



# 2022

**GREENVILLE  
COUNTY  
COLLEGE FAIR**

# College Guide

**FREE  
TO THE  
PUBLIC**

Monday, Sept. 26  
from 9:00-11:30 am;  
evening program from  
5:30-7:30 p.m.

MONDAY SEMINAR:  
The College Financial Aid  
Process from 7:15-8:00 p.m.

Tuesday, September 27  
from 9:00-11:30 am

[GreenvilleCountyCollegeFair.org](https://GreenvilleCountyCollegeFair.org)

## Connect. Engage. Belong.



### 100%

Full-time Residential Students Receive Institutional Aid



### Hands-On

Experience in Every Major



### 100+

Student Leadership Positions, Clubs, and Organizations

#### BACHELOR'S PROGRAMS

- Bible
- Bible Teaching
- Biology
- Biomedical Sciences
- Business Administration (*Residential or Online*)
- Communication
- Digital Media & Cinema
- Disaster Relief/Emergency Management
- English
- General Studies
- Healthcare Administration (*Online*)
- Human Services (*Residential or Online*)
- Humanities
- Intercultural Studies
- International Community Development
- Media Arts
- Middle Eastern Studies
- Music
- Music Education
- Nursing
- Pastoral Theology (*5-year B.A./M.Div.*)
- Philosophy
- Psychology (*B.S. only or B.S. and M.A. in Counseling in five years*)
- Social Media Strategist
- Sport Management
- Teacher Education (*B.S. only or B.S. and MAT in five years*)
- Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
- Youth Ministry, Family, & Culture

#### OTHER PROGRAMS

- Associate of Arts
- Associate of Arts in Business (*Online*)
- Associate of Arts in Human Services (*Online*)
- Bible Certificate

#### HONORS PROGRAM

#### DUAL ENROLLMENT

10th, 11th, 12th graders can take courses on campus or online for college credit at only **\$100 per credit hour**.



## Visit

Schedule your personal visit or attend an upcoming campus event.

[ciu.edu/visit](http://ciu.edu/visit)

## Apply

Apply using our simple online application to get started.

[ciu.edu/apply](http://ciu.edu/apply)



## CIU.EDU



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GREENVILLE COUNTY COLLEGE FAIR  
PLANNING COMMITTEE:

CHAIR: ALLYSON BROWN | Spartanburg Methodist College

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TUITION  
FREE  
AT SMC



**SMCSC.EDU/FREE2023**

# Greenville County College Fair Details

**Monday, September 26**

9:00 -11:30 am College Fair  
Greenville County Public Schools

5:30-7:30 pm College Fair

7:15-8:00 pm Seminar: The College  
Financial Aid Process

**Tuesday, September 27**

9:00 -11:30 am College Fair  
Greenville County  
Public Schools

**Where:** Greenville Convention Center  
1 Exposition Dr., Greenville, SC



## PRE-REGISTER FOR THE GREENVILLE COUNTY COLLEGE FAIR!

You are encouraged to register with **StriveScan.com** prior to the College Fair in order to get a personalized barcode that you can share with colleges when you visit their booths.

This is a free service that will save you time as you meet with college representatives.

Make the most of your College Fair experience and register today with the app at the right.

STRIVE  SCAN

REGISTER FOR A  
BARCODE

**STRIVEFAIR.COM**

Use Snapchat or Camera app



Register now to get a barcode for the college fair.  
Show your barcode to colleges who will scan it  
to send you more information about their schools.  
It's free and saves you time.

## 2022 COLLEGE FAIR PARTICIPANTS

Agnes Scott College	Mercer University
Anderson University	Mississippi State University
Appalachian State University	Montreat College
Arclabs Welding School	Newberry College
Auburn University	North Carolina State University
Barton College	North Greenville University
Belmont Abbey College	Nova Southeastern University
Benedict College	Paul Mitchell The School
Bob Jones University	Pfeiffer University
Brevard College	Piedmont University
Campbell University	Presbyterian College
Carson-Newman University	Queens University of Charlotte
Catawba College	Roanoke College
Charleston Southern University	Salem College
Claflin University	Samford University
Clemson University	South Carolina Army National Guard
Clemson University - The Lyceum Program	South Carolina Student Loan
Coastal Carolina University	Southern Wesleyan University
Coker University	Spartanburg Methodist College
College of Charleston	St. Andrews University
College of Coastal Georgia	St. Augustine's University
Columbia College	The Citadel
Columbia International University	Universal Technical Institute
Converse University	University of Alabama
Denmark Technical College	University of Mississippi
East Tennessee State University	University of Mount Olive
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University	University of North Carolina at Charlotte
Emory and Henry College	University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Fayetteville State University	University of North Carolina at Pembroke
Francis Marion University	University of South Carolina
Full Sail University	University of South Carolina Aiken
Furman University	University of South Carolina Beaufort
Gardner-Webb University	University of South Carolina Union
George Mason University	University of South Carolina Upstate
Georgia State University	University of Tennessee Knoxville
Grand Canyon University	University of Toledo
Greenville Technical College	Virginia Tech
Guilford College	Voorhees College
Hollins University	Warren Wilson College
Johnson & Wales University	Washington College
Kennesaw State University	Waynesburg University
Lander University	Western Carolina University
Lees-McRae College	William Peace University
Lenoir-Rhyne University	Winston-Salem State University
Limestone University	Winthrop University
Lincoln Memorial University	Wofford College
Mars Hill University	





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**UPSTATE**

University of South Carolina

[uscupstate.edu](http://uscupstate.edu)



# COLLEGE FAIR TIPS

Source: National Association for College Admission Counseling

Use these tips to make the most of out your College Fair experience:

## BEFORE THE FAIR

Register online for the Fair to receive a barcode for easy onsite access to college representatives. Print the barcode and bring it to the fair as your electronic ID. Online registration leaves more time for you to meet one-on-one with admission representatives.

### Ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I want to attend a large, medium, or small school?
- What major do I wish to study?
- Do I want to attend an urban, suburban, or rural school?
- Do I want to attend a two-year, four-year, single-sex, or religiously-affiliated school?
- Do I want to participate in athletics, clubs, fraternities, sororities, or special programs such as study abroad or cooperative education.
- Research colleges attending the fair to determine if they meet your search criteria.
- Make a list of questions to ask college representatives.

## AT THE FAIR

- Pick up a fair directory and bag for all of the materials you collect.
- Visit schools that match or are the closest match to your search criteria. Be adventurous. Don't just talk to the well-known schools.
- Ask the college representative to scan your barcode. This will allow the representative to follow up with you directly—and quickly.
- Ask the same questions to each college representative you visit.
- Take notes. Write down what you find most interesting about each college.
- Attend an information session to learn more about the college search process, financial aid, and other topics.

