

Olathe Public Schools

College and Career Planning Guide

Junior Year



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Post-Secondary Options

4 Year College or University

- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Professional/Doctoral Degree

Community College

- Associate's Degree/Certificate Program

Technical School

- Associate's Degree/Certificate Program

Apprenticeship

Military Training

Employment

Xello

(The new Career Cruising)

Xello is a great resource available for students in the Olathe School District. Students can access the website at <https://xello.world> and log in with their username and password. Some of the resources available include:

- **Skill inventories**
- **Career Assessments**
- **Career Overviews**
- **College Exploration**
- **Campus Visit notes**
- **Financial Aid and Cost Analysis**
- **Course Plan**
- **Career and Life Goals**
- **Resume Builder**
- **Community Service Log**

Students will be completing their portfolio of activities as part of their Individual Plan of Study.

Students have access to their Xello information for 5 years upon graduation. If a student logs into the site once during the 5 years, access is extended for 5 more years for a total of 10 years of Xello access.

ClassLink (Xello) Transcripts

Olathe students may access their transcripts in three ways:

1. via the ClassLink icon on the desktop of their district-issued mobile device
2. by downloading the ClassLink Launchpad app from iTunes for Apple devices or Play Store for Android devices
3. by visiting the ClassLink Launchpad website



Students will use their Olathe Public Schools network username and password for any of the three options. Parents do not have access to ClassLink because they do not have a district username and password.

Instructions for Seniors

- On your Xello homepage, select College Applications
- Next, select New Application
- Search for the school you want your transcript sent to, and click Select
- Select Next
- Three steps on this screen
 1. Choose your Admission Type (most of these are Regular Admission)
 2. Choose Application Deadline
 3. Select Create
- Select the three little dots icon in the lower right corner of the screen, and Request a Transcript

Instructions for Juniors

1. Access the Transcript tool from the Goals and Plans link in the top menu or on the dashboard
2. Select a school. The first page will show your Saved Schools or you can use the Search function to find a school.
3. Your selected school(s) will show in the carousel at the bottom of the screen for easy access. Schools are saved here so you can easily return and finish later.
4. Click Next.
5. Review your choices and make any necessary changes to your list.
6. When finished selecting schools, click Send to request that your high school send the transcript to the listed schools.
7. View your sent transcripts by clicking Track My Requests. Later you can check the progress by going to your Dashboard and clicking Transcripts. Click on the line of the transcript you want to view and a progress bar will appear.

COLLEGE PLANNING



Junior Timeline

Fall: Start a list of colleges

Stay on track with your classes and grades.

Meet with your counselor to see what you still need to take. Check on your class rank and your GPA. Even if your grades haven't been that good so far, it's never too late to improve. Colleges like to see an upward trend.

Consider Dual Credit or AP Credit.

Information about College Now (dual credit) through JCCC or AP Credit through Advanced Placement Exams will be available in the Fall. Be sure to check that the institutions you are interested in accept this type of credit. See JCCC's website --> <https://www.jccc.edu/> OR College Board's website for AP students --> <https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/getting-credit-placement/search-policies>

Evaluate your education options.

Now is the time to follow a more specific path. Decide whether you want to pursue full-time employment, further education or training (such as a vocational-technical school, career college, or two-year or four-year college), or a military career. If you're interested in attending a military academy, talk to your school counselor about starting the application process now.

Gather college information and make a college list.

Your list of colleges should include schools that meet your most important criteria (for example, size, location, cost, academic majors, or special programs). Go to college fairs, attend college nights, and speak with college representatives who visit your high school; use **Xello** to research schools, majors and career possibilities

Make sure you're meeting any special requirements.

If you want to play Division I or II sports in college, start the certification process and check with your counselor to make sure you're taking a core curriculum that meets NCAA requirements.

Winter: Stay involved and prepare for standardized tests

Stay involved with extracurricular activities.

Colleges look for consistency and depth in the non-academic activities you pursue. Taking on leadership roles and making a commitment to the same groups are more important than trying out tons of new activities each year.

Organize your college information and narrow down your college choices.

Set up a system (individual folders or electronic) to organize each college's correspondence and materials. Make sure you have all the information you need about the colleges you're interested in (entrance requirements, tuition, room and board costs, course offerings, student activities, financial aid, etc.). Then begin comparing the schools by the factors that are most important to you and rank your choices.

Prepare for standardized tests.

Find out if the colleges you are interested in require the SAT, ACT, or SAT Subject Tests. Register to take the tests you need; most juniors take them in the spring. You can take them again in the fall of your senior year if you're unhappy with your scores.

Junior Timeline

Spring: Scholarships and Campus Visits

Prepare a challenging schedule for senior year.

Make sure you're on track for graduation. When you pick your classes, don't load up on easy electives. Colleges do consider your senior year courses and grades, so stick with a schedule that challenges you.

Start a scholarship search.

There are lots of scholarships out there; you just need to spend a little bit of time and effort to find them. Use the Olathe School District scholarship page at --> <http://schools.olatheschools.com/buildings/scholarships/> to help you find local and national scholarships and search tools.

Apply for a summer job or internship.

Summer employment and internships in fields you're interested in will look appealing on a college application or resume. The money you earn can also be used to help pay application and testing fees in the fall.

