



QUESTIONS TO ANSWER BEFORE YOU APPLY:

- Does the college offer what I want to study?
- How much will it cost and can I afford it?
- What is the educational quality & experience offered by the school?
- What type of environment does the college offer?

TIPS ON APPLICATIONS:

- Use full legal name on applications
- Use a professional email address.
- Narrow choices of schools
- Review admissions requirements
- Know application fees and deadlines (Application fee waivers for those who qualify. Check with the college.)
- Proofread before submitting

College Readiness

SENIORS

STACY O'HAYER, COUNSELOR

Process in Finding the Right College

Four main steps in choosing the right college for you: search, explore, compare, and apply.

SEARCH

- Write down schools you know of or schools friends and family have gone to
- Schools you've found online when you search "top schools for (major)"
- Please note: I don't recommend relying on "best" lists alone, because selecting a school is about finding the best options for you. Depending on the criteria behind those lists, it's a possibility that some great colleges won't be included.
- Examine your preferences, priorities and interests.
- Who are you? What do you like? What are your deal breakers? What kind of student are you? Do you know your GPA and ACT score?
- Take a look at the college comparison worksheet. These are things you should consider as you search. As you go through the criteria, make a

list of what is most important to you.

EXPLORE

- Once you have a good idea of what is important to you, explore the colleges on your list by navigating through the school's website or print materials such as guide books. You should be focused on looking for what matters to you as well as what matter to them. Does the school offer your major? Is the school in the right setting for you? Do you have the right scores? Do they offer alternate entrance programs?
- Part of exploring a college is attending college fairs and speaking to college reps that come to your school.
- Now that your list has been narrowed down to schools that match your interests, you can start looking into

price". Almost every school will have scholarships to offer if you're accepted, not to mention financial aid, which will be discussed later on.

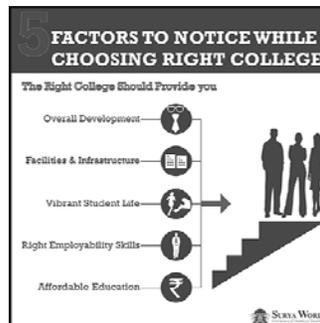
- Visit, visit, visit—I cannot stress this enough! No matter how good a school may sound on paper, it won't be till you visit, that you'll know if it is a right pick for you! Try to do overnight or weekend visits whenever possible. These visits give you a better idea of student life at the school. Remember you are allowed 3 as a senior.

COMPARE

- Use the attached college comparison worksheet to put the information gathered in a more organized structure.

APPLY

- Your next step is communicating to the colleges what you have to offer them.
- At this point, your guidance counselor, admissions counselor, and even teachers can be important in helping you prepare your application, write an effective admissions essay, and identify critical deadlines.



another very important part, cost. Most schools have a net price calculator on their website so use it!
• Don't base anything off of "sticker

Final Notes: Although this process takes a lot of work, and is VERY important, don't be scared. I stress the importance of the right "fit", but there isn't only one school that will be the right fit for you. Remember, nothing is set in stone. If after your first year you realize it isn't the school for you, or there are changes in your circumstances, you can always transfer.

What are Colleges Looking for?

Factors that influence college admission:

- High School Courses
- Class Rank
- Grade Point Average
- ACT/SAT Scores
- Activities (School & Community)
- Volunteer Work
- Essays
- Recommendations
- Social Networking Presence

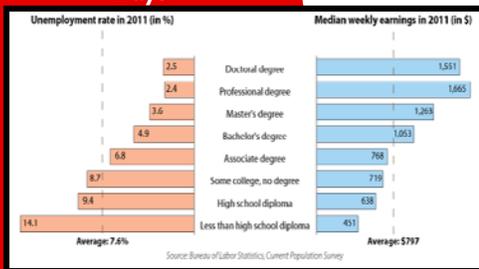
- **Class rank:** Shows where you place numerically in your senior class based on your GPA. The higher your GPA, the higher rank you will have.
- **Letters of recommendation:** Although not all colleges ask for them, some colleges require that you ask certain teachers, your high school counselor, and possibly your principal to complete and submit recommendation letters as a testimony of your achievements and capabilities. They are supposed to be letters of praise, so look for faculty with whom you've had a good history, who know you well and who can vouch for your likelihood of success.
- **Special talents:** This is a skill that makes you stand out. Whether it's your piano playing or your creativity in painting, a special talent that is valued by a college could give you a leg up