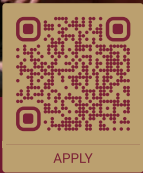
## AFTER THE FAIR

- Review college websites, catalogs, and viewbooks to gather more information to help narrow your choices.
- Send a thank you note/email to the college representatives you met. This simple gesture can show admission officials you're serious about wanting to attend their college.

# RISE ABOVE THE ORDINARY



[www.erskine.edu](http://www.erskine.edu)



 **15:1**  
Student-faculty ratio

 **24**  
Intercollegiate sports

 **99%**  
Students receiving financial aid

 **98%**  
Graduate school acceptance rate

 **1<sup>st</sup>**  
First four-year Christian college in South Carolina

**1839**  
Erskine College founded



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# DEFINITIONS OF ADMISSIONS: Options in Higher Education

## STUDENTS: WHICH COLLEGE ADMISSION PROCESS BEST SUITS YOU?

TYPE	DEFINITION	COMMITMENT	
Regular Decision	Students submit an application by a specified date and receive a decision in a clearly stated period of time.	NON-BINDING	Students are not restricted from applying to other institutions and have until May 1 to consider their options and confirm enrollment.
Rolling Admission	Institutions review applications as they are submitted and render admission decisions throughout the admission cycle.	NON-BINDING	
Early Action (EA)	Students apply early and receive a decision well in advance of the institution's regular response date.	NON-BINDING	
Early Decision (ED)	Students make a commitment to a first-choice institution where, if admitted they definitely will enroll and withdraw all other applications. The application deadline and decision deadline occur early.	BINDING	Students are responsible for determining and following restrictions.
Restrictive Early Action (REA)	Students apply to an institution of preference and receive a decision early. They may be restricted from applying ED or EA or REA to other institutions. If offered enrollment, they have until May 1 to confirm.	NON-BINDING	

Source: National Association for College Admission Counseling

The National Association for College Admission Counseling, founded in 1937, is an organization of more than 25,000 professionals from around the world dedicated to serving students transitioning from secondary to postsecondary education. NACAC is dedicated to providing counseling and admission professionals with the expert advice and tools they need to better serve students and improve the college transition process.



# COLLEGE TYPES

*While no two are exactly alike, most colleges fit into one or more of the following categories:*

**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.

**Universities** are generally larger and include a liberal arts college, as well as colleges focused on preparation for specific careers, like nursing or education. Universities offer a greater range of academic choices than liberal arts colleges, but often come with classes that are quite large. Research opportunities and other extracurricular options are readily available.

**Technical institutes and professional schools** enroll students who have made clear decisions about what they want to study and emphasize preparation for specific careers in music, fine arts, engineering, or technical sciences.

**Historically Black Colleges and Universities** originated at a 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 in which they are a part of the majority. They find committed faculty mentors who encourage their expectations of success.

**Tribal colleges** are similar to HBCUs, but they focus on the needs and education of American-Indian students.

Similarly, **women's colleges**, with their larger 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 high number of science majors, as well as students who continue on to graduate school and/or professional studies.

**Religiously-affiliated colleges and universities** were formed by religious groups and organizations. Although they are not limited in admission to members of that religious group, they often run in alignment with religious principles. To graduate, students may be required to take one or two religion classes (and sometimes more).

**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. Many students continue their education at a four-year institution.

**For-profit colleges** operate under the demands of investors or stockholders. These private institutions exist, at least in part, to maximize profits for their owners. Not all for-profit schools are predatory. But countless instances of unscrupulous conduct by for-profit colleges have been revealed through investigations by the federal government, media, and state attorneys general.

*Source: National Association for College Admission Counseling*

A photograph of a college campus scene. In the foreground, a young man in a black hoodie and a young woman in a grey jacket are walking and smiling. Between them is a large, white, fluffy mascot wearing a white jersey with "WINTHROP 40" on it. In the background, there are green trees and a brick building with a clock tower.

## LET US SHOW YOU AROUND

The logo for Winthrop University, featuring a stylized white bird or wing icon to the left of the text "WINTHROP UNIVERSITY" in a serif font.

Schedule your campus visit  
experience at Winthrop University at  
[www.winthrop.edu/admissions/visit](http://www.winthrop.edu/admissions/visit)



# THE COLLEGE APPLICATION ESSAY: Telling Your Story

*By Elizabeth Hawthorne*  
*Associate Director of Admissions*  
*Furman University*

When you enter your senior year of high school, so much of your college application has already been determined. Your transcript reflects the majority of your high school work, your senior year classes have been selected, the extracurricular activities you've been involved with for years are already on your resume, and your senior leadership opportunities are underway. **The college essay is the exception, a blank page of possibility.** This part of the application process is completely within the control of your senior year self, and you have the chance to introduce yourself to college admission offices in an entirely new way. No matter the school you are applying to or the topic you choose, here are a few pieces of advice to guide you on your writing journey:

**1. Pick a topic you're excited about.** When you are excited about your topic, that enthusiasm is contagious. As a general rule, an essay you enjoyed writing is going to be one that we enjoy reading. While choosing your topic can be the most daunting part of essay writing, selecting a subject that is interesting and meaningful to you can simplify your writing process. This part of the college application process offers you the chance to showcase something important to you in an authentic and meaningful way. Don't feel pressured to select a topic you think colleges would like - the best topic is the one that feels natural and significant to you.

**2. Make sure your essay helps the reader get to know you.** The essay is the one part of your application where we get to hear your voice, and therefore, it's our best opportunity to get to

know the real person behind the application. Don't miss the opportunity to allow us to meet you on a more personal level. Here's my piece of advice on this particular topic. Sometimes students will choose an essay prompt that asks them to describe an influential person in their life. They'll spend the next 650 words discussing the kindness, creativity, intelligence, and humor of a beloved grandparent. This is a great start, but if students end their essay before circling back to how their grandparent's incredible traits have influenced who they are, it's a squandered opportunity. I might leave the essay wishing your grandparent had applied to join our college community! No matter what your essay focuses on, make sure that parts of your story help the reader get to know you.

**3. Narrow your topic until it fits within your word limit.** Strong essays are in the details. Vivid descriptions, thoughtful reflections, and thorough explanations of an idea are often the best and most memorable parts of your writing. Make sure that you have narrowed down your topic to a size that leaves space for these powerful moments. For example, if you're writing about winning a big

football game against your rival high school, you're going to quickly

game. Likely, a description of just the fourth quarter will also be too much. Consider writing only about the final touchdown reception, zooming in on the feeling of catching the ball, the reaction of the crowd, and the pride you felt in the team's collective victory. A smaller topic allows you the space and opportunity to bring your story to life and leaves a lasting impression on your reader.

