



Frequently Asked Admissions Questions

The college selection process is overwhelming and exciting all at the same time. There are a myriad of questions that arise from students and parents as they progress on their college search; and they'll change along the way, too. Here, we've tried to answer some of the most commonly asked questions by University Prep students.

1. What Entrance Tests Are Required for College Admission?

ACT - The ACT focuses on four subject areas: English, math, reading skills, and natural sciences. Scores range from 1-36. The composite score is the average of the four subject areas. A writing test is offered as an option. Students are advised to choose this option. A combined English Writing score will represent 2/3's weight for the multiple-choice section and 1/3 for the writing. Registration forms for the ACT may be obtained from the College and Career Center or online at www.act.com. Students are encouraged to take the ACT in the spring of their junior year or the fall of their senior year.

SAT - The College Entrance Examination Board (College Board) offers the SAT Reasoning Test as a measurement of the verbal, mathematical, and writing abilities a student has acquired throughout the years of his or her education. Combined scores for the SAT Reasoning Test range from 200-2400 or 200-800 for each 3 divisions. Most University Prep students take the SAT for the first time in May of their junior year. The SAT may be taken as many times as it is offered, although many colleges recommend limiting the number to three.

Registration forms for the SAT may be obtained from the College and Career Center or online at www.collegeboard.com

SAT SUBJECT TESTS - The College Entrance Examination Board (College Board) offers Subject Tests to measure a student's ability in particular subject areas. Most highly competitive colleges require three Subject Tests, in addition to the SAT, or the ACT. Students thinking of attending an Engineering program should take the Math 11C and a science tests. It is to a student's advantage to take the Subject Test in as many areas of strength as possible. Students who are taking a one year course (i.e. biology, chemistry, physics, American and European history), should take the Subject Test at the end of year of study; students finishing sequential study in a particular area (i.e. math, foreign language) should take the SAT Subject Test at the end of the most advanced level of study prior to submitting scores to college.

2. Are There Fee Waivers for College Entrance Exams?

Yes, fee waivers for the SAT, Subject Tests, and the ACT are available in the College and Career Services Office. Fee waivers are granted based on family income.

3. What are AP Exams?

AP exams are NOT required for college admission. AP exams administered by the College Board (the same organization that administers the SAT and Subject Tests); allow highly motivated high school students the opportunity to demonstrate college-level achievement while still in high school. If students achieve the requisite scores, they may obtain advanced placement or credit from most colleges and universities. AP examinations are administered at University Prep the first two weeks of May. Students must register for these in the College and Career Services office by mid-March. Registration forms are not available on line so they must be picked up in the College and Career Services Office.

4. Are College Entrance Exams Offered at University Prep?

No. University Prep is not a testing site for College Entrance exams; however, students with current documented learning differences may be tested on site at University Prep with special accommodations or at national test sites if they only require 25-50% extended time. The Learning Resource Coordinator must be notified of testing intentions well before the designated test dates so that proctors may be employed. The University of Washington, SPU, and Seattle University are all testing sites. Do register early to assure a convenient test site to your home.

5. What is the PSAT?

Offered by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) and the College Entrance Examination Board (College Board), the PSAT is designed to measure mathematical, verbal, and writing abilities necessary for success in colleges. Scores range from 20 to 80 for each division of the test. The test is a preparation for the SAT. It is also used by the NMSC to determine candidates for the National Merit Scholarship Program and the National Achievement Program for African American Students. 1% of students with the highest nationwide scores may be eligible for further scholarship consideration. Many students scoring between 95-99% are awarded Letters of Commendation in recognition of their achievement.

6. How do I receive testing accommodations such as extended time for or use of a computer for standardized testing?

Students with a diagnosed learning or health disability may be eligible to take the SAT and ACT with extended time or with other accommodations. Current documentation (within the last three years) will be required through the form of a current IEP, 504 Accommodation Plan, and/or verification of a diagnosis which demonstrates the need for accommodations. Students who believe they may qualify for extended time should meet with Dr. Cutter early spring of their sophomore year or fall of the junior year to complete the necessary paperwork, which will be in addition to the regular registration materials.

To be eligible the student must:

Have a disability that necessitates testing accommodations.

Have documentation on file. Documentation must be current (within three years).