- on other candidates, not to mention access to scholarships that list your talent as a qualification. If a college wants a talent you possess, there is no telling what they'll offer.
- **Demonstrated interest:** Whether it's showing up for a college visit, calling admission officers or an enthusiastic interview, showing that you really want to attend a college can help your chances—especially at private colleges.
- **Extracurricular commitment:** What you do in your spare time says a lot about you. Maybe you've pursued a sport, spent years developing a talent, or made a strong commitment to work or volunteering. What counts to colleges, especially highly selective colleges, is how long you have been involved, how much time you allot each week, and whether or not you have taken a role of leadership in your activity.

- **Standardized test scores:** These include the results of the ACT or SAT test. Colleges will let you know which of these tests you will need to submit.
- **Overall high school grades:** Your transcript will list every class that you have taken in high school and the grade you received in that class. Colleges will be looking to see whether you took challenging courses or whether you opted for the easier route. They can also spot Senioritis.



Education Pays



Scholarships

Warning!! you should never pay for pay for scholarship information!

Scholarship sources:

- University scholarship office
- College/departmental offices
- University alumni associations
- Community organizations

- Religious organizations
- Professional organizations
- Local businesses
- Veteran organizations
- College ROTC
- Employers
- A+ (remember this will pay for 2 years at a junior college. Sometimes 4-year colleges offer a

scholarship in place of the A+)

Scholarship Application tips:

- Follow directions
- Meet deadlines
- Keep copies
- Proofread!!!

Check out my website for more scholarship information. <https://sites.google.com/a/knoxr1.us/kchscounselorcorner/>

College Lingo and Other Info!



- **College:** refers to ANY higher education institution where students complete a degree, diploma, or certificate program. The college may be a four year university, two year community college, technical school, or specialty school.
- **University:** generally larger than a college, offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees, typically employs graduate assistants to teach some of the introductory classes, labs and lectures. Some universities have separate colleges focusing on a different academic area (arts and sciences, engineering, nursing, education). Some have state of the art facilities (library, athletic facilities, Science Labs), offer great selection of majors, and are more diverse (opportunity to interact with students who are from other countries)
- **College:** usually smaller than 5,000 students, may not offer graduate education, classes are not usually taught by graduate assistants, provides more interactions with faculty, puts more emphasis on undergraduate teaching (not as much on research), and classroom size is generally smaller.
- **Public vs Private schools:** expenses at private institutions are covered by private sources (tuition, donations) and cost more than a public school. Public (State) colleges/universities are subsidized by tax revenues and offer lower tuition. Many state schools charge higher tuition to out of state students. Private colleges tend to offer more financial aid compared to state colleges.
- **Liberal Arts schools:** smaller than universities, classes tend to be smaller and more personal attention is available, students are exposed to a broad base of courses in the humanities, social sciences and sciences, not in a specific career path and many employers look for graduates of liberal arts programs valuing their well rounded preparation.
- **Religiously affiliated schools:** stu-

dents who prefer to attend school with others who share similar beliefs and colleges associated with a religion vary widely in size and focus (Catholic, Presbyterian, Baptist, etc.). To figure out what role religion plays on campus ask: Is chapel attendance required? Are students required to take religion courses? To find out just how religiously-affiliated a college is, start by reviewing the school's mission statement. This will indicate how much emphasis the school puts on the academic, social and spiritual aspects

- **Military Colleges:** the United States service academies includes; Military Academy (West Point), Air Force Academy, Naval Academy, Merchant Marine Academy, and Coast Guard Academy. The selection process is extremely rigorous and graduates agree to spend a minimum of 5 years as a military officer after graduation. With the exception of the Coastal Guard, all military academies require a nomination from a U.S. Senator or representative of congress.



vestors and stockholders, they attract adult learners and part time students, programs usually offer a non traditional format. Many for-profits also have classes available online only.