**4. Avoid Repetition.** If your extracurricular section highlights your success as captain of the soccer team and one of your letters of recommendation comes from your soccer coach, consider using your essay to teach us something new about you. It is good to show consistency and commitment throughout your application, but your essay provides you a unique opportunity to share something a little bit outside of the box. Teach us something about you that we can't know from a resume or transcript, and help us get to know a new facet of your personality!

**5. Give yourself enough time.** Writing under time constraints limits your creativity. A great essay usually involves multiple drafts and several rounds of focused proofreading, tasks that can be incredibly time-consuming. Make sure that you start writing well before the application deadline so that you have plenty of time to brainstorm topics, creatively revise your first drafts, and double-check your sentence structure and spelling. It can be tempting to wait until the last minute to start, but the best essays need time to marinate, and you are at your best when you minimize stress. Give yourself the gift of time.

**6. Don't let writer's block get you down.** A blank page is an intimidating place to start. While many colleges offer you a list of potential essay topics, most allow space for you to write about any topic of your choosing. This kind of limitless possibility can be great, but it can also be overwhelming. If you need inspiration, take some time to peruse essay prompts from a number of different schools, even those to which you do not plan to apply. Take a look at the essay questions they have provided. Sometimes the right question is all that you need for inspiration to strike.





**7. Don't feel pressured to save the world.** Sometimes students think that the best essay topic is one in which they win a state championship, climb to the top of the tallest mountain, or receive national acclaim for an achievement. However, in my experience, the best essay topic is one that is unique and meaningful to you, and it's often the simplest essay topics that shine. My favorite essay this past year came from a student who described her daily commute to school. She spent her essay discussing the tasks she completed, the ideas she contemplated, and the lessons she learned from the world inside her car. In my experience, it is not the topic of the writing that matters but rather the passion and personality of the writer shining through.

**8. Telling your story is good.** Showing your ability to reflect and learn from your experiences is better. No matter the story you're telling, look for opportunities to demonstrate your capacity for reflection and your commitment to growth. If you simply offer a description of an event in your life but fall short of addressing a larger theme, it's difficult for the reader to feel like they have gotten to know you in a personal way. The best essays not only share an experience but make meaning from it.

**9. Start with an outline and know where you're headed.** When I participate in essay-writing workshops, my favorite thing to do is flip over the draft of a student's essay and ask, "In one to two sentences, what are you trying to say?" Oftentimes, this question is harder to answer than you would think. Before you start putting the finishing touches on your essay, make sure that you are able to answer this question with a succinct and purposeful summary. If you can't articulate the main message in your essay, the reader will likely be similarly confused. Clarity of purpose is an important part of a memorable essay.

**10. Proofread.** This part of the process is easy enough to explain, but its importance cannot be overstated. Read your essay out loud and see how it sounds. Ask a trusted friend to read through your draft and offer feedback. Reread the prompt and make sure that you have answered the question that was asked of you. You want to showcase your ability to communicate to the best of your ability, and in this arena, a commitment to details is essential.

**11. If the essay prompt is school-related, specificity is the name of the game.** A lot of the advice I've provided today has focused on general essay prompts. However, I do want to take a moment to focus on a different kind of essay. Some universities will ask you to write a few paragraphs explaining why you want to go to their specific school. This is an incredible opportunity to show an institution why you are a perfect fit for their community. Expressing your excitement about attending a university with a pretty college campus and a commitment to academics could describe any number of institutions. Instead, address the specific attributes of that university that have motivated you to apply, the more detailed the better. Show the college admission office that you have done your research, thought critically about your college wish list, and taken the time to consider how you can contribute to their campus community. Ideally, the admissions officer should leave the essay convinced that their institution is right for you and that you are right for them.

I've read thousands of applications in my career, and I can say with confidence that the essay is my favorite part of the college admissions process. My colleagues and I can't wait to read your submissions and get to know you in this unique and significant way!

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CONSECUTIVE YEAR

## OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, Oct. 8, 2022  
Saturday, Nov. 12, 2022  
Saturday, Feb. 25, 2023  
Saturday, Mar. 25, 2023

TOUR CAMPUS, EXPLORE  
ACADEMICS AND STUDENT  
LIFE, AND LEARN ABOUT  
ADMISSION &  
FINANCIAL AID

## WEEKDAY VISITS

Monday – Friday,  
10 AM & 2 PM

- WALKING TOUR OF  
CAMPUS AND  
RESIDENCE HALLS
- INFO SESSION WITH  
AN ADMISSIONS  
COUNSELOR

## SATURDAY TOURS

Sept. 24, 2022  
Dec. 3, 2022  
Jan. 21, 2023  
Jun. 10, 2023

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# State-Funded Scholarship & Grant Programs

## Palmetto Fellows

### Qualifying Criteria

- 3.5 SC UGP GPA,
  - 1200 SAT or 25 ACT, and
  - Top 6% rank in Grade 10, 11, or 12
- If class rank criteria not met...
- 4.0 SC UGP GPA, and
  - 1400 SAT or 31 ACT

### Continued Eligibility Criteria

- 3.0 institutional GPA, and
  - Earn 30 credit hours per academic year\*
- \*cannot include hours earned from AP, IB, CLEP, or dual enrollment.
- Can be received for a maximum of 8 terms.

### Qualifying Criteria

Attending a 2-Year Institution? 

- 3.0 SC UGP GPA

Attending a 4-Year Institution?

Meet 2 of following 3:

- 3.0 SC UGP GPA
- 1100 SAT or 22 ACT
- Rank in top 30% of graduating

### Continued Eligibility Criteria

- 3.0 LIFE GPA, and
  - Earn an average of 30 credit hours per academic year\*
- \*includes hours earned from AP, IB, CLEP, or dual enrollment.
- Can be received for a maximum of 8 terms.

## LIFE

## SC HOPE

### Qualifying Criteria

- 4-Year Institutions Only
- 3.0 SC UGP GPA

### Continued Eligibility Criteria

- 3.0 LIFE GPA, and
  - Earn an average 30 credit hours by end of first academic year (can include hours earned from AP, IB, CLEP, or dual enrollment).
- If SC HOPE recipients have satisfied these criteria at the end of their first academic year, they can be enrolled in the LIFE Scholarship program.*

### Qualifying Criteria

Determined "in need" by completing the FAFSA.