Visit Colleges

Visit the campuses of your top five college choices. Many colleges have Junior Days. You'll often have to plan ahead when visiting colleges. Call the admissions office to set up a personal interview, tour, and a meeting with a professor or coach and the financial aid office. You may also be able to talk to students if some classes are in session. If you have an interview, be sure to send a thank-you letter to the interviewer once you return home.

Summer: Application Essays and Recommendation Letters

Start working on your application essays.

Compose rough drafts of the essays you'll need for your college applications. Have a teacher read and discuss them with you so you can see what to work on. Make any revisions to your application essays and prepare final drafts. Don't forget to proofread your final essays a few times. You will be glad to have some of these completed before senior year begins.

Recommendation letters.

Be thinking about teachers, counselors, youth mentors, coaches, etc who would write a strong letter of recommendation for you. It is always best to ask in person. If the potential recommender says yes, send them your resume and communicate clearly how they are to submit the letter (i.e. common app, hard copy, sendedu, other website, etc). The best way to thank a recommender is a handwritten thank you note. Please give each recommender 2-4 weeks notice.

Make early decision preparations.

If you plan to apply as an early decision applicant to any school, take the time to visit the school again and make sure you're willing to commit. If you elect to apply early decision, you should start working on your application as soon as possible because its deadline will be earlier than others.

Four Year University Admission Options

<h3>Regular Decision</h3>	Students apply by a specific date, usually the beginning of December to mid-January and receive notification in a clearly defined period of time.
<h3>Rolling Admission</h3>	<p>Students are considered in the order in which their application is received.</p> <p>Schools provide admission decisions throughout the admission cycle, until they have reached full capacity.</p>
<h3>Early Action (EA)</h3>	Early action is similar to early decision; however, the key difference is that decisions are not binding. Students apply early and receive a decision much sooner than the school's regular response date.
<h3>Early Decision (ED)</h3>	<p>Early decision should be utilized when the student has a top school they'd like to attend <i>no matter what</i> . Students must be sure that this is the school they'd like to attend because if accepted, students enter into a binding contract.</p> <p>If students apply to a school via early decision and apply to others in the meantime, applications to the other schools must be withdrawn if admitted to the early decision school.</p>

College Representative Visits at High School



Juniors are encouraged to attend information sessions with college admission representatives that visit schools each fall and spring.



A list of college visits can be found under each high school's Counseling/Student Services website.



Students sign up in Student Services and will receive a pass to attend on the day of the visit.



Before the visit, students are encouraged to research the colleges they would like to meet with. The information gained from the representatives should supplement what has already been learned from other sources, including the college's website.



UPCOMING COLLEGE FAIRS

www.gotocollegefairs.com/kansas

**KC College Exp
Shawnee Mission College Fair
NACAC College Fair
Hispanic College Fair
Christian College Fair**

QUESTIONS TO ASK AT A COLLEGE FAIR

REMEMBERTO SHAKE HANDS AND INTRODUCE YOURSELF

STUDENTS

- How would you characterize the majority of students? (age,gender, race/ethnicity, etc.)
- What percentage of first-year students return the following year?
- What percentage of graduates are employed within one year?

ADMISSIONS

- What are your admissions deadlines?
- Can credits be earned online or transferred from other colleges?
- Which association has given your college accreditation?
- Does your college award credit for Advanced Placement (AP) and College NOW at JCCC (concurrent enrollment)?
 - What are the test score requirements?
- Are admission interviews conducted? Are they required?
- Do you look at demonstrated interest (campus visits, calls, emails, etc. from interested students)?

ACADEMICS AND FACULTY

- What is distinctive about education here? What is the educational philosophy of the college? Has it changed much in recent years?
- How are faculty advisors assigned, especially before a major has been chosen?
- How would you characterize the academic pressure and workload?
- Are there research possibilities with the faculty? In what areas?
- What is the quality of student and faculty relationships? Is the faculty interested in and accessible to students after class? Do faculty members participate in student activities?
- What is the average class size?
- Will a professor or graduate student most likely teach the courses?
- When must you decide on a major?

FINANCIAL AID

- How much does it cost to attend your college (including tuition, room and board, fees, etc.)?
- What financial aid options are available?
- Does the school participate in federal and state aid programs?
- What percentages of undergraduates receive aid? How much do they receive on average?
- Will private/non-government scholarships reduce the amount of need-based aid I receive?

SOCIAL LIFE AND CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

- What is the role of fraternities and sororities on campus? If I didn't want to join, could I have a satisfactory social life?
- What role do team sports play in the social life of the college? What happens on football or basketball weekends?
- Is there a good balance of academics, social life, and extracurricular activities?
- Is there an alcohol problem and if so, how is the college handling it?
- Do students feel safe on campus?
- What is the security on campus like?

CAMPUS FACILITIES

- Housing and Dining
 - What are the types of food plans (Vegetarian, Kosher, Gluten Free, etc.)?
 - What types of meal plans are available (all you can eat, points, etc.)?
 - Are freshmen required to live on campus their first year?
 - How do you assign roommates?
 - Are freshmen allowed to have cars on campus?
 - What are your parking fees?
- Activity Centers and Athletic/Recreational Facilities
 - What kinds of facilities does the student center have?
 - How would you rate your fitness center?
 - Do students get free admission to athletic events?
 - Are inter-mural, club, and/or varsity sports offered?
- Health, Career Counseling, Student Services, and Security
 - Is there a doctor/nurse or health clinic on campus?
 - Do you have a counseling center for students?
 - What is the average waiting time for appointments?
 - Do you provide academic services such as tutoring or career counseling?
- Library
 - What have been students' experiences with the library?
 - Is the library well equipped with the latest technology?

