



THE COLLEGE CONNECTION NEWSLETTER

FOR HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS AND SENIORS

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FAFSA REPROCESSING COULD TAKE WEEKS

insidehighered.com

The Education Department has begun reprocessing some student aid forms affected by calculation errors, undersecretary of education James Kvaal said. The department has also started sending corrected versions to colleges, but Kvaal said others could take weeks longer to begin reprocessing.

In the past few weeks, FAFSA processing has been beset by two major discoveries: student aid index calculation errors, which affected about 200,000 forms, and incorrect tax data provided by the IRS on about 330,000 forms. Combined, the errors meant nearly 20 percent of submitted FAFSAs would have to be reprocessed.

The department will reprocess all the affected forms, and has made headway on the first batch. But reprocessing those affected by tax errors is more complicated, a spokesperson said, and requires technical alterations to their systems. It is “on track” to begin reprocessing those

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CHOOSING THE RIGHT PATH AMIDST MULTIPLE COLLEGE OFFERS

parentingforcollege.com

The college decision deadline is approaching for those seniors who have been accepted to colleges and have multiple college offers. Even though some have extended their decision deadlines beyond May 1 due to the FAFSA issues, parents and students are evaluating colleges and comparing offers.

Deciding which college to attend can be one of the most significant decisions in a young person's life. With multiple offers on the table, the choice can feel overwhelming. However, with careful consideration and a structured approach, you can navigate this maze and choose the college that aligns best with your goals, preferences, and aspiration.

- **Assess Your Priorities**

Before diving into comparing offers, take some time to reflect on your priorities.

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NAVIGATING THE TRANSITION TO DIGITAL TESTING & THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF STANDARDIZED TESTING

internationalcollegecounselors.com

Standardized testing has long been a cornerstone of the college admissions process, with the SAT debuting in 1926 and the ACT following in 1959. Because these tests are standardized, they have provided college admissions readers with an additional tool to measure a student's academic abilities and compare them to peers nationwide and globally.

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SCHOLARSHIPS

CAMERON IMPACT SCHOLARSHIP

A four-year, full-tuition, impact-driven undergraduate scholarship awarded annually to 10-15 exceptional high school students who have demonstrated excellence in leadership, community service, extracurricular activities, and academics.



NSHSS FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS

NSHSS Foundation scholarships have been created to help reduce financial barriers for high school students as they prepare for upcoming careers in STEM majors business, economics, public policy, and environmental science and sustainability.



COLLEGE APP SCHOLARSHIP

To encourage students to spend more time preparing for the Common App, Scholarship Guidance has created an annual scholarship to reward students.



FUN FACT: The University of California schools received 250,436 applications for 2024 admission

GEOSCIENCE IDEA SCHOLARSHIP

Encourages women from under-served or marginalized communities to pursue an education and career in the Earth Sciences/Geosciences. The IDEA Scholarship provides three upper-division undergraduate students an award of \$2500 each and one lower-division undergraduate student an award of \$500.



COMMON APP SCHOLARSHIP

To encourage students to spend more time preparing for the Common App, Scholarship Guidance has created an annual scholarship to reward students. Deadline Nov. 30th 2024



BIG SUN SCHOLARSHIP

The BigSun Organization is proud to be able to help young athletes succeed in their academic pursuits. Deadline June 19, 2024



SENIOR CHECKLIST

- Keep your grades up.
- File the FAFSA
- Research scholarships.
- Check those application portals
- Check your email
- Visit college campuses
- Accept or deny waitlist
- Commitment deadline May 1st or May 15th or June 1st

STUDENT ACADEMY AWARDS SCHOLARSHIP

An international student film competition. Each year, college and university film students from all over the world compete for awards and cash grants, with films being judged in the following categories: Animation, Documentary, Live Action Narrative and Alternative/Experimental.



HORATIO ALGER ASSOCIATION

Manages 70 of the largest need based scholarship opportunities in the country for high school juniors who have faced or overcome obstacles. Scholarships by state and by career.



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forms by May 1—many colleges' deposit deadlines for admitted students.

Kvaal said forms marred by student or contributor errors—about 16 percent of all submitted FAFSAs, a much higher rate than most years—are steadily being corrected, and that students can and should log back into the system to fix them as soon as possible. Two-thirds of those rejected forms are simply missing consent to retrieve tax data, a mistake Kvaal said should only take minutes to correct.

“This is a challenging year, and we’re not at a point we want to be at,” he said. “We know how important this is, and how hard these delays have been for students and families.”



NAVIGATING NET PRICE CALCULATORS

parentingforcollege.com

Before your student applies to any college, it's important to understand the cost of attendance as it applies to your family's financial situation. Many disappointments can be avoided if this is the first step before applying to any college. We made that mistake with my daughter and although she got into her first-choice college, we simply could not afford it. If we had been realistic about the cost, we would have discouraged her from applying and steered her toward more affordable options.