### Continued Eligibility Criteria

- 2.0 GPA,
- Earn 24 credit hours, and
- Complete the FAFSA annually, so "in need" status can be confirmed.

## SC Need-Based Grant

## Lottery Tuition Assistance

### Qualifying Criteria

- 2-Year Institutions Only
- Complete FAFSA or FAFSA waiver,
  - Enroll in at least six credit hours

### Continued Eligibility Criteria

- Maintain satisfactory academic progress;
  - After attempting 24 hours, earn a minimum 2.0 GPA;
  - and Complete the FAFSA annually
- Students are not eligible to receive Lottery Tuition Assistance for more than one certificate, diploma, or degree earned within any five-year period unless the additional certificate, diploma, or degree constitutes progress in the same field of study.*

# WOFFORD COLLEGE

Nationally Ranked Liberal Arts College

**98%** of students have a positive career outcome within **six months** of graduation

**95%** of students receive some form of **financial aid**

**11:1** student-to-faculty ratio

1,770 students from 38 states and 19 countries

#7 in the nation for percentage of students who study abroad for academic credit

Wofford College is a “fantastic option for students seeking a ‘rigorous’ liberal arts experience.”

PRINCETON REVIEW

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# ST. JOSEPH'S

CATHOLIC SCHOOL

*Middle and High School College Prep Education*

## Important Dates

Open House:  
**Oct. 9, 2022**

Middle School Shadow Day:  
**Nov. 8, 2022**

Prospective Parent Night:  
**Dec. 1, 2022**

Priority Admissions Testing:  
**Jan. 7, 2023**

Priority Deadline for Financial Aid:  
**Feb 15, 2023**

## About the School

St. Joseph's seeks academic excellence and strives to form the minds, hearts, and souls of its students in the likeness of Christ. We provide over 1.7 million dollars in tuition assistance through our **Flexible Tuition Program** to help families afford a Catholic education.

## MORE INFORMATION



 @SJCS\_Greenville

 @SJCS\_Greenville

100 St. Joseph's Drive  
Greenville, SC 29607  
[www.sj Catholicschool.org](http://www.sj Catholicschool.org)

**Call for a tour today!**  
**(864) 234-9009**



# TO TAKE OR NOT TO TAKE A GAP YEAR

For the first time since Covid hit, travel has now returned to 2019 levels. People are experiencing the world again, focusing on their mental health and prioritizing wellness. For many soon-to-be high school graduates, now is the perfect time for a gap year.

**What's a Gap Year?**

A gap year most commonly refers to that special window of time after high school graduation when students defer the start of college to pursue a passion, gain professional experience or travel. For a semester, two semesters or a full year, students get to take a step back, learn about the world and themselves and

set better goals for their college experience and beyond.

***“A gap year where you have some structure but don’t have to worry so much about academics really helps you mature,”*** said a recent CIEE alumni about her gap year abroad.

It is truly a formative time for young people. Understandably, students, parents and teachers with little experience with gap years are often filled with questions.

**What Can Students Do During a Gap Year?**

The possibilities to create the perfect gap year are endless. >>



## CLEMSON

**Clemson University empowers, encourages and educates every student by combining a small-town feel with large university resources. We create a unique experience on campus that will inspire you for the rest of your life.**

- Ranked as a **top public university** for 14 consecutive years (*U.S. News & World Report*, 2022).
- **No. 1 Best Career Services** (*The Princeton Review*, 2023).
- **R1 highest research activity** designation from the *Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education*.
- **No. 3 Most Trusted Universities** (public schools) (*Morning Consult*, 2022).

A campus visit will help you know us a little better. And we hope you find that the best is yet to come at Clemson. Plan your trip now at [clemson.edu/visit](https://clemson.edu/visit).

***let's begin*** →



Setting clear objectives while being open to combining different experiences is ideal.

Some students use their gap year to recharge and work on themselves while others have concrete academic and professional goals. Some students begin auditing or taking college-level classes abroad to ease into college while others choose to develop a new skill or travel instead.

During a gap year, many students combine experiences too. For example, some will do an internship in the U.S. first then study abroad for a semester to learn a new language. Others will travel the whole year but combine semesters in different locations to see more of the world and broaden their horizons.

The best gap program providers have gap counselors that can help recent high school graduates navigate their choices and set them up for success.

**What Are the Benefits of Taking a Gap Year?**

Gap years benefit students in many ways.

While the last years of high school are filled with commotion and stress, a gap year helps balance and center a student's mind so they can plan a future for themselves with a fresh perspective. They get to learn, travel, work, volunteer, have fun and grow into who they are.

That maturity serves them well in college. A growing body of evidence shows they perform better and are more likely to graduate in four years.

***"It's like a practice round and I'm flourishing in college now because of it,"*** said another recent CIEE alumni about her gap year abroad.

**Are the Costs of a Gap Year Worth it?**

Most families worry about the cost of adding a gap year when the cost of



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college is already a concern. However, programs come in all shapes, lengths, and prices.

Everyone can find programs that can fit their needs and means. In fact, many students work for part of their gap year and use their wages for travel. It is a great way for them to gain professional experience, while financing their own experience.

Staying home also comes at a cost! According to U.S. News and World Report, it takes \$14,800 per year to raise a child in the U.S. for a typical two-child household. With that same budget, a student could study abroad for a whole semester and live the experience of a lifetime.

Gap years should be viewed as a wise investment. It is a savvy pathway to college, and more broadly,

adulthood that will pay off in the end for students and their families.

### ***Is it Time to Consider a Gap Year with CIEE?***

Yes! CIEE is the country's largest and most tenured nonprofit study abroad and intercultural exchange organization. They currently offer gap language learning programs in France, Spain, Germany, Italy, Japan and Morocco.

All CIEE programs combine language classes, excursions, cultural activities and plenty of free time to explore and reflect. Students can combine semesters in one or two locations and get tuition discounts along the way.

Visit [ciee.org/gap](http://ciee.org/gap) to learn more.