COMMUNITY OFF CAMPUS

- What is there to do in town?
- Is public transportation provided if students do not have a car?
- Is the community supportive of the college and students who attend college?

College Visits on Campus

Before you go

- Call the admissions office in advance to schedule a specific day. Ask about options such as meeting with faculty, attending a class or staying overnight in a residence hall.
- Read up on the college and think about questions you would like to ask while you are there (be sure to write them down).

While you're there

- Meet with an admissions officer or attend an information session.
- Tour the campus. Take some time to look around on your own and absorb the atmosphere.
- Sit in on a class.
- Have a meal in the cafeteria.
- Talk to as many students as you can.
- If you scheduled an interview – be on time and be prepared to talk about yourself.

Questions to ask on your College Visit

- How many hours a week do students typically study?
- Is there good rapport between professors and students and are faculty accessible to students outside of class?
- Do many students go home on weekends?
- Are campus jobs readily available?
- How easy is it to get the classes I want?
- Are the residence halls pleasant and are there kitchen and laundry facilities?
- Are computers and lab equipment up to date and plentiful?
- What is the surrounding town and city like?
- Are there academic programs that fit my interests?
- Will I have an academic advisor?
- What is the average class size?
- What are the college's most recent graduates doing now?

After the visit

- Write down your impressions of the college while they are still fresh in your mind.

CHOOSING A COLLEGE

1. Degree Programs

If you know what you want to major in, definitely look at colleges that are strong in that program. But, if you have no idea what you want to study, it's just as important to choose a school with a wide range of degree programs to explore and choose from.

2. Learning Environment

Consider factors like a college's average class size, student-to-teacher ratios, whether classes are taught mainly by professors or graduate assistants, and whether you learn better through discussions or through hands-on activity.

3. Campus Life

What do you want your college experience to be like outside of the classroom? Think about what's important to you in terms of extracurricular activities, social life, school spirit and traditions, and housing.

4. Distance from Home

Decide how far from home you want your college experiences to take you. Do you want to have the support of friends and family nearby, or experience life in an entirely new part of the country?

5. Location

Do you see yourself attending college in a small town where the campus is the center of activity, or a major metropolitan area where you will enjoy the benefits of city living? Also, decide if you want to be in a certain geographical area or climate.

6. Type of College

Private, public, religiously affiliated, single-sex, or co-ed? There are many types of colleges and all offer benefits and drawbacks. Weigh the pros and cons and decide what type is right for you.

7. Size

A tiny liberal arts school and a huge state university will give you two very different college experiences. Visit colleges of different sizes to see where you feel most comfortable.

8. Student Body

Do you want a college where you will be surrounded by students similar to yourself, or one where you will meet people from a variety of backgrounds? Check out student demographics for colleges you are considering, such as male-to-female ratio, average student age, and geographic, ethnic, and religious diversity.

9. Cost

Don't limit your college search just because of cost, as financial aid and scholarships can do a lot to offset cost differences between two colleges. Do, however, think realistically about how you plan to pay for college, and find schools that will work within your financial circumstances.

10. First Impressions

No matter what, you should visit the top two or three colleges you are considering. Talk to students, take a walk through campus, sit in on a class or grab a cup of coffee in one of the buildings. The best way to get a real feel for a college and decide if you belong there is to go there. And if you're like many students, you will visit one college that just feels "right." Go with your instincts and believe in first impressions.



COMMUNITY COLLEGE vs FOUR YEAR COLLEGE

WHAT IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

What is a Community College?

Community colleges are typically two-year institutions that offer the benefits of low tuitions and convenient locations. Students usually choose a community college with one of the following goals in mind:

- To begin earning basic credits that will later transfer to a four-year college
- To pursue a two-year Associate Degree or certificate program to prepare for a specific career
- To take continuing education classes in order to build new job skills, explore a new career or pursue a personal interest

When Should You Consider a Community College?

A community college offers plenty of benefits, but it might be a particularly good option for you in one of the following is true:

- **Cost is an issue.** Tuition at most community colleges is quite a bit cheaper than at their four-year counterparts. Even if you plan to eventually attend a four-year school, you can save a lot of money by taking a couple of semesters of general prerequisites at a community college
- **Your grades do not make the grade.** Unlike competitive four-year colleges, community colleges typically have open admission policies which only require a high school diploma. Plus, attending a community college is a great way to improve your academic track record in order to get accepted to a four-year college.
- **You are not quite ready to leave home.** Plenty of high school grads are just not ready for the responsibility of living on their own. Community colleges are a good stepping stone, since you can ease into college courses while still living at home.
- **You want job-specific training.** At a community college, you can usually dive right into a two-year program that will give you specific training for a specialized field or a technical or vocational career.

The bottom line is that community colleges and traditional four-year colleges both offer great educational opportunities. Like every other choice you will make in your college search, deciding what is best for you boils down to weighing your educational goals, your personal circumstances and what you want most from your college experience.

