

Planning Ahead: College Admission Tips for Juniors

Academic Success Predictors for Competitive Admission Colleges

You are encouraged to use these predictors as a guideline to prepare for college-level work. When your application for admission is reviewed, your application is weighted for each academic success predictor below that you demonstrate:

- AP or IB coursework (3 or more courses)
- One or more math courses at the Pre-Calculus, Calculus, or higher math level.
- Three or more natural science courses (two with lab)
- Additional foreign language course(s) beyond two sequential years of the same language
- College level dual enrollment coursework (2 or more courses) or Running Start
- A GPA of 3.0 or higher in all dual enrollment coursework attempted

These predictors, coupled with your GPA, test scores and other potential admission factors are integral in the evaluative process for freshman admissions.

In addition to our Academic Success Predictors, GPA and test scores, we consider a number of other factors when evaluating your application for admission.

Strength of Curriculum

Your high school coursework serves to prepare you for the rigors of college courses, particularly at a research institution. You are encouraged to challenge yourself by taking coursework at the highest levels in which you can be successful, including Advanced Placement (AP), College in the High School or Running Start (dual enrollment) courses. In addition, we expect that you will complete additional academic coursework beyond minimum state requirements, particularly in the areas of math, science and foreign language. We want you to be successful academically once you enroll in college, not just competitive for college admission.

Grade Trend

One of the most overlooked areas of importance in the admissions process is your grade trend, particularly in the junior and senior years. In fact, we defer many of our applicants for official first semester senior grades so that we can evaluate progress and performance in the senior year. Generally, the higher your grades the better, and we prefer to see more A's and B's than Cs (though a few Cs may be acceptable, particularly in the most challenging of courses). Ds and Fs are cause for concern.

Dual Enrollment Grade Point Average

Taking dual enrollment coursework is a great way for you to get a head start on meeting college graduation requirements while receiving additional consideration in a competitive application process. *Please know, however, that once you begin enrolling in college courses, you establish a postsecondary record that will follow you forever on official college transcripts.* Not only might you lessen your chances to gain admission if your performance in these courses is poor—even in a single dual enrollment course—your grades may affect your chances for admission to graduate, law, medical or professional school in the future! As a rule, therefore, competitive colleges and universities require an applicant to have a minimum postsecondary GPA of 2.50 (unweighted) in dual enrollment courses to be considered for an offer of freshman admission. On the positive side, we provide additional consideration to those applicants with a postsecondary GPA of 3.00 or higher, as they have proven themselves capable of being successful in college-level work.

Personal Statements and Letters of Recommendation

Many colleges don't require this information with your initial application. However, in the event that you are deferred for any reason (including semester grades or new test scores), you are encouraged to submit this additional documentation. You should send no more than two letters of recommendation, and the recommendations that mean the most are written by teachers who can best vouch for your potential for academic success in college.

General Requirements & Deadlines

Apply early! Many college admissions decisions are made on a rolling basis beginning in October as applications are completed and all supporting documents are received. Know the college application deadlines for the colleges you may apply to!

Typical Application Deadlines (but check with your college for sure)

- November 1 – Preferred admissions deadline
- January 1 – Priority deadline for financial aid consideration
- January 15 – Application completion deadline for students to qualify for admissions scholarships
- March 1 – Final application deadline

Application Requirements

You will need to submit the following to be considered for admission:

- Application for Admission
- Non-refundable application fee or ACT/SAT application fee waiver (if qualified)
- Official high school transcript(s)*
- Official SAT or ACT scores

It is recommended **you regularly check the status of your applications** to ensure our office has received all required application materials. You will receive your decision by mail once a decision is rendered. Keep in mind colleges receive thousands of applications near the deadline, and your transcript and scores may not be posted immediately to your file, which is another good reason to apply early!!

GPA & Test Score Requirements

GPA Requirements

Depending on your choices of schools, competition for space in the freshman class can be quite rigorous. High school GPAs for the *middle 50 percent of freshman admitted in Fall 2017 for some of the more competitive colleges fall between 3.85 - 4.00 on an unweighted scale.*

Test Score Requirements

Most colleges and universities require freshman applicants to submit official results of at least one college entrance exam (SAT or ACT). **Check with the college admissions office if they currently require or consider the optional Essay section of the SAT or the ACT for the admission or scholarship review processes.** Likewise, SAT Subject Tests are not considered for admission or placement.

Superscoring

Some colleges consider your highest submitted section scores across all SAT and ACT test dates. Final admission decisions will be made using only your highest cumulative scores. We strongly encourage you to submit your scores each time you take the SAT or ACT. Sending your scores each time you take the SAT or ACT can benefit you by allowing the college to consider you for all available enrollment-related opportunities.

Testing Recommendations

Because the SAT and ACT measure college readiness through different means and formats, **competitive colleges encourage you to take each exam once during the spring of your junior year in high school.** You are likely to prefer (and even to perform better) on one test over the other, which would allow you to focus on that test during the fall of your senior year. **Except in rare cases, you should not take either test more than three times, as significant improvements on performance are unlikely at that point.

Freshman Admissions Scholarships

Requirements & Timeline

Students are selected for admissions scholarships based upon the following criteria. Some scholarships may have additional selection criteria.

- High school GPA (recalculated by admissions usually to a core course gpa)
- Post-secondary GPA must be at least 3.0 (if taking dual enrollment or college coursework)
- SAT or ACT test scores

To be considered for admissions scholarships, be sure to:

- **Check to see if you need to submit a complete admissions application and the deadline for that submission. Some colleges it is as early as December 1st (which means you need to be applied to that college before then.)**
- Submit updated SAT or ACT scores if you retest in the Fall semester.

Awarding Timeline

If selected for an admissions scholarship, you may be notified by mail or email as part of your admission acceptance letter or a separate scholarship offer letter. Notification usually takes place between October and February.

Transcripts and test scores received within the awarding timeline will be used for consideration. Even after you have been admitted, you may receive an admissions scholarship or an upgraded scholarship offer based on improved test scores. As scholarship funds are limited, you should send updated information as soon as possible. Senior year grades or test scores received after the awarding timeline will not be considered for scholarship selection.

Note: Scores from ACT/SAT test dates in December are the last to be used for scholarship consideration. Grades from senior year will not be used in consideration.

On the KnowHow2Go site { <http://knowhow2go.acenet.edu/get-advice.html#students-section>} is amazing information for students:

Students

- [Choosing a College →](#)
- [Explore Your Interests →](#)
- [Visit the Campus →](#)
- [Applying to College →](#)
- [Seniors – Get Ready →](#)
- [Cost & Financial Aid →](#)
- [College Life →](#)
- [Success Stories →](#)

Check out these sites

- 1) Are you ready for College Quiz: <http://knowhow2go.acenet.edu/>
- 2) How to estimate what you can receive for Financial Aid:
<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/estimate>
- 3) Where do I stand: <http://www.self-directed-search.com/> a site to give you the tools to match your talents to the career choices and educational opportunities that fit you best.