

A planning list for parents of ninth- and tenth-graders

It may seem early to start thinking about getting your child ready for college, but it really isn't—important groundwork should take place in ninth and tenth grade. Here's a list to help you make sure your child is on the right track:

Grade 9

1. **Create a four-year high school plan.** Once your child is settled into ninth grade, introduce the idea of preparing an overall plan for high school that relates to his or her goals.
 - Make sure you and your child know what high school courses are required by colleges, and that your child's ninth-grade courses are on the right track.
 - Map out when these courses should be taken.
 - Familiarize yourself with the various levels of courses offered by your child's school.
2. **Start your child thinking about careers.** Encourage your child to develop a tentative career goal. Of course it will change—often—but it's the thought process that counts.
 - Help your child to identify interests—likes and dislikes—not just in academics but in all areas. This will help your child focus on goals.
 - Encourage your child to discuss career options with others, such as the school counselor, teachers, recent college graduates who are working, professionals in the community, etc.
3. **Suggest extracurricular activities.** Encourage your child to actively take part in a sport, school club, music or drama group, or community volunteer activity.
 - Remember that colleges would rather see real involvement in one activity than a loose connection to several activities.
 - If your child may want to play sports in college, research the National College Athletic Association eligibility requirements. The NCAA requires completion of certain core courses; you can find the specifics at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net.
4. **Meet with the school counselor.** The school counselor knows how to help your child get the most out of high school. Make sure your child has an opportunity during the school year to discuss post-high school plans with the school counselor.
 - You should participate in this meeting, too.
5. **Save for college.** It's still not too late to start a college savings plan, if you haven't already. Every little bit helps!
 - Investigate state financial aid programs and 529 plans.
6. **Obtain a social security number for your child if you don't already have one.** This is often required for applications, testing, scholarships, and other opportunities.

A planning list for parents of ninth- and tenth-graders (page 2)

Grade 10

1. **Meet with the school counselor—again.** Make sure your child meets with his or her school counselor to ensure that he or she is enrolled in college-preparatory courses.
 - Check to see that your child is taking any prerequisites to advanced-level junior- and senior-year courses.
2. **Ask if the PSAT/NMSQT® if offered to tenth-graders.** While this test is usually taken in the eleventh grade, it is also often offered in the tenth. That's because it provides invaluable feedback on the Student Score Report; tenth-graders can then work on any disclosed academic weaknesses while there is still ample time to improve them.
3. **Is your child interested in attending a U.S. military academy?** If so, he or she should request a precandidate questionnaire and complete it.
4. **Attend college and career fairs.** These often take place in the fall, at your school, or in your area.
5. **Support your child's participation in a school activity or volunteer effort.** Extracurricular activities help students develop time-management skills and enrich the school experience.
6. **Tour college campuses.** If possible, take advantage of vacation or other family travel opportunities to visit colleges and see what they're like.
 - Even if there is no interest in attending the college you are visiting, it will help your child learn what to look for in a college.

Source: *The College Board*

College questionnaire for parents or guardians (page 2)

7. How do you view your child's actual academic progress so far?

8. What do you believe are your child's strengths in applying for college?

a. Academic strengths:

b. Other strengths:

9. You are invited to write a letter to the college counselor describing your child, specifically narrating events or anecdotes that characterize or illustrate your child's personality. What would you like us to know about your son or daughter? What experiences have shaped his or her personality? What makes your child special? Are there special circumstances you would like the college adviser to know about that would help with the college search? What do you hope your child will gain from the college experience?

Parent/Guardian Name(s): _____ Date: _____

Source: Susan Stagers, Cary Academy, North Carolina

Tips for parents on finding a college match

How can your child find colleges that match his or her needs? First, identify priorities. Next, carefully research the characteristics of a range of schools. Finally, match the two. Here are some college characteristics to consider.

Size of student body

Size will affect many of your child's opportunities and experiences:

- range of academic majors offered
- extracurricular possibilities
- amount of personal attention your child will receive
- number of academic resources (e.g., books in the library)

In considering size, your child should look beyond the raw number of students attending. For example, perhaps she's considering a small department within a large school. She should investigate not just the number of faculty members, but also their accessibility to students.

Location

Does your child want to visit home frequently, or is this a time to experience a new part of the country? Perhaps he would like an urban environment with access to museums, ethnic food, or major league ball games. Or maybe he hopes for easy access to the outdoors or the serenity of a small town.

