



# STUDENT RESOURCE GUIDE

2017 Edition

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## **Student Planning Resources Overview**

The following items are included in this manual. Common uses for each are detailed below. The materials have been updated by your College Application Campaign State Coordinator to reflect your state's implementation.

### **College Research Worksheet**

Understanding match, fit, and cost is critical to researching colleges. Students should use this worksheet to help them research and identify the colleges to which they want to apply.

### **College Application Worksheet**

This worksheet is an opportunity for students to identify some of the most common information asked on college applications prior to the event. Ensure students have this well in advance of the College Application event so they can ask any questions they may have before they apply.

### **Application Fee Waivers**

Students who are eligible for fee waivers associated with college entrance exams (SAT or ACT) are also usually eligible for college application fee waivers. It is important to begin talking with students about this payment option early in the school year. This section provides additional details on the fee waiver process and resources to learn more.

### **Social Media One-Pager**

The purpose of this one-pager is to share the national, state, and host site social media channels and encourage students to connect and share on social media.

## College Research Worksheet

Prior to submitting a college application, you need to research the various college options you have available. During your research, there are three important things for you to consider: fit, match, and cost. This worksheet will help you think through each of them.

Does the college **fit** with your preferences? There are several factors to consider in regard to fit such as the size of the school, the location of the school, and services available on campus. Also, it is important to consider the college's graduation rates and retention rates (the number of students who return to school for their second year) when researching what a college has to offer you. Finally, does the school offer your major? If you're not sure what you'd like to major in, visit ACT Profile ([www.act.org/profile](http://www.act.org/profile)) to explore and learn more about careers and majors that align with your interests and talents.

Does the college **match** with your academic record? For this, you'll need to understand how your high school grade point average (GPA), your college entrance exam scores (SAT and/or ACT), and the courses you've taken in high school match to the college's entrance requirements AND to the average GPAs and scores of students admitted. Keep in mind that what a school requires could be different from the averages of who they admit. You should plan to apply to multiple schools and should include at least one of each of the following types of schools:

- Reach School – this does not mean out of reach, it just means that the school may be more selective (look at the percent of applicants admitted) and your academic record may be on the lower end of what the college typically accepts. In other words, you *may* be admitted to this school
- Match School – typically, at a match school, your academic record will be similar to the “average” student admitted to this school. In other words, you are *likely* to be admitted.
- Safety School – a safety school will usually have either open enrollment (meaning anyone who submits a completed application is admitted) or will be considered a “less selective” institution. Your academic record will exceed the institution's requirements and averages for students admitted. In other words, you will almost *definitely* be admitted.

Finally, it is important for you to understand the **cost** of the institutions to which you would like to apply. Keep in mind that the “sticker” price of a college may be very different from the “net” price of a college after you consider the amount of aid that is typically available to students.

Use the worksheet, Identifying Your College Fit, to think through what type of college you would like to attend. The worksheet will also ask you to detail your academic record by providing information on the various academic indicators that many colleges consider during the application review process. If you are unsure of any of the information requested, be sure to work with your school counselor so you have the most accurate information possible.

After the worksheet, you will find a table that you can complete with information specific to the colleges you are researching. Remember, you should plan to apply to at least one reach, one match, and one safety college. Go to [College Planning Tool and Website] to conduct your research.

Use the completed tables to help you identify what colleges you would like to apply to!

**Identifying Your College Fit**

**LOCATION**

**Where would your ideal college be located (circle one)?**

In-state                                      Out-of-state                                      Either

**How important is location to you (circle one)?**

Very Important                                      Important                                      Not Important

**TYPE OF SCHOOL**

**In what kind of setting would your ideal college be (circle one)?**

Rural                                      Suburban                                      Urban

**How important is setting to you (circle one)?**

Very Important                                      Important                                      Not Important

**How big would your ideal college be (circle one)?**

Large >10,000                                      Medium 5,000-10,000                                      Small < 5,000

**How important is size to you (circle one)?**

Very Important                                      Important                                      Not Important

**SUPPORT SERVICES**

**What services would be available on your ideal campus (circle all that apply)?**

Tutoring	Employment Services
Career Counseling	Academic Support Services
Minority Student Services	Disability Services

**What other things are important to you at your ideal college?** Things to consider are what you want to major in; whether the campus is co-ed or single gender; the diversity of the campus; whether students live on-campus or if a majority of students are commuters; etc. Use the space below to identify any other characteristics your ideal college would have.

ACAC recommends you create a free profile at ACT Profile ([www.actprofile.org](http://www.actprofile.org)) or chat with your school counselor for additional resources.

**Your Academic Record**

If you don't know some of this information, check with your school counselor!

