions; job search tips ; links to information about the job market in each State , and more .

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/oco2004.htm>

MILITARY RESOURCES

Air Force : <http://www.airforce.com>

Army: <http://www.goarmy.com>

Coast Guard: http://www.uscg.mil.com/dod/coast_guard.html

Marines : <http://www.marines.mil>

Navy: <http://www.navy.com>

High School vs. College

How Is College Different From High School?

HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE / UNIVERSITY
Mandatory & Free	Voluntary & Expensive
Time structured by others.	You manage your time.
Permission required for extracurricular activities.	You decide extracurricular activities.
Parents & teachers set responsibilities & priorities.	You set your responsibilities & priorities.
Daily classes are one after another, 30 hrs. per week.	Random day & evening, 12 to 16 hrs. per week.
Not required to know what it takes to graduate.	Required to know complex graduation requirements.
School year is 36 weeks long.	Academic year is 32 weeks long.
Classes are no more than 35 students.	Classes may number 100 or more.
Home study is no more than 0 – 2 hrs. per week.	2 - 3 hrs. per hour of class time is required per week.
Seldom need to read, just listen in class.	Need to review class notes & text material regularly.
Read assignments to be cover or re-taught in class.	Assigned substantial readings ... may not be covered.
Teachers: check homework.	Professors: may not check homework.
remind students of incomplete assignments.	may not remind of incompletes.
approach students if they seem to need help.	expect student to come if help is needed.
available before, during, & after class.	have office hours for conference.
have been trained in teaching methods.	are experts in area of research.
provide students with missed information.	expect missed information to come from classmates.
Frequent testing & covers small amounts of material.	Infrequent testing & large amounts of material.
Makeup tests are often available.	Makeup test are rare; if done, must be requested.
Test dates can be changed.	Tests usually scheduled & set; can't be changed.
Review sessions are done before testing.	Rarely is a review sessions offered.
Grades are given for assigned work.	Grades may not be provided for all work.
High grades on homework can raise overall grade.	Grades come from tests & major papers.
Extra credit projects are often available.	Extra credit is not available to raise grade.
Test grades may not effect the final grade.	All tests count and can affect your final grade.
Can graduate if you pass required with D or above.	Can only pass if you meet the 2.0 standard.

How to make the transition to college:

- Take control of your own education: think of yourself as a scholar.
- Get to know your professor; they are your single greatest resource.
- Be assertive.
- Create a own support systems, and seek help when you realize you may need it.

- Take advantage of study sessions, workshops, tutorials, etc.
- Take control of your time. Plan ahead to satisfy academic obligations and make room for everything else.
- Stretch yourself: enroll in at least one course that really challenges you.
- Make thoughtful decisions: don't take a course just to satisfy a requirement, and don't drop any course too quickly.
- Think beyond the moment: set goals for the semester, the year, your college career.

Health Career/College Planning Websites

Career Testing

<http://www.students.net/student-tests/career-test/>

College Preparation Resource

<http://www.washington.edu/doit/Student/college.html>

Free Test Prep Review

<http://www.testprepreview.com/>

Life Works

<http://www.science.education.nih.gov/LifeWorks>

Mapping Your Future

<http://www.mappingyourfuture.org/>