Technical College and Certificate Programs

Another great option for many students is to attend a technical college and receive a certificate. Students who learn a trade can enter the workforce sooner, earning a competitive wage with opportunities for continual growth. The following are some Kansas Technical Schools:

Flint Hills Technical College

Kansas City Kansas Community Technical College

Manhattan Area Technical College

North Central Kansas Technical College

Salina Area Technical College

Wichita Area Technical College

There could be many job opportunities available to students graduating from trade schools in Kansas or its vocational institutions and community colleges. In fact, some of the fastest-growing jobs in the Sunflower State will require career-focused training, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Check out this chart with a number of vocational-level jobs in Kansas, and recent salary information for each:

Career	National Employment	Annual Mean Wage
Automotive Service Technician	815,920	\$45,150
Avionics Technician	21,750	\$66,970
Brick Mason	73,040	\$55,040
Carpenters	734,170	\$57,850
Chefs and Head Cooks	128,190	\$56,310
Crane and Tower Operator	45,480	\$60,530
Diesel Engine Specialists	266,330	\$50,360
Insurance Sales Agents	410,050	\$67,780
Plumber	442,870	\$59,800
Police Officers	669,970	\$67,620
Rail Transportation Workers	111,090	\$67,240
Telecommunications Install/Repair	120,900	\$59,670
Welders	110,750	\$45,190
Wind Turbine Service Technicians	5,960	\$56,700

Source: March 2020 Occupational Employment Statistics from Bureau of Labor Statistics, BLS.gov.

Military Opportunities

Requirements:

- Must be a U.S. citizen or resident alien.
- Must be at least 17 years old (17 year old applicants require parental consent).
- Must (with very few exceptions) have a high school diploma.
- Must pass a physical medical exam.
- Must complete the ASVAB.

Enlisting: Enlisted members do the hands on work of the military. A high school diploma is required (a GED may or may not suffice).

Officer: Officers are the managers of the military. Most officer programs require a college degree at minimum and are very competitive. Many officers have Master's or higher degrees.

Before visiting with a local recruiter, be sure to meet the minimum qualifications for serving in the U.S. Armed Forces. Some qualifications are required by all five services. For each branch of the military, there are slightly different requirements. This information can be attained from a local recruiter or military career counselor.

The ASVAB is a multiple-aptitude battery that measures developed abilities and helps predict future academic and occupational success in the military. It is administered annually to more than one million military applicants, high school students, and post-secondary students.

Immediate Benefit: (not limited to)

1. Educational and career training (technical and professional)
 - College degrees associates, Bachelor's, graduate
 - Vocational or technical certificates
 - Certificates of completion of civilian apprenticeship programs
2. Specific guaranteed training and an opportunity to become a commissioned officer through ROTC or military academies
3. Guaranteed pay and promotion opportunities
4. Free medical and dental care

Long Term Benefits: (not limited to)

1. G.I. Bill
2. Scholarships and Fellowships
3. Pay bonuses
4. Lifetime Retirement benefits after 20 years of service

Scholarships and Financial Aid



Financial Aid Resources

Adapted from Associated Colleges of the Midwest

The process of applying for aid may feel complicated and difficult, however the financial aid officers at colleges and universities are there to help you. Be sure to reach out for help. Here are some questions you might ask!

1. What kind of financial assistance does the college offer: need-based, merit-based, or both?
2. Can the college provide an early estimate of what our financial aid award might be?
3. What forms are needed in order to apply?
4. When are financial aid applications due?
5. What is included in the comprehensive fee? For example, do students have to pay extra for computer time or to attend campus events (concerts, plays, films, lectures, athletic events, etc.)?
6. When will we be notified about the amount of assistance we can expect?
7. Does the institution have an appeal process to review special circumstances?
8. Is there a commitment for financial assistance beyond the first year?
9. How and when do we apply for financial assistance after the first year?
10. What if we do not qualify for need-based aid? Are there alternative financing options available?
11. What grants, loans and work study opportunities are offered by the college itself? Are there any we might be eligible for?
12. Is there a restriction to the length of time that financial assistance will continue?
13. What impact do scholarships from outside sources have on other financial aid?
14. Can we apply financial aid toward an off-campus study program, either in the U.S. or another country?
15. What happens if our family's financial situation changes substantially during the school year?
16. Are there any payment options available (such as monthly or quarterly)?



Beloit • Carleton • Coe • Colorado • Cornell • Grinnell • Knox
Lake Forest • Lawrence • Luther • Macalester • Monmouth • Ripon • St. Olaf
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Financial Aid Terms to Know

Financial aid package The combination of gift aid, loans and work-study that a student receives.

Expected family contribution The amount that the family, including the student, could reasonably be expected to contribute toward the cost of college education. This is determined by need analysis.

Financial need The difference between the estimated family contribution and the estimated cost of attendance at a college or university. The amount of financial need is the basis for awarding need-based aid.

Need-based aid Financial aid awarded on the basis of the financial need shown by a family, as determined by need analysis.

Merit-based aid Financial aid awarded on the basis of factors other than financial need. This usually consists of scholarships awarded for academic performance or for special talents, such as artistic or athletic ability.