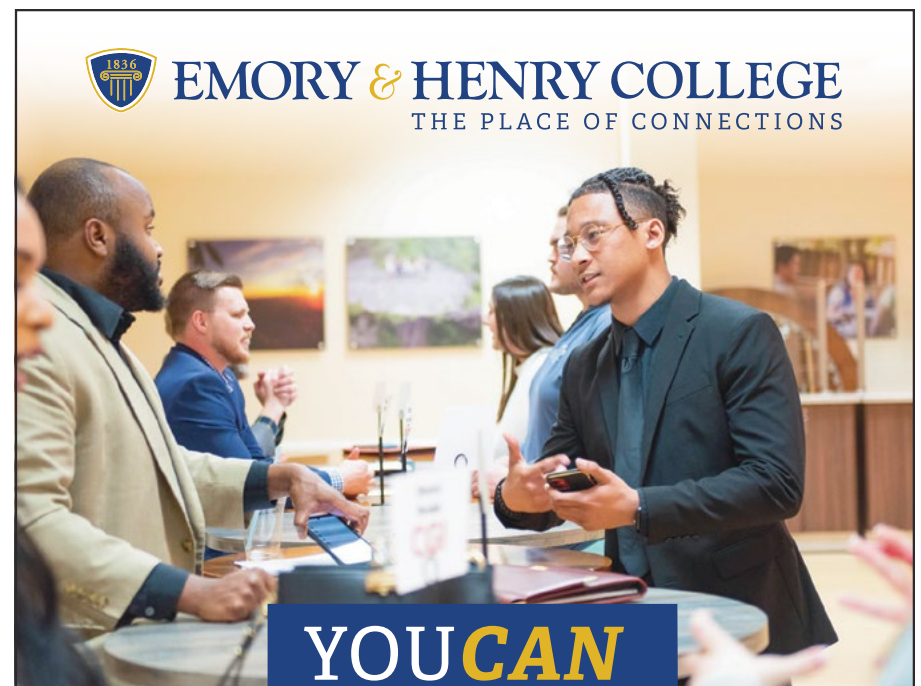
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# TEST OPTIONAL COLLEGE ADMISSION: Insights from College Enrollment Professionals

The last two years have certainly brought about shifts in the college admission landscape. One of the most significant changes is the immersion of a test optional admission process for colleges and universities that have traditionally used SAT or ACT scores as an integral part of the freshman application evaluation. According to FairTest (fairtest.org), “Test optional is both a blanket term for schools which do not require applicants to submit test scores before admissions decisions are made, including test-free institutions, and a more specific label for the more than 1,700 bachelor-degree granting schools that currently give students the power to choose whether ACT/SAT scores will be considered in the admissions process.”

Seniors in the process of applying this fall are able to make a choice at hundreds of colleges as to whether or not they submit their test results as part of their application. To guide these students in understanding the test optional process and with determining whether or not they should submit their scores, we are sharing perspectives from several well-respected college admission

professionals. **Students should consult individual college and university websites to determine each institution’s test policy.**

## LAFAYETTE COLLEGE

“Lafayette College is continuing its test-optional policy for at least another two years. Students need simply to let us know that they do not wish us to consider their test scores either on the Common Application or even via email after the Common App has been submitted. Once we get that notification, we suppress the test score data (if on file) so that it is not used in file review.

We learn most about our applicants by the materials that are in and with the application, as well as the interactions with our applicants throughout the admission process (through interviews, campus visits, visits in high schools, essays, etc.). A tenet of any holistic review is ‘the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.’ So it is with our applicants.”

**FORREST M. STUART, PhD**  
Interim Vice President for Enrollment Management

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## PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE

“The best predictor of success is previous success. In my opinion, it always has been and always will be the best indicator of a student’s ability to be successful in college. More specifically the grades students make while taking the most challenging courses available to them are the most important factors for students considering PC. How they perform on a daily basis, over their four years in high school, is far more important than how they perform on a four-hour test taken on a Saturday morning. The more information we have to present to the admissions committee, the better decision they can make. However, whether a student chooses to submit their scores or not, our committee will never allow a test score to hurt them in the admissions process. Rather, it can only help. At PC, we are looking for reasons to admit students, not reasons to deny them admission. Ultimately the admissions decision is based upon whether or not a student is a good match for PC. ‘Match’ is defined by two factors: 1) Will the student be an asset to our community? 2) Can the student be successful and graduate?”

**WOODY O’CAIN, Vice President for Enrollment**

## WOFFORD COLLEGE

“Wofford College has been test optional since Fall 2018. Prior to making the decision to go test optional, we analyzed our institutional data and determined that the best predictor of academic success at Wofford is a student’s high school GPA. This remains true today. Wofford practices a holistic admission review process, focusing on both the quantitative and qualitative elements of a student’s application. High school GPA, academic rigor, extracurricular involvement and leadership, the essay and recommendation letters are among the factors Wofford considers. Wofford places significant emphasis on high school GPA and academic rigor, which we evaluate by analyzing the courses available to students at their high school and the courses they select. Competitive standardized test scores can certainly benefit a student’s application, but scores are not required for admission or scholarship consideration. About half of our applicants apply test optional each year. We are confident our holistic review of every applicant allows us to make well-informed admission decisions and enroll a class of academically competitive students who are leaders in their communities.”

**MEGAN TYLER, Director of Admission**

## EMORY UNIVERSITY

“A test-optional policy has encouraged students to apply who may have previously opted out on the assumption of being less competitive. It also gives each student the power to compile a narrative that best describes who they are as a scholar and a person without the worry of testing.”

**KELLEY LIPS, Assistant Vice Provost & Dean of Oxford Enrollment, Oxford College of Emory University**

“It’s been surprising to us, because we have spent a lot of time and money over the years to diversify our applicant pool by traveling to various high schools and fairs, and this one policy change seems to have done as much as all of our other efforts combined. Test optional helps make our case that we are a community for talented students from all backgrounds.”

**JOHN LATTING, Associate Vice Provost for Enrollment & Dean of Admission, Emory University**

## FURMAN UNIVERSITY

“Furman University adopted a test optional approach to admissions review more than a decade ago, recognizing the importance of viewing applicants beyond the scope of what a standardized test score alone may suggest. Even for applicants who still choose to submit a standardized test score, the greater consideration is placed on a student’s academic performance throughout their high school career and their willingness to challenge themselves in difficult courses available to them at their given high school. All students, whether applying under test review or test optional review, are considered equally in the awarding of merit-based scholarships. In utilizing a holistic admissions review process, we seek to identify future Furman students who demonstrate a love of learning and a commitment to personal growth and development outside of the classroom, which may be demonstrated through extracurricular engagement, family obligations, or work experiences.”

**MELISSA M. CLINE, Director of Admissions**

## UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

“Many institutions across the country, including UofSC, continue to have test-optional admission policies. A question we often get is whether students should ask to have scores included in the review of their application. The answer will vary by student. We encourage students to 1) Consider whether they believe the score is an accurate indicator of their academic ability, and 2) Review the academic profile of the most recently admitted freshman class to determine where their scores fall given the published ranges.”