**Note: For-profits have been sued for allegedly using aggressive and deceptive sales and marketing practices*

- **Community Colleges:** generally offer the first two years of a liberal education in addition to a specialized occupational preparation, an associate's degree is awarded at the end of a two year program of studies following which many students continue their education at a 4 year institution, you earn an Associate's de-

gree typically after you have earned at least 60 credit hours

- **Bachelor's Degree:** post-secondary degree awarded to an individual after completion of undergraduate course work usually taking eight semesters (4 years) and 120 credits to complete, course work for bachelor's degrees is done at the undergraduate level and is made up of general studies and major specific classes, individuals pursue bachelor's degrees to further their education and career advancement, different types of Bachelor's degrees include: Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, and Bachelor of Fine Arts.
- **Master's Degree:** graduate program, usually earned in one or more years depending on the field of study, they are generally sought to improve a person's expertise in their given field, and graduates usually earn a higher income. Types of Master's degrees include: Master of Arts (MA), Master of Sciences (MS), Master of Fine Arts (MFA).
- **Common Application:** This application may be used to apply to many colleges at one time, visit www.commonapp.org for a list of colleges who allow use of the Common Application.
- **College Athletes:** you will need to register with either NCAA Clearinghouse (Division I or Division II) or NAIA Registration. They will require ACT/SAT, transcripts and a certain GPA. There is a fee required for both registrations (may apply for waiver). Send ACT/SAT test scores directly from the testing agency. (NCAA 9999 or NAIA 9876)
- **ACT:** put the KCHS School Code (260-920) on your registration, choose a test center code, choose the codes of the colleges to which you want your scores sent **WHEN YOU REGISTER!** Athletes—Remember to put the NCAA (9999) and/or the NAIA (9876) as a score recipient if you plan to play in college. There are four sections: English (45 minutes), Math (60 minutes), Reading (35 minutes), and Science (35 minutes). Knox County will test all juniors in April.

Scholarship Websites

www.acinet.org

www.back2college.com

www.blackexcel.org

www.brokescholar.com

www.canadianembassy.org

www.collegeanswer.com

www.collegeboard.org

www.collegenet.com

www.collegepeas.com

www.collegescholarships.com

www.collegeview.com

www.clubscholarship.com

www.discovernursing.com

www.dosomething.org

www.ed.gov

www.edupass.org

www.fastaid.com

www.fastweb.com

www.finaid.org

www.financialaidfinder.com

www.findtuition.com

www.gocollege.com

www.guaranteed-scholarships.com

www.hispanicfund.org

www.hispanicscholarship.com

www.iefaf.org

www.internationalscholarships.com

www.invent.org/collegiate

www.kaarme.com

www.lulac.org

www.meritaid.com

www.nasfaa.org

www.newvisions.org

www.nextstudent.com

www.scholarshipexperts.com

www.scholarshiphelp.com

www.scholarshiphunter.com

www.scholarships.com

www.scholarships4students.com

www.studentawards.com

www.studentscholarshipsearch.com

www.supercollege.com

www.usafunds.org

Continue to look at my website! There is a wealth of information for you and your parents.

Financial Aid

Types: grants, work study, loans

How to Apply: complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) every year. You cannot complete FAFSA until January 1st and you need previous year's federal income tax information (estimated to meet deadlines). <https://fafsa.gov/>

Financial Aid Vocab:

Grants: the federal government provides grant funds for students attending colleges, career schools, and universities. Grants, unlike loans, do not have to be repaid.

Work Study: provides part-time jobs for undergraduate and graduate students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay education expenses.

Loans: money that is borrowed with a promise to pay it back. Federal student loans usually offer borrowers lower interest rates and have more flexible repayment terms and options than private student loans.

FAFSA PIN: www.pin.fafsa.ed.gov

Cost of Attendance (COA): the average cost to attend for one academic year (fall through spring). It includes tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, transportation, and personal expenses.

Estimated Family Contribution

(EFC): Your EFC is not the amount of money your family will have to pay for college, nor is it the amount of federal student aid you will receive. It is a number used by your school to calculate how much financial aid you are eligible to receive.

Student Aid Report (SAR): is a paper or electronic document that gives you basic information about your eligibility for federal student aid and lists your answers to the questions on your FAFSA.

Net Price Calculator: uses the financial information you enter into the calculator, the Net Price Calculator estimates the amount of money your family would be expected to contribute to pay for college, finally, the Net Price

Calculator evaluates your eligibility for financial aid at specific colleges by matching your financial and personal characteristics to the criteria that schools use to distribute financial aid (need-based grants as well as merit-based scholarships).

Check out <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/sites/default/files/federal-grant-programs.pdf> to learn about FAFSA Grants.

Check out <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/sites/default/files/federal-loan-programs.pdf> to learn about FAFSA Loans.