Web Resources for Financial Aid

www.finaid.org A comprehensive Web site, including explanations of different types of financial aid, a glossary of terms, and calculators for estimating college costs and financial aid.

www.studentaid.ed.gov This is the student financial aid site for the U.S. Department of Education. The site includes resources and suggestions for every step of the process, from beginning your college search to financing your education to repaying college loans. The “Funding” section has links to information about the FAFSA, downloadable federal student aid publications, and links to information about financial aid programs in each state. This site has a Spanish language version.

www.studentaid.org The Web site of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) features online financial aid brochures (some in Spanish), worksheets and checklists.

www.fastweb.com FastWeb is a searchable database of more than 600,000 scholarships.



Scholarship Search

Start by visiting the Olathe School District's Scholarship page at <http://scholarships.olatheschools.com> for the following information:

- Olathe Public Schools Foundation Scholarships (OPSF)
- Local Scholarships
- National Scholarships
- Corporate Scholarships
- Free Scholarship search sites

Recommendation Letters:

- Allow at least two weeks for the person who is writing your letter.
- Provide the recommender with a resume and senior information profile sheet.
- Write the recommender a thank you note.

Submitting Your Application:

- Remember to check your spelling and grammar. Is your application presented well?
- Proofread your materials and have a teacher, parent or friend review your application and essay.
- Make sure you included all required documents and answered ALL of the questions.
- Keep a copy for your records.

Scholarship Essays:

- Develop a theme that fits the scholarship. Learn about the scholarship provider's mission and goals. Tailor your essay/application to complement the sponsor's expectations. For example, if the provider is interested in community service, highlight ways you impact your campus community and your community at large within your essay.
- Talk about specific interactions you had with others. Sponsors want to know the impact you had on others and what this says about "you". Do you still keep in touch with anyone you've helped? How did you influence their lives?
- How did your achievements reflect your values? Why are your achievements important to you? Did you do something that received high praise or recognition?
- Personalize your experience. For example, what makes the volunteer and community service you've performed unique? What made you stand out?
- Instead of saying "Science is my favorite subject", discuss a specific assignment or project that you worked on that sparked your interest. Give examples.
- Avoid saying that you selected a major or career path to "help people". What specific actions can you take to improve the lives of others? Discuss how your values are relevant to what you will be studying in college.
- Think about your friends and family, community and the things you've learned outside of the classroom. Pick specific people, incidents, and learning experiences to write about that will let your personality come through. Is there a person you aspire to be like within your chosen academic major or career path? Someone who encouraged you to succeed? Focus on specific qualities or actions that the person has inspired in you.

Beware of Scholarship Scams:

- If you have to pay money to get money, it's probably a scam.
- Never invest more than a postage stamp to get information about a scholarship or to apply for a scholarship.
- Nobody can guarantee that you'll win a scholarship.
- Do not give out personal information like bank account, credit card or Social Security numbers.

Check your online presence to ensure that it looks professional. Review your social media profiles and remove inappropriate and immature material. Use a simple email address, such as `firstname.lastname@gmail.com`.

TESTING

- ACT
- SAT



The ACT and SAT

While the ACT and SAT are very different tests, they both fulfill the same role in the college admission process. They are designed to provide college admission officers with two things: a predictor of the first-year academic achievement in college, and a common yardstick to use in comparing students from a wide range of educational backgrounds.

About the ACT (ACT registration and test dates can be found at ACT.org)

The ACT assesses the knowledge and information learned in high school by focusing on subjects and skills taught in high school.

- The ACT includes 4 tests: Reading, English, Math and Science.
- The ACT offers an optional writing test.
- There is no penalty for wrong answers.
- The ACT questions are not in order of difficulty.
- The ACT is 175 minutes (plus 30 minutes for the optional writing test).
- English: 45 minutes for 75 questions, Math: 60 minutes for 60 questions, Reading: 35 minutes for 40 questions, and Science: 35 minutes for 40 questions.

All Juniors will get the opportunity to take the ACT for FREE at their high school in the spring!

About the SAT (SAT registration and test dates can be found at collegeboard.org)

The SAT emphasizes reasoning, knowledge and skills.

- The SAT includes: Evidence-based reading and writing tests, math and essay (optional).
- There is no penalty for wrong answers.
- The SAT is 180 minutes. (230 minutes with optional essay)
- Reading: 65 minutes, Math: 80 minutes, Writing: 35 minutes, essay (optional): 50 minutes.

The ACT or the SAT?

The most important answer to the “ACT or SAT?” question is to check with your target schools about their requirements. Although most colleges in the United States now accept both the ACT and SAT test results, make sure to know the requirements of your target school.

Depending on strengths and weaknesses, students may perform better on one test than the other. As a result, many students starting the college admission process are now considering both the ACT and SAT to figure out which test provides a better showcase for their abilities. Results from a previously taken practice ACT and PSATs may be helpful in determining a preference as well.

ACT Test Taking Tips

The ACT is a widely used college admission standardized test. It has four mandatory subject tests: English, Reading, Mathematics, and Science. There is an optional Writing test which some colleges require.