My grade point average is: \_\_\_\_\_

By graduation, how many years of the following classes will you have taken?

My SAT Reading score is: \_\_\_\_\_

English \_\_\_\_\_ Science \_\_\_\_\_

My SAT Math score is: \_\_\_\_\_

Math \_\_\_\_\_ Art \_\_\_\_\_

My SAT Writing score is: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Studies \_\_\_\_\_ History \_\_\_\_\_

My ACT Composite score is: \_\_\_\_\_

Foreign Language \_\_\_\_\_ Electives \_\_\_\_\_

## College Match and Fit Table

**Instructions:** Go to [College Planning Tool and Website]. There, you can search for colleges that “fit” and “match” the information you completed on the previous page. Be sure you keep in mind what characteristics are important to you in regard to fit! Or, search for a specific college to which you think you would like to apply to learn more about them. For each college, complete this table to determine if the college is a good fit and match for you and whether the costs seem reasonable based on your anticipated resources.

**Name of College:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Location of college (City, State)		4-year or 2-year?	
Size of college		Public or Private?	
Number of undergraduate students		Co-ed? Women only? Men only?	
Setting of college		Students live on campus or commute?	
Do they offer my major?	Yes          No	Diversity of campus	
Percent of students that return sophomore year		Graduation Rate	
What services are available on campus that are important to me?			

How well do you think this college **fits** your preferences?

Excellent Fit      Good Fit      Okay Fit      Somewhat of a Fit      Does not Fit

How selective is this college?		Have I taken the required high school courses?	Yes	No
Percent of applicants admitted?	%	Percent of students with my SAT score		%
Percent of students with my GPA	%	Percent of students with my ACT score		%

Comparing my academic record to this college, this would be a **Reach, Match, or Safety** college for me (see definitions above)? \_\_\_\_\_

Total estimated cost to attend	\$	Percent of need met	%
My calculated net price	\$	Percent of need met through scholarships/grants	%
Percent of freshmen with need who received aid	%	Percent of need met through loans	%

**I plan to apply to this college:**      Yes                  No

**If Yes, Application Deadline:**

## College Application Worksheet

**Instructions:** Students, complete this College Application Worksheet and bring it with you on the day of your school's College Application event. You may need to ask your family,

school counselor, or another adult you trust to assist you in answering all of the questions. **Be sure to keep this information in a safe place given the personal information included.**



## Top Three Colleges and Universities you Plan to Submit an Application

Prior to participating in your school's College Application program, you should do some research on the schools to which you plan to apply. Use the worksheet below to keep track of the information you learn during your research on your top three colleges and universities.

### 1. Name of College:

Is an essay or personal statement required to apply? If so, note the prompt so you can draft a response:

Deadline for application:

Cost to apply:

Payment option:

SAT and/or ACT required?

Recommendation letter required?

Deadline for scholarship or institutional financial assistance:

### 2. Name of College:

Is an essay or personal statement required to apply? If so, note the prompt so you can draft a response:

Deadline for application:

Cost to apply:

Payment option:

SAT and/or ACT required?

Recommendation letter required?

Deadline for scholarship or institutional financial assistance:

### 3. Name of College:

Is an essay or personal statement required to apply? If so, note the prompt so you can draft a response!:

Deadline for application:

Cost to apply:

Payment option:

SAT and/or ACT required?

Recommendation letter required?

Deadline for scholarship or institutional financial assistance:

It is **strongly recommended** that you write your essays and personal statements well in advance of your school's College Application event. Your English teacher, school counselor, and other adults you trust are good resources to assist you in getting your essays to a final version. You should bring a final, proofed, electronic copy of your essays and/or personal statements on a flash drive to the event. If flash drives are not allowed on your school computers, talk to your school counselor before the College Application event about how you can access these documents while applying.

## Test Scores

Many applications for college admission will request information related to tests that you have taken. Use the worksheet below to list the scores for tests you have already taken. If you have not yet taken the SAT or ACT and the school(s) you are applying to require them, speak with your school counselor about upcoming test dates – you will need to take at least one of these college entrance exams soon! Most colleges will also require an “official” score that is sent by College Board (SAT scores) or ACT (ACT scores). Talk with your school counselor about how to do this.

### SAT

#### Test #1:

Date Taken:

Total Score:

Critical Reading Score:

Mathematics Score:

Writing Score:

#### Test #2:

Date Taken:

Total Score:

Critical Reading Score:

Mathematics Score:

Writing Score:

### ACT

#### Test #1:

Date Taken:

Total Score:

Critical Reading Score:

Mathematics Score:

Science Score:

Writing Score:

#### Test #2:

Date Taken:

Total Score:

Critical Reading Score:

Mathematics Score:

Science Score:

Writing Score:

## Extra-Curricular Activities

Some applications request information related to the activities that you participate in outside of your high school classes. This could include clubs, organizations or any other activity that you want to share with the college. List your activities below, including the year(s) you participated and if you held a position or received an award related to the activity.