With the rising costs of higher education, understanding the true financial implications of attending college has become increasingly crucial for students and their families. Net price calculators, often available on college websites, offer valuable insights into the actual cost of attending a particular institution after factoring in financial aid and scholarships. Here's a comprehensive guide on how to utilize these calculators effectively:

1. **Locate the Net Price Calculator:** Start by visiting the college's official website. Look for a section related to financial aid or affordability.
2. **Gather Financial Information:** Before using the calculator, gather necessary financial information such as income records, tax returns, and any assets or investments.
3. **Initiate the Calculator:** Some calculators may require you to create an account or provide basic information about yourself, while others allow you to proceed anonymously.
4. **Enter Personal and Financial Details:** The calculator will prompt you to enter various personal and financial details. This may include information about your family size, income, assets, and any additional factors that could impact your financial aid eligibility.
5. **Provide Academic Information:** In addition to financial details, you may need to input academic information such as GPA, standardized test scores, and extracurricular achievements.
6. **Review the Results:** This estimate typically includes tuition, fees, room and board, and other expenses, minus any financial aid you may receive.
7. **Analyze the Breakdown:** Take a closer look at the breakdown provided by the calculator. It will show how much you might receive in grants, scholarships, loans, and work-study opportunities.
8. **Compare Results:** If you're considering multiple colleges, use their respective net price calculators to compare the estimated costs of attendance.
9. **Seek Clarification:** If you have questions or uncertainties about the results generated by the calculator, don't hesitate to reach out to the college's financial aid office for clarification.
10. **Plan Accordingly:** Armed with the estimates from net price calculators, you can now make informed decisions about college affordability and financial planning.

HOW TO MAKE A COLLEGE LIST

usnews.com

The challenges of college begin long before a student enrolls. The first hurdle often is just finding the right college, and the sheer range of educational institutions in the U.S. can make it hard for students to even be aware of the many options available.

Considering the multitude of factors that prospective students ought to weigh, choosing a college can be an arduous process. But a smart approach – one that's well-thought-out and targeted – can make finding the right college less cumbersome.

This list is intended to be a starting point rather than comprehensive and will vary based on student priorities.

- Does the college have my intended major?
- What financial aid is available?
- What are the net costs after financial aid?
- Are there opportunities for internships or undergraduate research?
- What is the average class size?
- What kind of academic experience am I looking for?
- Does the college offer extracurricular activities of interest to me?
- What housing options are available?
- What are retention rates for first-year students?
- What are the graduation rates?
- What are the graduation rates for students by income level?
- What are job placement rates for students in my intended major?

Regarding college costs, experts note that the sticker price isn't necessarily what a student will have to pay, since tuition discounts, scholarships and other forms of financial aid aren't reflected in the price tag

JUNIOR CHECKLIST

- **ACT - Next test date is June 8th. You must register by May 3rd. It takes 30 minutes to complete registration and you will need a photo.**
- **Digital SAT - Next test date is June 1st. You must register by May 16th.**
- **Attend College Fairs**
- **Meet with admission reps**
- **Tour college campuses**



SCHOLARSHIP FOR DREAMERS

\$4,500 per year for four years for undocumented students with goals to attend college.

APPLY HERE

If you are interested in attending an **HBCU**, **apply in the Common Black College App.** Pay a one time fee of \$20 to apply to 65 HBCUs.

GREG GOFF LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP

Scholarship for to recognize young leaders in their schools and communities. Apply by May 17, 2024

APPLY HERE

APPLY HERE

HSF SCHOLARSHIPS

More than 150 scholarships for Latino students with or without US citizenship.

APPLY HERE

YOUNG WOMEN IN STEM SCHOLARSHIP

Encourage the future generation of women in STEM fields, especially those coming from low-income backgrounds.

COLLEGE NEWS

New York State will require public school districts to certify that every high school senior completes the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA), a similar financial aid form for undocumented students, or a waiver saying they or their parents have opted out of financial aid. The requirement is part of the new fiscal year 2024–25 budget.

University of Southern California when the Los Angeles school decided to cancel valedictorian Asna Tabassum's commencement speech in May – the first time USC has prevented its top graduate from speaking at the ceremony.

California community colleges (CCCs) may not be the most glamorous option, but they do provide a streamlined pathway to the UCs. Six of the nine UCs participate in Transfer Admission Guarantee (TAG) program (some majors excluded).

New Title XI rules are released designed to protect college and university students and employees from sex-based harassment and sexual violence.

More than 100 students arrested at **Columbia University** as turmoil grips campus in the wake of President Shafik's grilling by Congress over alleged antisemitism.

The Sports Science Laboratory at **Washington State University** is an authority on the science of bats and balls and how they collide. That satisfying crack of a bat connecting with a baseball? At WSU, that's the sound of science.

Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs signed a bill that will allow students at the state's three public universities to opt not to have their student activity fees go towards certain student organizations. The bill was introduced so Jewish students could have the option to direct their fees away from Pro Palestinian groups.