➤ **General Tips**

- Answer the questions you find easiest first. Come back to the others later.
- Don't spend more than a minute or two on any question.
- When working a section, keep track of how much time remains. (It's a good idea to bring a reliable watch).
- Answer every question. There is no penalty for guessing.
- Be careful to mark only one answer choice per question.
- Write in the test book in any way that will help.
- Consider all answer choices before choosing one. Use the process of elimination to narrow choices.

➤ **English Section Tips**

- Consider the writing style used for each section. The correct answer choice will be the one that works best with the writing style used.
- When asked a question about something that is underlined, consider how the underlined portion fits with the rest of the section.
- Examine each answer choice to see how it differs from the others.
- For items that include "No Change" as an answer choice, choose this as the answer only if sure none of the other answers choices are correct.
- Reread the underlined portion with your answer choice to be sure it is correct.

➤ **Reading Section Tips**

- Read the passage carefully before reading the questions.
- Focus on the main ideas in the passage. Underline these. Don't get lost in the details.
- Try to identify how ideas in the passage are connected.
- Refer back to the passage as answering each question.

➤ **Mathematics Section Tips**

- Work out the problem before looking at the answer choices. When done, choose the answer choice that matches your answer. If none match, redo the problem.
- Don't overly rely on your calculator. Some problems are best worked out manually. Some don't even require calculation.
- The questions focus on much more on reasoning than on calculation. If you find yourself doing complicated calculations, you're probably on the wrong track.
- Make sure the answer choice makes sense. A calculator error can lead you to a wrong answer choice.
- Check your work.

➤ **Science Section Tips**

- Given the complexity of the passages, it may help to make some simple notes while reading them.
- Cross out irrelevant information
- Don't be overly concerned with any technical terminology. Technical terms usually have little to do with the correct answer choice.
- Be watchful for conflicting viewpoints in some of the passages.

➤ **Writing Section Tips**

- Organization is very important. Use a five-paragraph essay that includes an introduction, supporting paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- Plan your response before you begin to write it.
- Stay with the topic throughout.
- Vary sentence structure and word choices.
- Use specific examples wherever possible.
- Write legibly.
- If time, check grammar, usage, punctuation, and spelling.

SAT Test Taking Tips

- Did you take the PSAT? The test will be the same format, just a different number of questions.
- Manage time by wearing a watch to the test and keeping track of time.
- Practice! Practice on sample SAT tests provided by College Board. This helps to get familiar with test content, format, and timing.
- Mark up the test booklet. This helps with focus on reading passages.
- Know when to skip questions. Circle them and come back. Do not take too long on any one question.

Remember: Practice = Confidence!

These tips can help you get the most out of your knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Find other study skills at www.how-to-study.com

Athletic Eligibility





Division I and Division II Initial Eligibility Requirements

If wishing to participate in NCAA Division I or II athletics, students need to be certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center. You need to qualify academically and you will also need to be cleared as an amateur student-athlete.

Students are responsible for achieving and protecting your eligibility status!

Core Courses

- NCAA Divisions I and II require 16 core courses.
- For students enrolling on or after August 1, 2016, NCAA Division I will require 10 core courses to be completed prior to the seventh semester (seven of the 10 core courses must be a combination of English, math or natural or physical science that meet the distribution requirements to the right). These 10 courses become “locked in” at the start of the seventh semester and cannot be retaken for grade improvement.

Test Scores

- Division I uses a Sliding Scale to match test scores and core GPA. To view the Division I Sliding Scale, visit www.2point3.org
- Division II requires a minimum SAT score of 820 or an ACT sum score of 68.
- The SAT score used for NCAA purposes includes only the critical reading and math sections. The writing section of the SAT is not used.
- The ACT sum score used for NCAA purposes is a sum of the following four sections: English, mathematics, reading and science

***When you register for the SAT or ACT, use the NCAA Eligibility Center code of 9999 to ensure all SAT and ACT scores are reported directly to the NCAA Eligibility Center from the testing agency. Test scores that appear on transcripts will not be used.*

Grade Point Average

Only courses that appear on your high school’s List of NCAA Courses will be used in the calculation of your core GPA.

Division I:

- A Sliding Scale is used to match test scores and core GPAs. The Sliding Scale can be found at www.2point3.org or on Page No. 10 of the Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete found at www.eligibilitycenter.org.
- The Division I GPA required to be eligible for competition is **2.300**.
- The Division I GPA required to receive athletics aid and practice is **2.000-2.299**.

Division II:

- The Division II core GPA requirement is a minimum of **2.000**.

Division I (16 Core Courses)

English - 4 years.
 Mathematics - 3 years (Algebra I or higher).
 Natural/physical science - 2 years (1 year of lab if offered by high school).
 Social Science - 2 years
 Additional year in English, mathematics or natural/physical science - 1 year
 Additional academic courses - 4 years

Division II (16 Core Courses)

English - 3 years.
 Mathematics - 2 years (Algebra I or higher).
 Natural/physical science - 2 years (1 year of lab if offered by high school).
 Social Science - 2 years
 Additional year in English, mathematics or natural/physical science - 3 year
 Additional academic courses - 4 years

Checklist for College-Bound Student-Athletes

- Register at the beginning of your sophomore year at www.eligibilitycenter.org.
- Send your transcript to the NCAA Eligibility Center at the end of your junior year. (www.careercruising.org)
- Take the ACT or SAT and use the code “9999” to have your official scores sent directly to the NCAA Eligibility Center.
- Check with your high school counselor to make sure you are on track to graduate on time with your class and are taking the required amount of NCAA-approved core courses.
- Request final amateurism certification during your senior year (beginning April 1).
- Submit your final transcript with proof of graduation.