#### Activity 1:

Years Participated:

Leadership position held:

Awards:

#### Activity 2:

Years Participated:

Leadership position held:

Awards:

#### Activity 3:

Years Participated:

Leadership position held:

Awards:

#### Activity 4:

Years Participated:

Leadership position held:

Awards:

#### Activity 5:

Years Participated:

Leadership position held:

Awards:





## Application Fee Waivers

### Who is eligible?

Typically, fee waivers are available to students for whom the college application fees would create a financial burden or hardship. Students who were eligible for fee waivers to college entrance exams, such as the SAT or ACT, are usually also eligible for college application fee waivers. There may be different expectations by both of these organizations about how to access fee waivers.

### Who accepts fee waivers?

[State Coordinators, this is the section where you should list the colleges and universities in your state who accept fee waivers. In addition, if any colleges or universities are also free to apply to (for instance, your state's two-year public institutions may not charge a fee), this would be a great place to include that information. Finally, if colleges and universities accept waivers other than those listed below such as a letter from a school counselor on school letterhead, that information should also be communicated here.]

### What fee waivers are available?

There are three types of fee waivers typically accepted by colleges and universities, but it is important to note that not all colleges and universities will accept fee waivers. Students or school counselors should confirm with the admissions office at specific institutions to ensure fee waivers are accepted.

#### ACT Fee Waiver

ACT provides a fee waiver application in their *ACT User Handbook for Educators* publication, link below. Students who are eligible for a fee waiver to the ACT college entrance exam are also eligible for a college application fee waiver. School counselors need only print out the number of fee waivers needed and sign-off on student eligibility. Students must also sign the form. The fee waiver may be found on pages 23 and 24 here:

[www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/ACT-UserHandbook.pdf](http://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/ACT-UserHandbook.pdf)

#### College Board Fee Waiver

The College Board states that students who have received a College Board fee waiver for the SAT or the SAT subject tests may also be eligible for up to four college application fee waivers. Students should receive their college application fee waivers at the beginning of their senior year through their SAT accounts. College Board fee waivers will no longer require school counselor approval. More information on the College Board fee waiver can be found here:

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/about/benefits/college-application-fee-waivers>

The College Board also provides additional information including a link to which colleges accept the College Board application fee waiver here:

[www.sat.org/fee-waivers](http://www.sat.org/fee-waivers)

#### National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) Fee Waiver

This fee waiver can be downloaded from NACAC's website, provided below. Students must complete their portion of the fee waiver request and a school counselor or TRIO representative must verify that a student is eligible to use the form (a list of eligibility requirements are provided on the NACAC website and on the fee waiver request – students must meet only one of the requirements to be eligible). NACAC recommends that students receive no more than four fee waivers for the college application process. Additional information on the NACAC fee waiver can be found on their website here:

[www.nacacnet.org/studentinfo/feewaiver/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.nacacnet.org/studentinfo/feewaiver/Pages/default.aspx)



## Engaging with Social Media

### ACAC Recommended Hashtags

We encourage you to use the ACAC recommended hashtags to increase visibility of our collective efforts.

#### #WhyApply

Watch for #WhyApply during the months of August and September. ACAC has encouraged counselors, college access professionals and mentors in your community to share reasons why they think it's important to apply to college. New this year, ACAC has marked Friday, September 22 as #WhyApply Day and the official kickoff to the college application season.

#### #IApplied

Use #IApplied during October and November to celebrate your application success as you complete your college applications.

#### #TransformationTuesday

ACAC is reinventing #TransformationTuesday as a way to celebrate the college-going process. Posts are encouraged every Tuesday in September – November and April – May. Students should use #TransformationTuesday in September-November to show their transformation from #WhyApply to #IApplied and in April-May to show their transformation from #IApplied to #IDecided

### ACAC Social Media Accounts

We're on Facebook and Twitter! Like our page and/or follow us to see how colleagues across the country are accomplishing the ACAC goal. We look forward to featuring you!

ACAC Facebook: [www.facebook.com/americancac/](http://www.facebook.com/americancac/)

ACAC Twitter: @American\_CAC [https://twitter.com/American\\_cac](https://twitter.com/American_cac)

[Insert state campaign social media]

### Don't forget to tag us and use the campaign hashtags.

- Facebook: [AmericanCAC](https://www.facebook.com/AmericanCAC)
- Twitter: [American\\_CAC](https://twitter.com/American_CAC)
- #IApplied
- #WhyApply