**JESSICA S. FREED, Director of Recruitment**





# SHOW ME THE MONEY!

## Searching for College Scholarships

*By Emily Butler, M.S., IEC  
Butler College Counseling*

Affording college is often not a conversation occurring between the parent and student. Instead of setting clear financial boundaries from the beginning, scrambling and panic ensue when the Financial Aid packet rolls in late in the senior year. It's highly recommended the family starts the scholarship process as early as possible.

A little-known fact is that the bulk of the aid money will come from the actual college itself. This could be in the form of grants, merit and academic scholarships, performance-based scholarships and work study. The best way to understand how much you might pay per year at your student's college is to fill out their Net Price Calculator (<https://collegecost.ed.gov/net-price>). This is a financial tool required to be utilized on a college's website for the sake of transparency in affordability.

When you run the Net Price Calculator and it's more than you are willing to pay, you have 1 of 2 choices ... #1 – Accept you cannot pay the Net Price and move on, or #2 –

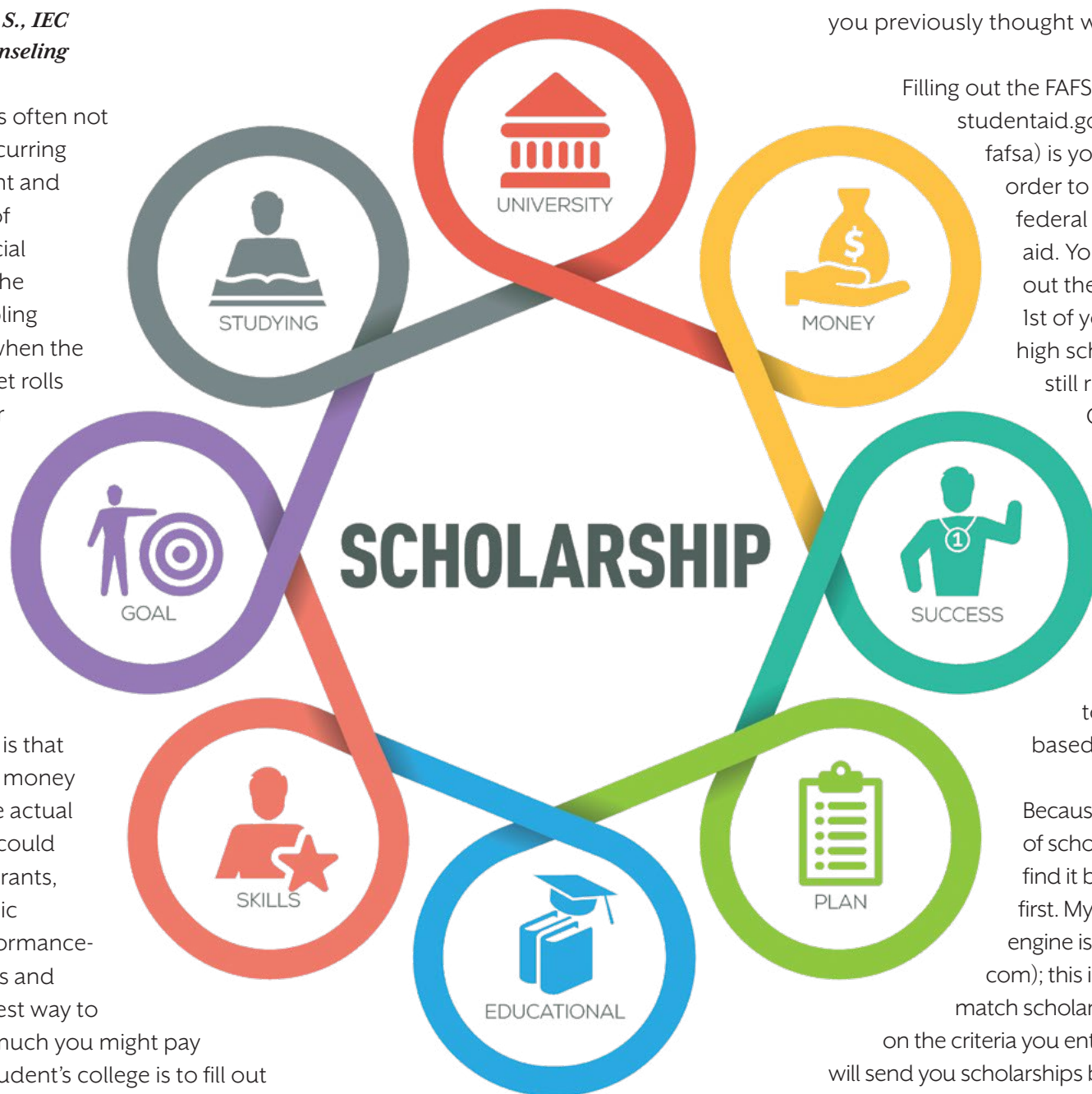
Search and apply for scholarships to close the gap. Completing this step is essential and should be done early in the process. I recommend completing the calculator during the student's junior year so colleges can be eliminated, if need be. On the flip side, you can add colleges to your list that

you previously thought were unaffordable.

Filling out the FAFSA (<https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>) is your first priority in order to qualify for any federal and state financial aid. You can begin filling out the FAFSA on October 1st of your senior year in high school. Many colleges still require the FAFSA or CSS profile (<https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org>) in order to determine what you can pay. Be sure to pay attention to any deadlines to qualify for need-based aid.

Because there are millions of scholarships available, I find it best to qualify them first. My favorite FREE search engine is FastWeb ([fastweb.com](http://fastweb.com)); this is a tool that will match scholarships to you, based on the criteria you entered in. FastWeb will send you scholarships based on your academic, leadership, financial, etc. criteria. I do recommend you create a separate email address for any scholarship portal, because you don't want to clog up other important emails. Some other useful free engines are GoingMerry.com and Unigo.com.

There are a multitude of other ways to find scholarships! First is connecting with your



school counseling department. They should provide a list of scholarships either online or in their office, most of which are regional and are more likely to be won. Your school counselors should be aware of programs in the local community like the Elks, Rotary or a non-profit that awards scholarships. Second is using Google! For example, if you are interested in being a mechanical engineer, you would type in “scholarships for mechanical engineering” and you will be provided with a wealth of information. Typically, there is a national association for most professions and they will post their scholarships on their pages. Google is your friend in this process!