NCAA DIVISION I SLIDING SCALE		
Core GPA	SAT Verbal and Math ONLY	ACT
3.550 & above	400	37
3.525	410	38
3.500	420	39
3.475	430	40
3.450	440	41
3.425	450	41
3.400	460	42
3.375	470	42
3.350	480	43
3.325	490	44
3.300	500	44
3.275	510	45
3.250	520	46
3.225	530	46
3.200	540	47
3.175	550	47
3.150	560	48
3.125	570	49
3.100	580	49
3.075	590	50
3.050	600	50
3.025	610	51
3.000	620	52
2.975	630	52
2.950	640	53
2.925	650	53
2.900	660	54
2.875	670	55
2.850	680	56
2.825	690	56
2.800	700	57
2.775	710	58
2.750	720	59

NCAA DIVISION I SLIDING SCALE		
Core GPA	SAT Verbal and Math ONLY	ACT
2.725	730	60
2.700	740	61
2.675	750	61
2.650	760	62
2.625	770	63
2.600	780	64
2.575	790	65
2.550	800	66
2.525	810	67
2.500	820	68
2.475	830	69
2.450	840	70
2.425	850	70
2.400	860	71
2.375	870	72
2.350	880	73
2.325	890	74
2.300	900	75
GPA's Below 2.3 Are Redshirt only		
2.299	910	76
2.275	910	76
2.250	920	77
2.225	930	78
2.200	940	79
2.175	950	80
2.150	960	81
2.125	970	82
2.100	980	83
2.075	990	84
2.050	1000	85
2.025	1010	86
2.000	1020	86

For more information, visit www.eligibilitycenter.org or www.2point3.org.

Division I Worksheet

This worksheet is provided to assist you in monitoring your progress in meeting NCAA initial-eligibility standards. The NCAA Eligibility Center will determine your academic status after you graduate. Remember to check your high school's list of NCAA-approved courses for the classes you have taken.

Use the following scale: A= 4 quality points; B=3 quality points; C=2 quality points; D=1 quality point.

English (4 years required)

10/7	Course Title	Credit	X	Grade	=	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
✓	Example: English 9	.5		A		(.5x4)=2
	Total English Units					Total Quality Points

Mathematics (3 years required)

10/7	Course Title	Credit	X	Grade	=	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
	Example: Algebra 1	1.0		B		(1.0x3)= 3
	Total Mathematics Units					Total Quality Points

Natural/physical science (2 years required)

10/7	Course Title	Credit	X	Grade	=	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
	Total Natural/Physical Science Units					Total Quality Points

Additional year in English, mathematics or natural/physical science (1 year required)

10/7	Course Title	Credit	X	Grade	=	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
	Total Additional Units					Total Quality Points

Social science (2 years required)

10/7	Course Title	Credit	X	Grade	=	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
	Total Social Science Units					Total Quality Points

Additional academic courses (4 years required)

10/7	Course Title	Credit	X	Grade	=	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
	Total Additional Academic Units					Total Quality Points
	Total Quality Points from each subject area / Total Credits = Core-Course GPA		/		=	
		Quality	/	Credits	=	Core-Course GPA

Core-Course GPA (16 required) Beginning August 1, 2016, 10 core courses must be completed before the seventh semester and seven of the 10 must be a combination of English, math or natural or physical science for competition purposes. Grades and credits may be earned at any time for academic red shirt purposes.

Division II Worksheet

This worksheet is provided to assist you in monitoring your progress in meeting NCAA initial-eligibility standards. The NCAA Eligibility Center will determine your academic status after you graduate. Remember to check your high school's list of NCAA-approved courses for the classes you have taken.

Use the following scale: A=4 quality points; B=3 quality points; C=2 quality points; D=1 quality point.

English (3 years required)

Course Title	Credit	X	Grade	=	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Example: English 9	.5		A		(.5x4)=2
Total English Units					Total Quality Points

Mathematics (2 years required)

Course Title	Credit	X	Grade	=	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Example: Algebra 1	1.0		B		(1.0x3)=3
Total Mathematics Units					Total Quality Points

Natural/physical science (2 years required)

Course Title	Credit	X	Grade	=	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Total Natural/Physical Science Units					Total Quality Points

Additional years in English, math or natural/physical science (3 years required)

Course Title	Credit	X	Grade	=	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Total Additional Units					Total Quality Points

Social science (2 years required)

Course Title	Credit	X	Grade	=	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Total Social Science Units					Total Quality Points

Additional academic courses (4 years required)

Course Title	Credit	X	Grade	=	Quality Points (multiply credit by grade)
Total Additional Academic Units					Total Quality Points
Total Quality Points from each subject area / Total Credits = Core-Course GPA					
	Quality	/	Credits	=	Core-Course GPA