Academic programs

If your child knows what she wants to study, she can research the reputations of academic departments by talking to people in the fields that interest her. If your child is undecided, as many students are, she may want to choose an academically balanced institution that offers a range of majors and programs. Students normally don't pick a major until their sophomore year, and those students who know their major before they go to college are very likely to change their minds. Most colleges offer counseling to help students find a focus.

In considering academic programs, your child should look for special opportunities and pick a school that offers a number of possibilities.

Tips for parents on finding a college match (page 2)

Campus life

Your child should consider what college life will be like beyond the classroom. Students have to maintain a balance between academics, activities, and social life. Before choosing a college, your child should learn the answers to these questions:

- What extracurricular activities, athletics, clubs, and organizations are available?
- Does the community around the college offer interesting outlets for students?
- Are students welcomed by the community?
- Is there an ethnic or religious group in which to take part?
- How do fraternities and sororities influence campus life?
- Is housing guaranteed?
- How are dorms assigned?

Cost

In considering cost, look beyond the price tag. For most students, today's college costs make finances an important consideration. At the same time, most colleges work to ensure that academically qualified students from every economic circumstance can find financial aid that allows them to attend.

Diversity

Your child should explore what she might gain from a diverse student body. The geographic, ethnic, racial, and religious diversity of the students can help students learn more about the world. Investigate which student organizations or other groups with ethnic or religious foundations are active and visible on campus.

Retention and graduation rates

One of the best ways to measure a school's quality and the satisfaction of its students is to learn the percentage of students who return after the first year and the percentage of entering students who go on to graduate. Comparatively good retention and graduation rates indicate that responsible academic, social, and financial support systems exist for most students.

Source: www.collegeboard.com

CSU-UC Comparison of Eligibility Requirements for 2011-12 Freshman Admission

	California State University (CSU)	University of California (UC)
HIGH SCHOOL GPA	Calculate GPA using only "a-g" approved courses taken after the 9th grade. All "a-g" courses and grades must be reported.	
SUBJECT REQUIREMENTS	Fifteen yearlong college preparatory courses from approved "a-g" list are required:	
"a" History/Social Science	Two years of history/social science, including one year of U.S. history OR one semester of U.S. history and one semester of American government, AND ...	For fall 2012 freshman applicants, 11 UC-required college preparatory ("a-g") courses must be completed by the end of 11th grade
"b" English	One year of history/social science from either the "a" or "g" subject area	One year of world history, cultures and geography from the "a" subject area
"c" Mathematics	Four years of English (including no more than one year of Advanced ESL/ELD courses) Three years of math (algebra I and II, geometry); four years recommended	
"d" Laboratory Science	Two years of laboratory science, including at least two of the three foundational subjects of biology, chemistry, and physics	
"e" Language Other Than English	At least one year of physical science and one year of biological science, one from the "d" subject area and the other from the "d" or "g" area* Two years of language other than English (must be the same language)	Both courses must be from the "d" subject area; three years recommended
"f" Visual and Performing Arts	One yearlong course in visual and performing arts (selected from dance, music, theatre/drama and visual arts)	Three years recommended
"g" College Preparatory Elective	One year of an elective chosen from any area on approved "a-g" course list (Numerous career technical courses are approved for fulfillment of "a-g" subject requirements.)	
HONOR POINTS	Maximum of eight extra grade points awarded for approved honors, Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses and transferable community college courses. No more than two yearlong courses taken in 10th grade can earn honors points.	

*It is best to prepare for both the UC and the CSU by completing two laboratory courses from the "d" subject area.