Third, your parents’ employer may also offer a scholarship to their employee’s children. Large

companies such as Michelin, CVS, Home Depot and Wells Fargo offer employee dependent scholarships. Be sure to ask your parents if they are aware of any such opportunities. Additionally, lots of companies that the student works for will offer a chance to earn money for college. Chick-fil-A, Starbucks, Burger King, Amazon and Chipotle are but a few organizations that will offer tuition reimbursement or scholarships.

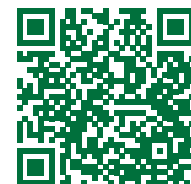
A final thought is to address a popular question: “When do we start applying for scholarships?” The answer: Now! Scholarships are not limited to high school seniors. It does take time and effort but will prove fruitful in the long run.

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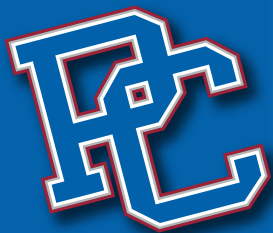
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\*Source: GTC Economic Impact Report ([www.gvltec.edu/roi/](http://www.gvltec.edu/roi/))



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# THROUGH AN INCLUSIVE LENS: Look for Diversity

*By Allyson Brown*

*Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion  
Spartanburg Methodist College*

## WHAT'S SO IMPORTANT ABOUT DIVERSITY, REALLY?

The concept of diversity is a valuable thread that creates the fabric of society. It can be ignored but it's not going away. Diversity is also increasingly important to the landscape of higher education, the future of diversifying the workplace, and essential to our personal identities.

According to the Pew Research Center, the demographics of the United States will shift to reflect a non-majority representation by race over the next few decades (pewresearch.org). We also know the "demographic cliff" is a prediction of a decreased number of students enrolling in college.

So, what does it all mean? It means there will be fewer, but a more diverse college student population in the near future. Colleges

are preparing now. Everyone deserves to live and study in a place where they belong but how does one find this special place?

The college search process is daunting and overwhelming enough as it is, and if you're "different" in any shape or form, finding a college home can be even more complicated. The best advice I give to students and families who approach me with this same question is to **explore**.

### Explore your identity

Who do you perceive yourself to be? Dimensions of diversity are infinite and can range from the visible: race, ethnicity, age, perceived gender, physical features to the invisible: nationality, culture, sexual orientation, education, talents, etc. All of these elements make up **who you are**. Let your identity be a navigating light when choosing your college home. Research supports the idea that students tend to perform better academically and have an overall better college experience when they feel a sense of belonging. A sense of purpose. A place where you can be your

authentic self. Look for indicators of inclusion through website searches, conversations with your school counselor and most certainly your family.

### Explore the campus

Colleges love the opportunity to host prospective students and families on campus because this oftentimes is the selling point of the entire college search process. For those who are able to travel and visit colleges, explore what those options look like and if it provides an opportunity for you to have a sneak peek of how you might fit into that campus environment. **Daily campus tours** are a great place to start to see college students in their educational environments and how they interact with one another. Campus tours also allow prospective students to observe physical structures for access (i.e: accessible entry points or bi-lingual signage) and indicators of inclusive spaces (i.e: cultural centers and lounge spaces) all while engaging with a student guide about their own experience. Large campus visits such as open house or accepted student days create time and space for prospective students to be part of a



larger community that may become peers, friends, and classmates. These larger visit programs also put prospective students in front of college officials so they can learn about the institution from a different angle. If these two types of visit opportunities are not satisfying your exploration, ask if there are any visit programs that focus on diversity and inclusion. These are typically smaller visit programs, likely to be overnight and led mostly by current students. This opportunity gives a prospective student like you direct access to a current student who may be navigating college with an array of identities, too.

Explore the student body

If absolutely nothing else, **talk to a student**. Talk to two, three or more! Whatever it takes for you to feel comfortable with making one of the first big decisions of your life. Ask what they like about that institution, what they don't, and what would they



change? These questions will give you an idea of current initiatives that may be taking place (or not) and may confirm (or deny) your desire to be a part of it. Most college admissions offices are aware and/or proactively diversifying their ambassador teams for this very reason. Are you looking to talk to a Black female from Florida who is involved in multicultural clubs and organizations? Ask!

If these students do not exist on campus, then your admissions counselor can connect you with another student that has a similar experience or a staff member that can share what's taking place on campus.

Explore the admissions process

Your **admissions counselor** is there to assist you through the entire admissions process. They are real people hired to recruit the best, brightest, and now diverse future classes. I promise they exist (I used to be one) and are literally working hard to deliver campus visit experiences, travel to your high school, and help you and your family make the best decision for you. Ask them the hard questions: How many Hispanic students do you have on campus? What clubs do you have that support LGBTQ+ people? How many Black professors do you have? I'm not religious, do I have to go to chapel? Do you have a chief diversity officer? Ask the hard questions.

You are about to embark on a tremendous journey; do yourself a favor by ensuring a level of inclusion for whatever is most meaningful to you.

I hope you end your college search with this in mind: **Go where you can grow.**

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# NAVIGATING COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID

Navigating the world of college financial aid can be a daunting and intimidating task. It seems at times that there are more questions than answers and those answers you do receive are filled with new vocabulary words like EFC (estimated family contribution) and ambiguous data that is challenging to discern. It can all be a bit overwhelming. This article is meant to help you navigate the tumultuous waters of financial aid ahead. We sought out experts in the field from various colleges and types of institutions and asked them to provide their most pertinent advice and information about this process. We hope it helps you journey through the changing tides of College Financial Aid.

Shelby Maguire, Interim Director of Financial Aid and Director of Financial Wellness at Lafayette College begins by sharing, “One of the keys to the financial aid process is knowing where to start. Any and every college where you are seeking to apply for financial aid will require the FAFSA. So, this is a great starting point!”

Carolyn Sparks, Associate Vice President for Enrollment and Director of Financial Aid at Wofford College adds, “The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the center of all federal need-based financial aid, state need-based financial aid and maybe even institutional need-based financial aid. The FAFSA covers grants, federal work-study and student and parent loans. I encourage completing the FAFSA at least the first year to establish a baseline for need. It only takes a little time to share your income and asset information, and the government has made this process easier over time. Your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) will be calculated and used to determine your financial need based on the Cost of Attendance (COA).

The FAFSA becomes available October 1st of each year for the following academic year. For example, this October 1st the 2023-2024 FAFSA will be released (for students entering college in the fall of 2023). Use the income information for 2021 to complete this application. “

Maguire shares, “The first part of completing the FAFSA is to create an FSA username and password. You do not need to wait until October 1st to create your username and password. You can visit <https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch> to get started. The student and at least one parent will need

to create a username and password to sign the completed FAFSA. Both you and a parent will need to create your individual IDs. Please do not use the same email address to set up your FSA ID.”