Additional Resources



COLLEGE TERMS

- **Associate Degree:** An associate degree is typically a two-year degree program requiring students to earn approximately 60 hours of college credit; often awarded through community and technical or junior colleges. Many public and private four-year universities in Kansas also offer associate degrees. At Kansas community colleges, different types of associate degrees are offered, such as an Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.), which is considered a degree for going directly into a career, an Associate of Arts (A.A.) or an Associate of Science (A.S.), which can be used to either go into a career or can be applied toward a bachelor degree at a Kansas public university.
- **Bachelor's Degree:** Traditionally a four-year degree program requiring students to earn approximately 120 hours of college credit; also known as a baccalaureate or undergraduate degree.
- **Certificate:** A certificate demonstrates that a student has earned knowledge in a very specific area of study, often focused on a vocational or professional subject. A certificate typically does not involve taking general education courses and usually can be completed in days, weeks, or months, rather than years. Kansas community colleges and technical institutes offer certificate programs.
- **Community or Junior Colleges:** generally offer the first two years of a liberal arts education, in addition to specialized occupational preparation. An associate degree is awarded at the end of a two-year program of studies, following which many students continue their education at a four-year institute.
- **Diploma:** A diploma is awarded to students who complete an academic program, typically a program that is longer than a certificate program.
- **Financial aid:** comes in many forms and helps students with financial need pay for college costs. Financial aid includes:
 - **grants:** money given to students based upon family income
 - **scholarships:** awards based upon school performance, test scores, or special talents (like sports or music)
- **Hispanic-serving Institutions:** are colleges, universities or systemic/districts where total Hispanic enrollment constitutes a minimum of 25 percent at either the undergraduate or graduate level.
- **Historically Black Colleges and Universities:** find their origins in the time when African-American students were systematically denied access to most other colleges and universities. Students at HBCUs have a unique opportunity to experience an educational community as the majority. They find committed faculty mentors who encourage their expectations of success.
- **Liberal Arts Colleges:** focus on the education of undergraduate students. Classes are generally taught by professors who see teaching as their primary responsibility. Students who attend liberal arts colleges are exposed to a broad sampling of classes. In addition, they select at least one area of in-depth study that is their college "major." Many employers look for graduates of liberal arts programs, because they are "well-rounded."

COLLEGE TERMS

- **Private Colleges and Universities:** are not supported by states or taxes. Some receive support from religious groups and other endowments.
- **Proprietary Institutions:** are considered for-profit companies that operate under the demand of investors and stockholders. They attract adult learners and part-time students in search of narrowly-focused professional training opportunities. These programs usually offer a non-traditional format; many for-profits also have classes solely available online.
- **Public Colleges and Universities:** are financed by state taxes. Their primary mission is often to serve students who live close to their campus. Generally, they cost less than private colleges.
- **Technical Institutes and Professional Schools:** enroll students who have made clear decisions about what they want to study and emphasize preparation for specific careers, for example in music or fine arts, engineering or technical sciences.
- **Tribal Colleges:** are similar to HBCUs, in focusing on the needs and education of American Indian students.
- **Universities:** are generally larger and include a liberal arts college, as well as colleges focused on preparation for a specific career, like nursing or education. Universities offer a greater range of academic choices than do liberal arts colleges, but often come with classes that are quite large.
- **Women's Colleges:** with their large numbers of female faculty and administrators, offer college women confidence-building role models, greater opportunities to serve in a full range of student leadership positions, and a heightened awareness of career possibilities for women. Women's colleges graduate a higher number of science majors, as well as students who continue on to graduate school and/or professional studies.

Web Resources Guide

Information about Financial Aid

Fastweb

www.fastweb.com

FinAid

www.finaid.org

Fastweb's College Gold

www.collegegold.com

Federal Student Aid for Students

www.studentaid.ed.gov

Financial Aid Calculators

www.finaid.org/calculators

College Cost Information

<http://navigator.ed.gov>

College Affordability and Transparency Center

www.collegecost.ed.gov

FTC Project Scholarship Scam

ftc.gov/scholarshipscams

Guide to Federal Student Aid

studentaid.ed.gov/guide/

International Students

www.edupass.org

Mapping Your Future

www.mappingyourfuture.org

National Student Loan Data System

www.nsls.ed.gov

Sources of Aid

Scholarship Search

www.fastweb.com

AmeriCorps*

www.americorps.gov

Athletic Scholarships

www.ncaa.org

City Year*

www.cityyear.org

College Savings Plan Network

www.collegesavings.org

Job Corps

www.jobcorps.gov State

Resources

www.finaid.org/state

Student Tax Information

www.irs.gov/individuals/students

**Award upon successful program completion*

Financial Aid Applications

CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE

profileonline.collegeboard.com

FAFSA

www.fafsa.ed.gov

FAFSA FSA ID

<https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm>

FAFSA 4Caster

www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov

General Information

Social Security Administration

www.ssa.gov

Selective Service

www.sss.gov

Study Abroad

www.studyabroad.com

U.S. Department of Education

www.ed.gov

Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration

uscis.gov

Graduate and Admissions Testing

SAT & SAT Subject Tests

www.sat.collegeboard.org

ACT

www.actstudent.org

GRE

www.ets.org/gre

LSAT

www.lsac.org

GMAT

www.mba.com/mba

MCAT

www.aamc.org/mcat

Choosing a Career

MonsterCollege

www.monstercollege.com

Bureau of Labor Statistics

www.stats.bls.gov

Occupational Outlook Handbook

www.bls.gov/oco