University of California (UC)	California State University (CSU)	TEST SCORES -- ACT/SAT
ACT or SAT is required*		
UC uses the highest combined score from a single sitting of the ACT Assessment plus Writing or the SAT Reasoning Test. Also required are two SAT Subject Tests in two different subject areas: history, literature, mathematics (level 2 only), science or language other than English. Note: UC will no longer require Subject Tests effective for fall 2012 freshman applicants.	CSU combines the best critical reading and math scores from multiple sittings of SAT; may combine the best subscores from multiple ACT tests to calculate the best composite. *Test required for CSU applicants, to non-impacted campuses, who have earned an "a-g" GPA of less than 3.0.	
VALIDATION OF SUBJECT REQUIREMENTS BY OTHER COURSES		
Mathematics	A grade of C or better in the second semester of a yearlong algebra course validates a D in the first semester. A grade of C or better in Algebra II validates Algebra I. A grade of C or better in trigonometry or pre-calculus validates the entire high school college preparatory requirement. A grade of C or better in statistics will validate only Algebra I and Algebra II, not geometry.	
Language Other Than English (LOTE)	A grade of C or better in a higher-level course validates a lower-level course. A higher-level LOTE course can validate the appropriate number of years based on the level. A college course can validate a high school LOTE course. The level of validation depends on the college course prerequisite and description.	
Chemistry	The CSU will continue to permit the second semester of chemistry and validate the first semester.	A grade of C or better in the second semester of chemistry WILL NO LONGER VALIDATE a D in the first semester.
VALIDATION OF D GRADES IN REQUIRED COURSES		
	Required "a-g" courses must be completed with a grade of C or better. Courses in which grades of D are earned must be repeated, EXCEPT in the areas of math and language other than English, where grades of D can be validated by successful completion of higher-level coursework.	
VALIDATION OF SUBJECT REQUIREMENTS BY TEST SCORES		
	Subject omissions may be satisfied with appropriate test scores on SAT Subject Tests, Advanced Placement examinations and designated International Baccalaureate exams. A list of acceptable tests and scores is available on the UC and CSU websites.	
REPEATED COURSES		
	The best grade will be used in the GPA calculation.	
		A course not completed with a grade of C or better can be repeated only once.

Information is accurate as of August 2010

ETC



University of California

(9 Campuses)

Berkeley/ Davis/ Irvine/ Los Angeles/ Riverside/ San Diego/ Santa Barbara/ Santa Cruz/Merced

Requirements

- English: 4 years
- Mathematics 3 years of at least Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, 4 years recommended.
- Foreign Language: 2 years, 3 years recommended
- Lab Science: 2 years of Biology, Chemistry or Physics, 3 years recommended.
- US History, Government & World History: 2 years
- Visual and Performing Arts 1 year
- Academic Electives: 1 year
- Minimum of a 3.0 GPA



The California State System

(23 Campuses)

Bakersfield/ California Maritime Academy/ Chico/ Dominguez Hills/ Fresno/ Fullerton/ Hayward/ Humboldt/ Long Beach/ Los Angeles/ Monterey Bay/ Northridge/ Pomona/ Sacramento/ San Bernardino/ San Diego/ San Francisco/ San Jose/ San Luis Obispo/ San Marcos/ Sonoma/ Stanislaus/ Channel Islands

Requirements

- English: 4 years
- Mathematics: 3 years of at least Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II (4th year recommended)
- Foreign Language: 2 years (3rd year recommended)
- Lab Science: 2 years of Biology, Chemistry or Physics (3rd year recommended).
- US History and social science 2 years
- Visual and Performing Arts 1 year
- Academic Electives 1 year
- Minimum of a 2.0 GPA



California Private/Independent Colleges

(Over 65 Campuses)

Occidental/ University of San Diego/ Pitzer/ Redlands/ Chapman/ USC/ Pepperdine/ LMU/Mount St. Mary's/ Santa Clara/ University of San Francisco/ St. Mary's/ Stanford/ University of the Pacific/ Scripps/ Pomona/ Claremont McKenna

Requirements

- English: 4 years
- Mathematics: 3 years of at least Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II (4th year recommended)
- Foreign Language: 2 years (3rd year recommended)
- Lab Science: 2 years of Biology, Chemistry, Physics, 3 recommended.
- US History, Government & World History: 2 years
- College Prep Electives: 1 year (additional year from the "A-G" list)
- Generally a minimum of a 3.0 GPA



Average Costs per Year

Fees: \$ 8,700
 Housing/Food: \$ 12,600
 Books/Supplies: \$ 1,500
 Personal/Transportation \$2,600
 Expenses: \$ 1,000
TOTAL: \$ 26,400



Average Costs per Year

Fees: \$ 4,640
 Housing/Food: \$ 4,338-11,970
 Books/Supplies: \$ 1,638
 Transportation: \$ 1,182-1,272
 Personal Expenses: \$ 2,892-3,114
TOTAL: \$ 15,002-22,376



Average Costs per Year

Tuition: \$ 32,000
 Housing/Food: \$ 9,000
 Books/Supplies: \$ 2,000
 Fees: \$ 3,000
 Expenses: \$ 1,500
TOTAL: \$ 47,500



Financial Aid

- Pell Grant
- Cal Grant
- UC Grant
- Scholarships
- Federal Work Study
- State Work Study
- Loans



Financial Aid

- Pell Grant
- Cal Grant
- CSU Grant
- Scholarships
- Federal Work Study
- State Work Study
- Loans



Financial Aid

- Pell Grant
- Cal Grant
- Institution Grant
- Scholarships
- Federal Work Study
- State Work Study
- Loans