Email invitations for the "[Bright Beginnings](#)" program (used to be called "Count Me In") at **UC Merced** have been sent out. The invited students are the top 9% of California high school seniors who were not admitted to any of the UC campuses where they have applied.

Students can use **free scholarship** matching services to search for the awards. Some of popular services include [Fastweb](#) and the [College Board's Big Future](#).

AVA is an A.I. counseling assistant created by the College Guidance Network that can help answer many of the questions students and families ask about the college and career planning process, freeing counselors up for more impactful work, such as critical 1:1 meetings with students. AVA is available to students and families 24/7—even during school breaks!

Masked individuals pushed their way past the president and other campus employees to occupy the president's office at Pomona College and refused to leave despite repeated warnings to do so. Claremont police arrested 20 individuals for trespassing. They included eight **Scrpps College**, seven **Pomona College** and five **Pitzer College** students.



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Recently, the SAT has undergone some significant changes. As of this year, the SAT has moved to a new digital format. This shift brings both advantages and challenges. This week's blog is written by our expert college advisor, Mary Simon. Before joining ICC, Mary spent 16 years working as a college advisor in top schools around the country. In addition to guiding students throughout the college admissions process, she served as a testing coordinator and proctor for the in-school SAT exams and knows about the stress, nuances, and importance of these tests.

Advantages of the New Digital SAT

- Faster score reporting
- Enhanced security measures
- Reduced testing time from 3 to 2 hours
- Shortened reading passages in the Reading section
- Calculator use allowed for the entirety of the Math section
- Greater accessibility for students with disabilities, including built-in adaptations such as a zoom feature to access large print, speech-to-text capabilities, and even a refreshable braille display for students who need these accommodations.

However, this new format presents its own set of challenges. Students taking the new Digital SAT have to adapt to its new format, which is much different than students are used to.

Challenges of the New Digital SAT

- An algorithm adjusts the difficulty of the test questions in the second half based on the student's performance in the first half
- Increased anxiety due to unfamiliarity with the new format
- Limited resources for preparing for the new format
- Navigating the technical issues that may arise during digital testing

Recent ACT Updates

ACT has also recently announced some major changes, including the formation of a new partnership with Nexus Capital Management LP and a transition from a nonprofit entity to a for-profit institution. Along with this change, they are beginning to roll out a new pilot program that offers a shorter, digital testing option. This will be an option as early as the June 2024 testing date. This change is in addition to the new digital testing format that they already rolled out at select locations on the February 2024 test date. Currently, ACT offers the paper and pencil version as well as the newer digital format. We expect to see more changes and updates as they embark on this new path.



Consider aspects such as academic programs, location, campus culture, extracurricular opportunities, financial aid, and overall fit.

- **Make a Pros and Cons List**

Create a pros and cons list for each college based on your priorities. This exercise can help you visualize the strengths and weaknesses of each option and clarify your thoughts. Consider factors such as the reputation of the academic programs, faculty expertise, campus facilities, student support services, and any unique opportunities offered by each college.

- **Visit the Campuses**

Whenever possible, visit the campuses of the colleges you are considering either on admitted students day or another convenient time. A campus visit can provide

valuable insights into the atmosphere, community, and facilities. Take a campus tour, attend information sessions, sit in on classes if permitted, and interact with current students and faculty members. Pay attention to your gut feelings and how comfortable you feel on each campus.

The college visits after my daughter was admitted served to eliminate colleges on her list and solidify the one she finally chose.

- **Consider Financial Aid Packages**

Evaluate the financial aid packages offered by each college carefully. Compare tuition costs, scholarships, grants, loans, and work-study opportunities. Consider the long-term financial implications of attending each college and how it aligns with your financial goals and obligations. Keep in mind that the cheapest option may not always be the best choice if it doesn't meet your other criteria.

- **Consult with Trusted Advisors**

Seek input from trusted advisors, such as parents, teachers, counselors, and mentors. They can offer valuable perspectives, ask probing questions, and help you weigh the pros and cons of each option. However, ultimately, remember that the decision is yours to make, and it's essential to choose a college that feels right for you.

- **Evaluate Academic Programs**

Dig deeper into the academic programs offered by each college. Consider factors such as class size, faculty-student ratio, research opportunities, internship programs, and alumni success stories. Evaluate whether the academic offerings align with your interests, career goals, and desired level of challenge.

- **Consider Campus Life**

Think about the campus culture and extracurricular opportunities available at each college. Consider factors such as student organizations, clubs, sports teams, cultural events, volunteer opportunities, and campus traditions. Choose a college where you can envision yourself thriving both academically and socially.

- **Trust Your Instincts**

In the end, trust your instincts and intuition. While it's essential to gather information and consider various factors, ultimately, the decision should feel right to you. Listen to your inner voice and choose the college where you feel most excited, inspired, and at home.

Choosing which college to attend when you have multiple college offers can be a challenging decision, but it's also an exciting opportunity to shape your future.