Complete an eligibility form for SAT/ACT (see Dr. Cutter).

The Professional Evaluation from a qualified professional must:

1. state the specific disability as diagnosed
2. provide complete educational, developmental, medical history
3. describe tests/techniques used to arrive at diagnosis
4. establish professional credentials of evaluator
5. describe specific accommodations being requested

7. What is University Prep's CEEB Code?

Our Code is 481169. Every secondary school in the United States has a CEEB code number. It is unique to each school and it ensures that students testing results are sent to the correct school. This code number is needed when taking SAT, ACT, PSAT, PLAN and AP tests.

8. What is required of an Athlete Applying to College?

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) establishes rules on eligibility, recruiting and financial aid for athletes. The NCAA Clearinghouse processes the eligibility forms that can be obtained from the College and Career Center or online. Student athletes should take the SAT/ACT in the junior year and start the certification process early in the senior year. Only students thinking of playing at the Division 1 and Division 11 level are required to register with the NCAA Clearinghouse. <http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net/ncaa/NCAA/common/index.html>

9. If you are a Musician, Artist or Thespian, is your application process different than your peers?

In most cases, if you are a musician, artist or thespian your application process will be the same as your peers. You will, though, want to submit a special resume detailing your musical, artistic, and acting accomplishments. Moreover, a portfolio or CD of your work is recommended. Some colleges, especially those with conservatories, may have special requirements and audition days. Look closely at the fine print in their applications.

10. How do I set up a College Visit?

College visits can be made any time during the junior and senior years. To learn how to best maximize a visit to a college campus, visit the college's website or call the admissions office. A tour, information session and, if offered, an interview are three productive ways to spend your time while visiting a college. For a complete list of what to ask while on a college campus, please refer to your college handbook.

11. What is the Common Application?

The Common Application is used by over 400 colleges, mostly private, throughout the country. One form utilized by so many colleges allows for students to streamline the college application process. If a student is submitting his or her application online, he or she can work on the application over the course of several months before submitting it. The Common Application can be found on line at <http://www.commonapp.org> or in the College and Career Services Office.

12. What is the difference between Early Action, Early Action Single Choice, Early Decision, Early Decision II, Rolling Admissions and Regular Admission?

EARLY ACTION – An early action process whereby a student can submit an application by November 1 (or other designated date) and receive a decision by mid-December. The Early Action student, if accepted, is not bound to enroll. Students are not required to notify the college of their enrollment decision until May 1 and they can apply to other colleges' early action or early decision.

EARLY DECISION – An early application process that carries a binding commitment to enroll, if accepted, to the college. Student and parent must sign that if admitted, the student will attend the college/university regardless of financial aid award. Colleges will share early decision lists, so all other applications must be withdrawn. Students not admitted under Early Decision are reconsidered with the regular decision candidates. Students and parents will not be informed of financial aid prior to admission. A small number of colleges have a second round of early decision called early decision II. This deadline is usually around January 15th with notification one month later.

EARLY ACTION SINGLE CHOICE - An early application process used by a few Ivy League Universities (Stanford, Harvard, Yale for example) where students typically apply by mid-November and are notified by mid-December. Students are not required to notify the college of their enrollment decision until May 1. Under the early action single choice policy, students are not allowed to apply to other colleges under early decision or early action programs. They can, however, apply to other colleges through regular decision programs.

REGULAR DECISION - The most common application process in this country. Students usually apply to colleges between January 1st and the 15th, are notified of the decision by April 1st, and then must let the college know whether they will matriculate by May 1st.

13. What if a Student's College Entrance Exam Scores are not as High as he or she would have liked?

Please do not worry. There are 700 colleges and universities in America that do not require standardized testing for admission. A student's transcript (a cumulative record of their academic work throughout high school) is the most important factor in college admission. Standardized test scores do not measure a student's humanity or work ethic. Fair Test, an organization that promotes the holistic review of a student in the admission process maintains a listing of colleges that are test optional <http://www.fairtest.org>

14. What type of academic program should I take while a student at University Prep.?

Students should take the most demanding academic schedule in which they can succeed. Most selective colleges would like for students to enroll in all five academic majors (Math, Science, History, English and a Foreign Language) for all five years of high school.