She goes on to indicate what information and documents you will need:

- Your Social Security number
- Your parents' Social Security numbers if you are a dependent student
- Your driver's license number if you have one
- Your Alien Registration number if you are not a U.S. citizen
- Federal tax information, tax documents, or tax returns, including IRS W-2 information, for you (and your spouse, if you are married), and for your parents if you are a dependent student
- Records of your untaxed income, such as child support received, interest income, and veterans non-education benefits, for you, and for your parents if you are a dependent student
- Information on cash; savings and checking account balances; investments, including stocks and bonds and real estate (but not including the home in which you live); and business and farm assets for you and for your parents if you are a dependent student

## ***What if my parents are separated or divorced?***

It doesn't matter which parent claims you as a dependent on their taxes; use the information of the parent whom you lived with the most during the past 12 months. If you did not live with either parent or you lived with them equally, use the information of the parent who provided you with the most financial support during the past 12 months. If the parent for whom you provide information is remarried, then you must also provide your stepparent's information.

## ***Who are your legal parents?***

Reyonna Parrish, Financial Aid Program Manager for



Outreach at Florida State University shares, “If you are considered a dependent student for Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) purposes, you'll need to provide information about your legal parent(s) on the application. A legal parent is your biological or adoptive parent, or your legal parent as determined by the state (for example, if the parent is listed on your birth certificate). If you have a stepparent currently married to your legal parent, generally, you must also provide information about your stepparent. Unless otherwise noted, “parent” means your legal (biological and/or adoptive) parent or your stepparent. Grandparents, foster parents, legal guardians, older brothers or sisters, widowed stepparents, and aunts and uncles aren't considered parents unless they've legally adopted you.”

## ***Some tips and points to remember regarding the FAFSA:***

- (Parrish) If you need help completing the FAFSA, check with your colleges, universities, or technical institutions in the area. Financial Aid Representatives can assist you for free.
- (Parrish) The FAFSA needs to be completed each year if you're receiving grants, loans, and institutional grants.

- (Sparks) The FAFSA only collects financial information from the previous tax year. If your family experiences a significant change in income and/or has unusual expenses, contact the Office of Financial Aid for further guidance. If warranted, you will be asked to provide documentation of the situation. The end result could be additional aid for you to attend the college of your choice.

- (Parrish) Time is of the essence as free funding (grants) are awarded first-come-first-serve based on eligibility as determined by the FAFSA and availability of funding at the school at the time you applied. Your eligibility will differ from institution to institution as determined by the FAFSA.

- (Parrish) Grants are limited, so apply early.

Interested in pursuing higher education at a University, College, or Technical Institution? Great! Experts share some other general tips to get you started.

- When visiting a college or university, ask if you

may have the opportunity to speak with someone in the financial aid office. Prepare a list of general questions as well as school-specific ones. Ask if the school requires additional financial aid forms for financial aid and scholarship consideration. (Sparks, Wofford College)

- Elizabeth Milam, Director of Financial Aid at Clemson University offers this tip: Set up a workspace, calendar and designated weekly time to work on college forms and scholarship applications. You will be less likely to put off tasks or miss deadlines if you have a designated time to work on items. Parents or mentors can act as timekeepers and proofreaders, but students should do the work.
- Consider your college choices and APPLY! Each school has different criteria for awarding financial aid, so your financial aid will vary from school to school. (Sparks, Wofford College)
- Be willing to invest your time. Application and essays take time, but if you work for an hour and earn a \$500 scholarship, that is a great payoff! You can often rework essays from homework assignments or reuse pieces for multiple

applications. That is perfectly ethical as long as it is your work. (Milam, Clemson University)

- Financial aid ranges from grants, scholarships, work-study opportunities to student and parent loans. When you receive your financial aid offer each year, be sure to review the terms and conditions of your awards. You may decline any awards you are offered. For example, you may be offered a loan and decide to decline it. That's okay. (Sparks, Wofford College)
- Shelby Maguire from Lafayette College states that some colleges will also require additional financial aid documentation. These documents will be required by some institutions, but not all. For example, the CSS Profile ([cssprofile.collegeboard.org](https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org)) is an online application used by some colleges and scholarship programs to award institutional aid. It is important to see what each college is requesting and keep track of each individual institution's deadlines.
- Make sure you regularly check your emails and/or texts for announcements and notifications from both the admission office and the financial aid office. (Sparks, Wofford College)



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- Avoid scams and fees. Scholarship searches such as FASTWEB.com are available for free. Do not pay search fees, application fees, or processing fees. Most of these offers are scams; even if they eventually give away a small scholarship, they are making money. (Milam, Clemson University)
- Use all available resources, pay attention to school announcements, and attend college planning functions. Look for information from your school, church, employers, clubs, and civic organizations (yours, your parents', and your grandparents'). (Milam, Clemson University)
- Keep records of your financial aid documentation as you may be asked to submit federal tax records to the Financial Aid Office. For that matter, maintain copies of anything submitted because you never know when you may need those documents again. (Sparks, Wofford College)
- Let your guidance office help you! If your school offers a financial aid/college night, GO! You will gain a great deal of knowledge on the entire process and have a better understanding of the different sources of financial aid. (Sparks, Wofford College)

Reyonna Parrish from FSU concludes: Finally, do not be afraid to ask questions. You have a wealth of resources available at your disposal — use them.

Sparks wanted to leave this final piece of advice, “Prepare for the future! It’s so easy to get caught up in the excitement of college planning, but it’s really important to remember that the cost of college usually increases each year. You and your family need to plan and prepare for that possibility.” Maguire concludes by stating, “Applying for financial aid can be a stressful and overwhelming process. We hope this article helps demystify the financial aid process and helps you understand it’s really not that bad.”

**For more information about the FAFSA, visit:**  
[studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out](https://studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/filling-out)



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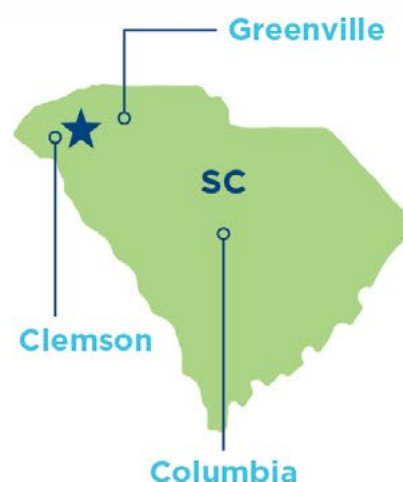


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