

COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS

YOU MUST SEND YOUR ACT AND/OR SAT SCORES TO THE COLLEGES YOU FILL OUT AN APPLICATION FOR. Colleges require ACT and/or SAT scores to be sent to them directly from the testing agency. Be sure to send your ACT Writing score; some colleges require this score for admissions. Check this out before registering for exams.

1. You must complete the "Transcript Request Card" before the Guidance Receptionist can send out transcripts to colleges, universities, etc.
2. Begin submitting your college admissions applications in the summer before your senior year and/or in early fall. Some colleges will accept these as early as during the junior year; however, most colleges will begin accepting admissions applications in July, August, and September of your senior year as well as throughout the year.
3. Most colleges prefer you to apply online; however, paper applications are sometimes available for students. (You may download and print the application form or request one through the college's website.) Be sure to keep up with your username and password when applying online!

Well over eight-hundred colleges and universities (usually private colleges) have agreed to accept a generic application called the "Common Application." It is available online at www.commonapp.org or through the college.

You will not be considered for admission without colleges having received your official transcript (from your school) and ACT/SAT scores (from the testing agency), if required.

College admissions applications vary widely; however, here is what you should expect to do when completing applications:

- College applications vary considerably from those requiring only factual student data to those requiring counselor recommendations, teacher recommendations, essays, and other supplemental material, etc.
- YOU are responsible for making sure all parts of the application are completed and that counselor and teacher recommendations are submitted well in advance of the application deadline.
- Be sure to proofread your application for neatness and errors. Remember, this is the college's first impression of you.
- Do not leave anything blank on the application. If a question does not apply to you, write "Not Applicable (N/A)."
- If you are using a paper application, do not complete the application in pencil; some colleges will think you sent a rough draft.
- Also, be sure to use your legal name on your application and on your college entrance exams (ACT, SAT), etc.
- You will complete some important forms and your parent will complete a questionnaire to be turned in to your counselor before your senior year begins. You will also update your resume so that I will be better prepared to write counselor recommendations for you in your senior year.
- Some colleges will inform your counselor of your acceptance, but to be sure your college counselor knows.
- It is very important to keep your grades up second semester of your senior year, because some colleges have been known to rescind their acceptances and their scholarship offers.

Each college/university has its own admissions deadline policies. You will need to know the admissions deadlines and policies for your colleges-of-choice. Listed below are typical types of college-admissions policies.

College-Admissions Policies:

- **Early Decision-** The Early Decision (ED) application is binding! This means that, if admitted, the student will attend that institution. These Early Decision applications must be filed in the fall months, and the college considers only grades through the junior year or the first quarter of the senior year. An Early Decision application is considered a commitment to attend the institution; therefore, all other college applications must be withdrawn. (Note: Now, most colleges are requiring the senior counselor to sign the application, along with the student and parents.)
- **Early Action-** This college application plan allows you to receive the college's admission decision early, but you are not obligated to attend, if admitted. Most Early Action deadlines are usually in October, November, December, or January. You may apply to other colleges and have until May 1st to choose the college you wish to attend. Colleges have three options under this plan: Admit you; defer your application for further review; or deny you admission. (If a college has a "Single Choice Early Action" plan, then frequently these colleges will restrict your right to make applications to other Early Decision or Early Action plans.)
- **Regular Decision -** Under this plan, the college will have an application deadline (usually between January 1 and February 1). The college will then evaluate all their applications before selecting the best qualified applicants for admission. The colleges that use this plan will notify all their applicants at the same time (usually mid-March to mid-April).
- **Rolling Admission -** Colleges using the rolling admissions plan will notify students of their admission decisions as soon as all supporting documents have been received and reviewed (transcript/test scores). You will need to file your application early in the fall of the senior year, before residence halls are filled.
- **Open Admission-** All applicants who have a high-school diploma or equivalent (GED) are accepted. Community colleges such as Gadsden State Community College; Snead State, Central Alabama Community College; Jefferson State Community College; Southern Union State Community College; and Shelton State Community College all have open admission. However, many of these community colleges have requirements for certain programs, such as nursing! Be sure to check the requirements for each of these.